

Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2026, Meeting

3:00 PM–4:44 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Jen Rowe, Chair, representing the City of Boston

Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee agreed to the following:

- Approve the minutes of January 22, 2026

Materials

Materials for this meeting included the following:

1. January 22, 2026, TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Meeting Minutes ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

J. Rowe welcomed committee members to the TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee meeting. See attendance on page 12.

2. Public Comments

Justin Curewitz (Tighe & Bond) commented regarding the two Lynn projects programmed in the FFYs 2026–30 TIP, the Rehabilitation of Western Ave (project ID 609246) and the Rehabilitation of Essex Street (project ID 609252). The Readiness Baseline published for the February 19, 2026, MPO board meeting programmed both of these projects in FFY 2030 in accordance with the MPO's recently adopted readiness policy. J. Curewitz stated that advertising both projects in the same year would be a significant undertaking for the City of Lynn.

3. Action Item: Approval of January 22, 2026, Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was made by the Inner Core Committee (Brad Rawson) and seconded by the Town of Brookline (Erin Chute). The motion carried.

4. Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2027-31 TIP Project Updates and Readiness Guidelines—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

E. Lapointe reviewed the discussion that took place during the MPO board meeting of February 19, 2026. MPO staff and board members discussed projects that are not on track to advertise before FFY 2031 based on the readiness guidelines, cost increases, and the trend of funding shifting away from municipal projects due to a lack of project readiness.

E. Lapointe stated that the MPO's program projections made in January were too optimistic compared to the Readiness Baseline, because some projects that were scheduled to submit design packages did not. He noted that the projects that applied for funding for the FFYs 2027–31 TIP are generally well-aligned with MPO readiness guidelines. Only two of the eight projects do not have a pre-25 percent design submission, and four of the eight have a 25 percent submission. Several of these projects are at more advanced design states than currently funded projects. These may one day function as a “bench” of municipal proponent projects. A project “bench” includes projects at advanced design stages that can be programmed as fill-in projects in the inner years of the TIP if surplus funding becomes available. However, most of these projects have readiness years of FFY 2030 or 2031, so could not yet be programmed in the earlier years of the TIP.

E. Lapointe stated that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and the MPO are working together to build a more secure TIP program. For example, during TIP Readiness Days, MassDOT incorporated the MPO's readiness guidelines in its recommendations.

E. Lapointe described the five projects that have cost increases not yet incorporated in the Readiness Baseline (see Table 1). These projects have cost increases beyond \$2.5 million and/or cost increases beyond 25 percent of the cost estimate.

Table 1
Project Cost Increases

Project Name	Current Cost	New Cost
Belmont- Community Path, Belmont Component of the MCRT (Phase 1)	\$27,306,266	\$48,934,961 +79.2%
Boston- Bridge Preservation, B-16-066 (38D), Cambridge Street over MBTA	\$16,531,736	\$20,741,786 +25.5%
Brookline- Rehabilitation of Washington Street	\$27,959,721	\$39,015,364 +39.5%
Lynn- Rehabilitation of Essex Street	\$23,567,554	\$33,813,139 +43.5%
Lynn- Rehabilitation of Western Avenue (Route 107)	\$45,897,600	\$68,189,552 +48.6%

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MCRT = Massachusetts Central Rail Trail.

E. Lapointe stated that design consultant cost estimates do not always match MassDOT’s planning estimates. He gave an example of a project where contingencies, including engineering, design, and utility contingencies, made up more than 35 percent of the project cost estimate. Though contingencies generally decrease as design progresses, this is not always the case. Unexpected expenses may occur late in the design process, such as expenses for transit diversions or contaminated soil removal.

E. Lapointe stated that all five project cost increases are from projects that submitted design updates within the last six months (see Table 2). Often, long periods of time between design submissions correlate with significant cost increases. Three of these projects had not had a design milestone submission in five years or more.

Table 2
Cost Risk as a Factor of Time

Project Name	Design (FFYs 2027–31 TIP)	Design (FFYs 2026–30 TIP)	Time Difference (Years)
Belmont- Community Path, Belmont Component of the MCRT (Phase 1)	100% Comments to DE (01/15/2026)	75% Submitted (03/06/2025)	0.86
Boston- Bridge Preservation, B-16- 066 (38D), Cambridge Street over MBTA	25% Received (10/14/2025)	PRC Approved (12/21/2022)	2.81
Brookline- Rehabilitation of Washington Street	25% Comments to DE (01/27/2026)	PRC Approved (09/24/2020)	5.35
Lynn- Rehabilitation of Essex Street	25% Received (09/24/2025)	PRC Approved (12/06/2018)	6.81
Lynn- Rehabilitation of Western Avenue (Route 107)	25% Comments to DE (12/02/2025)	PRC Approved (12/06/2018)	6.99

DE = District Engineer. MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MCRT = Massachusetts Central Rail Trail. PRC = Project Review Committee.

E. Lapointe stated that the MPO’s readiness guidelines require cost updates no less than once every 1.5 years. The majority of projects abide by this guideline, but there are several projects that have not had a cost update in over four years.

E. Lapointe noted that the MPO board retains the prerogative to consider making exceptions to the readiness policy, but only for projects that are designated as low risk for their advertising year. A low-risk project has a simple scope of work, minimal right-of-way easements and required permits, and at least a 25 percent design submission.

Discussion

B. Rawson commented that the work done by the MPO is bearing results in the forms of better information flow and reduced project risk.

Lenard Diggins (Town of Arlington) asked if it is clear whether or not cost contingencies have been factored into a project’s cost.

E. Lapointe answered that it is because of better information flow between the MPO and MassDOT and the requirements of the readiness policy.

E. Chute stated that the Town of Brookline underwent an extensive year-long public community process for the Washington Street project. When the Town was preparing the 25 percent design for submission, MassDOT's requirements changed, and the Town was required to submit the subsurface utilities plan as part of the 25 percent design instead of the 75 percent design. This change delayed the 25 percent submission. She encouraged the committee to understand that late design submissions may happen for a multitude of reasons outside of the control of the municipal proponent. She stated that the Town's consultant is not in agreement with MassDOT's recent cost increase and encouraged the committee to reconcile the discrepancies between the MassDOT and consultant design estimates before this presentation is brought to the full board.

J. Rowe stated that the Subregional Readiness Days could be an opportunity to share information about discrepancies between cost estimates.

B. Rawson said that it might be useful to develop a dashboard or similar tool to have better transparency for project design statuses, such as whether an intersection control evaluation has taken place or if project requirements were changed during the project lifecycle.

E. Lapointe stated that the MPO must use the cost estimate recorded in MassDOT's project information system. If the MassDOT estimate is lower than the consultant estimate, that discrepancy can be discussed between the proponents and the MassDOT staff. However, if the MassDOT estimate is higher than the consultant estimate, the MPO board cannot choose to fund the lower figure.

5. FFYs 2027-2031 Program Development Objectives—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

E. Lapointe stated that during the development of the FFYs 2025–29 and 2026–30 TIPs, the board spent the majority of the time working to attain fiscal constraint and allocated unprogrammed balances in earlier TIP years. MPO staff received feedback that there were insufficient time and information to make informed programming decisions; that there was inconsistent application of the MPO's cost and readiness policies; and that there was confusion around the roles and responsibilities for TIP program development, especially regarding the role of the TIP Committee. The adoption of the readiness guidelines has mitigated some of these challenges. Although there is an approximately \$20 million deficit in FFY 2030, there are strategies in place to address this issue through the MPO's TIP Project Cost Policies.

E. Lapointe reminded the committee that four MPO board meetings are scheduled for TIP program development. The first was on February 19, 2026, when the Readiness Baseline was discussed. Next, initial modifications will be made during the March 5, 2026, meeting. On the March 19, 2026, meeting, the board will further refine the program and consider more complex factors. Lastly, the board will adopt the final program on April 2, 2026. The TIP Committee will meet on March 12, 2026, and March 26, 2026, to develop recommendations.

At the March 5, 2026, MPO board meeting, MPO staff will ask the board to consider making decisions on smaller projects, including design funding, Community Connections projects, smaller bikeshare projects, and smaller or returning transit projects. These are projects that are generally less than \$5 million in cost and have programming years in FFY 2027 or 2028. Time permitting, MPO staff encourage the MPO board to address a potential FFY 2028 advertising year for the Boston Bridge Preservation, Cambridge Street over MBTA project due to its relatively simple project scope and the need to alleviate the deficit in FFY 2030. In addition, the board could address cost increases for Lynn's Rehabilitation of Essex Street and Rehabilitation of Western Avenue projects, the Rehabilitation of Washington Street in Brookline, and the Boston bridge preservation project. Addressing these changes may resolve the FFY 2030 deficit without requiring further project delays.

On the March 19, 2026, MPO board meeting, MPO staff will ask the board to consider larger funding decisions in the earlier years of the TIP, including the cost increase of the Belmont Community Path project, transit projects, larger bikeshare projects, MassDOT fill-in projects, and more. There will be about \$300 million worth of projects to choose from. Staff will present illustrative scenarios, or "bundles" of projects. Staff will also request the board to release TIP Amendment 3 to the FFYs 2026–30 TIP for public comment. This will include cost changes for projects programmed in FFY 2026, transit projects seeking funding in FFY 2026, delays from FFY 2026 to FFY 2027, and a \$5 million Bluebikes expansion project.

At the April 2, 2026, MPO board meeting, the board may make any final programming decisions, including whether to program new municipal-proponent projects.

Discussion

B. Rawson asked if there would be a formal board vote regarding changes to the TIP program at the upcoming MPO board meetings.

E. Lapointe answered that he would defer to the board on whether or not there would be a formal vote.

L. Diggins asked for clarity as to what the MPO board expects from the TIP committee.

J. Rowe answered that there was no clear directive given, but that this could be discussed at an upcoming MPO board meeting.

Caitlin Allen-Connelly (Community Advisory Council) asked for clarification on the bundles of projects that MPO staff would be bringing forth.

E. Lapointe answered that at the March 5, 2026, meeting, MPO staff would present a bundle of projects less than \$5 million each. Staff would defer to the board for larger projects.

Meghan Roche (Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination) asked what the available pool of money was for funding smaller projects.

E. Lapointe answered that MPO staff are only considering addressing projects less than \$5 million, of which there are few. Even if the board decides to fund all of these projects, there would still be approximately \$50 million of surplus in FFY 2026 alone.

B. Rawson asked for clarification on the Boston bridge preservation project's recent cost increase and why it would be different enough in scope to warrant an exception to the readiness policy.

Preston Huckabee (Gill Engineering) answered that when the project was initiated in August of 2022, Gill Engineering expected to rehabilitate the structure in kind. Later, the project limits expanded to connect with another project in the Boston neighborhood of Lost Village. The scope incorporated more Complete Streets elements, including widened sidewalks and bicycle facilities. The design also accommodated an MBTA request for a left turn lane for buses to enter Sullivan Square. Lastly, the project needed to be coordinated with the Rutherford Square project. These elements all contributed to increases in cost. However, bridge preservation projects are typically designed faster than other typical TIP projects. There are only four temporary easements involved in the project, and the project is all within city-owned property. Gill Engineering will be submitting a combined 75/100 percent submission.

6. FFYs 2027-2031 Program Development Objectives—Adriana Jacobsen, MPO Staff

A. Jacobsen presented the scores for projects applying for TIP funding this spring and the scores for projects that underwent rescoring (see Tables 3–6). She noted that at the upcoming MPO board meeting, the meeting materials would include a document with more detailed information about all of the projects applying for programming on the TIP.

**Table 3
New Project Scores (Core Investment Programs)**

Proponent	Project ID	Project Name	Score
Brookline	613683	Brookline- Pedestrian Bridge Replacement, B-27-017, Davis Path over MBTA	73.7
Cambridge	613568	Cambridge- New Bridge and Shared-Use Path Construction over Fitchburg Line at Danehy Park Connector	85.3
Concord	612870	Concord- Assabet River Multi-Use Trail and Bridge Construction	59.9
Everett	613685	Chelsea- Everett- Reconstruction of Vine Street and Third Street, from Chelsea Street to MBTA Station	67.1
Malden	613244	Malden – Broadway Reconstruction Everett to Melrose City Line	78
Marblehead	612947	Marblehead- Village Street Bridge Replacement M-04-001	44.4
Newton	613594	Needham- Newton- Bridge Replacement on Christina Street	74
Revere	S13406	Revere- Revere Beach Connector (Design Only)	71.4

Table 4
New Project Scores (Transit Transformation)

Proponent	Project ID	Project Name	Score
CATA	S13388	CATA Access for All	39.8
CATA	S13389	Cape Ann Dialysis Transportation	39.8
CATA	S13412	Magnolia Shuttle	28.6
CATA	S13413	Vehicle Replacement	21.6
MBTA	S13393	Symphony Station	50.6
		Downtown Crossing Vertical Transportation	
MBTA	S13394	Improvements Phase 2	42.6
		High Priority Stations Accessibility Improvements	
MBTA	S13402	Program	44.8
MBTA	S13406	Locomotive Procurement	41
MBTA	S13420	North Station Rapid Transit Flooring Replacement	36.8
MBTA	S13397	Franklin Line Double Track Improvements – Phase 3	43.6
MBTA	S13398	Unit Substation Upgrade/Replacement	45.4
MBTA	S13399	Haverhill Line Double Track Improvements	43.8
MBTA	S13395	Operational Enhancement of Bus Routes 714 and 716	34.8
MBTA	S13396	Bus Priority and Accessibility Improvements	53.6
		Better Bus Project – Operational Safety Improvements at	
MBTA	S13401	Bus Stops	44.6
MBTA	S13404	Silver Line Tunnel Flood Mitigation	47.8
MBTA	S13405	Blue Line Tunnel Airport Flood Mitigation	51.6
		Procurement of 10 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)	
MWRTA	S13390	Vehicles	49.5
MWRTA	S13391	Construction of Vehicle Maintenance and Fueling Facility	55.6
		Procurement of Hydrogen Fuel Cell-Powered Transit	
MWRTA	S13392	Vehicles	50.8

CATA = Cape Ann Transportation Authority. MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MWRTA = MetroWest Regional Transit Authority.

Table 5
New Project Scores (Community Connections and Bikeshare Support)

Proponent	Project ID	Project Name	Score
Brookline	S13386	Brookline Bluebikes Expansion	79.5
Brookline	S13387	Brookline Bicycle Rack Expansion	76.5
Malden	S13385	Malden Bicycle Rack Expansion	78
MAPC	S13411	Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, and Somerville Bluebikes Replacement of 58 Stations	81
MAPC	S13409	Joint Municipality Bluebikes Expansion, 1500 E-Bikes, 25 Classic Bikes, 17 Stations	85
Quincy	S13410	Quincy Bluebikes Expansion	63

MAPC = Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Table 6
Rescored Projects

Proponent	Project ID	Project Name	Score
Boston	606226	Boston- Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue, from City Square to Sullivan Square	69
Boston	606453	Boston- Improvements on Boylston Street	62
Everett	609257	Everett- Reconstruction of Beacham Street	57
Medford	611982	Medford- Shared Use Path Connection at the Route 28/Wellington Underpass	53
Lexington	S13146	Lexington- Design of the Reconstruction of the Interstate 95 and Route 4/225 Interchange	49.8
Lynnfield	613163	Lynnfield- Rail Trail Construction, from Ford Avenue to Nichols Lane	50
MassDOT	605857	Norwood- Intersection Improvements at Route 1 and University Avenue/Everett Street	34.7
MassDOT	605168	Hingham- Improvements on Route 3A	-
MassDOT	609531	Arlington- Stratton School Improvements	-
Woburn	610662	Woburn- Roadway and Intersection Improvements at Woburn Common	47.5

MassDOT = Massachusetts Department of Transportation

A. Jacobsen stated that detailed scoring results would be sent to project proponents shortly.

Discussion

B. Rawson asked if there would be a fill-in project list from MassDOT. He asked if any of the scored transit projects would be considered as fill-ins.

A. Jacobsen replied that many of the MBTA, CATA, and MWRTA projects have readiness years in FFY 2026 or 2027, as do several of the Community Connections and bikeshare projects.

E. Lapointe added that MPO staff are still working with MassDOT to identify programming years for MassDOT fill-in projects.

L. Diggins asked if there was any information in writing from TIP Readiness Days. He requested more information on the reasons for cost increases or delays.

E. Lapointe replied that there was not, but pointed him to the TIP Project Descriptions that would be posted on the MPO meeting calendar for the March 5, 2026, MPO board meeting.

7. Members' Items

There were none.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2026.

9. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the Town of Arlington (Lenard Diggins) and seconded by the Community Advisory Council (Caitlin Allen-Connelly). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
City of Boston	Jen Rowe
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Brad Rawson
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	-
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)	Sam Taylor
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)	Michael O'Dowd
MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)	Tyler Terrasi
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Lexington)	Meghan Roche
Community Advisory Council	Caitlin Allen-Connelly
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Lenard Diggins
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Erin Chute

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Aleida Leza	-
Allison Lenk	-
Ben Sun	City of Boston
Benjamin Muller	MassDOT
James Turnbull	Gill Engineering
Jim Nee	MWRTA
Jim Tarr	City of Malden
John Romano	MassDOT
JR Frey	Town of Hingham
Justin Curewitz	Tighe & Bond
Karin Rose	City of Boston
Logan Casey	Town of Marblehead
Maura Carroll	-
Michael Trepanier	MassDOT
Nelson Mui	MWRTA
Preston Huckabee	Gill Engineering
Rich Kosian	-
Richard Azzalina	Stantec
Valerie Oorthuys	Town of Stow

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director
Annette Demchur
Dave Hong
Ethan Lapointe
Ibbu Quraishi
Lauren Magee
Sean Rourke

CIVIL RIGHTS NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Welcome. Bem Vinda. Bienvenido. Akeyi. 欢迎. 歡迎.



You are invited to participate in our transportation planning process, free from discrimination. The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is committed to nondiscrimination in all activities and complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency). Related federal and state nondiscrimination laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, sex, disability, and additional protected characteristics.

For additional information or to file a civil rights complaint, visit www.bostonmpo.org/mpo_non_discrimination.

To request accommodations at meetings (such as assistive listening devices, materials in accessible formats and languages other than English, and interpreters in American Sign Language and other languages) or if you need this information in another language, please contact:

Boston Region MPO Title VI Specialist

10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150

Boston, MA 02116

Phone: 857.702.3700

Email: civilrights@ctps.org

For people with hearing or speaking difficulties, connect through the state MassRelay service, www.mass.gov/massrelay. Please allow at least five business days for your request to be fulfilled.