

# Draft Memorandum for the Record

## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

### Community Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

#### May 11, 2026, Meeting Minutes

2:00 PM–3:30 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Caitlin Allen-Connelly, Chair, representing TransitMatters

#### Meeting Agenda

##### 1. Introductions

Michaela Grenier (MPO staff) called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. Members and guests attending the meeting introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 5.)

##### 2. Chair's Report— Caitlin Allen-Connelly, TransitMatters

C. Allen-Connelly (TransitMatters) shared that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) public review period is open. C. Allen-Connelly encouraged Advisory Council members to review the plans and provide comments.

C. Allen-Connelly summarized the Public Engagement Update presentation from the recent MPO meeting.

##### 3. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

##### 4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2026, meeting was made by Abundant Housing MA (Jesse Kanson-Benanav) and seconded by Watertown TMA (Sophia Galimore). The minutes were approved.

##### 5. Advisory Council Member Information Sharing

Members from TransitMatters and Abundant Housing MA shared projects and initiatives with the Community Advisory Council.

## Discussion

Charles Lyu (TransitMatters) presented on TransitMatters' long-range transit planning campaign, FRAME the Future. C. Lyu discussed TransitMatters' role includes providing tools and data to inform discussions and working with stakeholders to support advocacy for long-term transit modernization. C. Lyu shared various tools and resources for stakeholders, such as advocacy toolkits and the Futures Explorer, an interactive tool for imagining and exploring a future with expanded public transit.

C. Allen-Connelly, C. Lyu, and James Fuccione (MA Healthy Aging Collaborative) discussed engaging older adults as a part of TransitMatters' long-range planning process. C. Allen-Connelly, C. Lyu, and S. Galimore discussed opportunities for engagement and collaboration with transit management associations.

J. Kanson-Benanav shared an introduction about Abundant Housing MA and the housing challenges in Massachusetts. J. Kanson-Benanav described Abundant Housing MA's role in addressing these challenges, including

- advocating for policies to make it easier to build more homes of all types,
- prioritizing building multi-family homes near jobs and public transportation,
- and organizing Massachusetts residents around a pro-housing agenda.

J. Kanson-Benanav shared information about Abundant Housing MA's work on the MBTA Communities Act and parking reform.

J. Kanson-Benanav and M. Grenier stated they will organize answers to Advisory Council members' questions and discussion in an email due to time constraints.

## **6. Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Highlights and Discussion—Olivia Saccocia, MPO Staff**

O. Saccocia (MPO staff) provided an overview of the FFY 2027 UPWP. O. Saccocia noted that because MPO-Funded Discrete Studies make up a small percentage of the annual budget, staff are interested in continuing to engage stakeholders in programs under the MPO Support and 3C (continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative) Planning category. MPO Support and 3C Planning includes core MPO functions and activities that support the 3C planning process, which have more flexibility.

## Discussion

O. Saccocia facilitated a discussion about engagement strategies for the MPO's work planning process.

Karl Alexander (Mystic River Watershed Association) discussed providing more information and transparency about project development. Angie Cradock (PRC on Nutrition and Physical Activity, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health) discussed providing clear engagement opportunities that include information on when and what type of feedback staff are seeking. Paulina Muratore (Conservation Law Foundation) encouraged staff to close the feedback loop and share how feedback was incorporated.

O. Saccocia facilitated a discussion about which MPO programs and activities are most relevant to Advisory Council members. A live Zoom poll was shared, and meeting participants selected programs and activities that are most relevant to their organization's work.

J. Fuccione, O. Saccocia, David Hong (MPO staff), and Annette Demchur (MPO staff) discussed the Unified Planning Work Program and the Performance-Based Planning and Programming.

## **7. FFYs 2027-31 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Highlights and Discussion—Ethan Lapointe and Adriana Jacobsen, MPO Staff**

E. Lapointe (MPO staff) shared an overview of the federally funded projects and programs in the FFYs 2027-31 TIP. E. Lapointe noted the Regional Target Program reflects a funding category where the MPO has direct control of selecting investments. E. Lapointe discussed the distribution of Regional Target funding across investment programs, and the objectives projects serve. E. Lapointe highlighted that the MPO's visions, goals, and objectives are best realized through project delivery.

### **Discussion**

E. Lapointe facilitated a discussion about the composition of project types reflected in the TIP and the development process.

K. Alexander encouraged Advisory Council members to schedule office hours with MPO staff to further discuss TIP development. K. Alexander and E. Lapointe discussed project development challenges and how to keep the TIP as a reliable funding resource for municipalities. A. Cradock and E. Lapointe discussed reasons why projects were removed from the FFYs 2027-31 TIP. Scott Mullen (A Better City), A. Jacobsen, and E. Lapointe discussed that the TIP dashboard reflects programmed projects, and the possibility of adding removed projects during previous development cycles.

## **8. Members' Items**

M. Grenier shared that the public review period for the Public Engagement Plan has been pushed out to June. MPO staff will share more information during the June Community Advisory Council meeting.

K. Alexander shared that the Mystic River Watershed Association is hosting their 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Mystic River Herring Run and Paddle.

S. Mullen shared that A Better City is hosting their second year of the Guided Ride Series.

## **9. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by the 495/MetroWest Partnership (Jason Palitsch) and seconded by A Better City (Scott Mullen). The motion carried.

## Attendees

<b>Member Municipalities</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
Natick	Morgan Griffiths

<b>Citizen Advocacy Groups</b>	<b>Attendees</b>
495/MetroWest Partnership	Jason Palitsch
A Better City	Scott Mullen, Amir Wilson
Abundant Housing MA	Jesse Kanson-Benanav
Conservation Law Foundation	Paulina Muratore
LivableStreets Alliance	Maha Aslam
MA Healthy Aging Collaborative	James Fuccione
MassBike	Alexis Hosea-Abbott
Mystic River Watershed Association	Karl Alexander
Mystic Valley Elder Services	Meg von Lossnitzer, Sheila Buckland
Prevention Research Center (PRC) on Nutrition and Physical Activity, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health	Angie Cradock
TownGreen	Maureen Aylward
TransitMatters	Caitlin Allen-Connelly
Watertown TMA	Sophia Galimore

<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Tony Collins	MBTA
Mike Dion	BL Companies
Charles Lyu	TransitMatters
Jim Tarr	City of Malden

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**MPO Staff**

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Annette Demchur

Michaela Grenier

David Hong

Jia Huang

Adriana Jacobsen

Ethan Lapointe

Lauren Magee

Meghan O' Connor

Gina Perille

Sean Rourke

Olivia Saccocia

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**Boston Region MPO Title VI Specialist**

10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150

Boston, MA 02116

Phone: 857.702.3700

Email: [civilrights@ctps.org](mailto:civilrights@ctps.org)

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