

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF MPO TRANSIT PROVIDER REPRESENTATION SURVEY RESULTS

Respondents

Twelve Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) members responded to the survey.

General Feedback

One of the 12 respondents did not answer any questions regarding a transit committee in the affirmative. This respondent expressed disagreement with a survey instrument that presupposed the expansion of the MPO board, noting

- the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council) is a key vehicle to advance discussion of issues pertaining to the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) and the Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) on the MPO board;
- existing permanent subregional representatives—the North Shore Task Force and the MetroWest Regional Collaborative—could communicate on behalf of these agencies; and
- a lack of awareness of MWRTA and CATA providing testimony at recent MPO meetings, while the federal agencies call for the need for dialogue with MWRTA and CATA as part of their recommendation in the 2015 Certification Review report.

Potential Transit Committee Mission

The survey asked members to select mission statements they felt should apply to the committee and to supply others, as desired. They were then asked to rank those mission statements in order of importance, with 1 being the most important. Eleven of the 12 respondents answered this survey question. Table A-1 displays the results, with the number of respondents selecting each option shown in the cells.

**Table A-1
Respondent Selection and Ranking of
Potential Committee Mission Statements**

Mission Statement	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Did not include or rank	Total
Represent additional public transportation providers serving the region on the MPO board	6	1	2	0	2	11
Advise the MPO on matters pertaining to public transit to inform MPO transportation planning and decision making	2	7	1	0	1	11
Provide a forum for the region’s public transportation providers to discuss topics of mutual interest and concern (irrespective of their relationship to MPO activities)	3	2	4	1	1	11
Member-proposed statement: Review the transit elements of the TIP and provide for more detailed discussion	0	0	1	0	10	11

MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization. TIP = Transportation Improvement Program.

Potential Transit Committee Support for MPO Decision Making

The survey asked members to note how a transit committee might support and improve the MPO’s decision making. Ten respondents identified the following ways the committee might support the MPO:

- Provide input on matters relating to suburban transit or transit outside of the MBTA service area
- Provide more unified and comprehensive input for the whole region
- Support coordination between the region’s public transit providers
- Provide more first-hand knowledge of transit service, planning, and operations
- Advise on funding requests made to the MPO, particularly for the Long-Range Transportation Plan or Transportation Improvement Program
- Focus on Regional Transit Authority (RTA) needs
- Focus on first- and last-mile solutions
- Provide direct representation and voice to transit providers
- Provide a transit-focused forum for discussing transit issues

- Advise on the challenges, needs, and day-to-day experience of public transit providers
- Formulate new ideas for the MPO

Transit Committee Membership

The survey asked members several questions about the types of organizations that should be included as members of the committee and what characteristics their membership should take. For context, staff noted that members of the committee would attend committee meetings and offer insight and guidance on topics brought to the committee for discussion. Depending on the committee structure and operations, members might also (1) vote on items that would inform the actions that their representative would take when voting on the MPO board and (2) vote to elect their representative to the MPO board. Permanent members would not rotate or need to be re-elected to their seat on the committee.

Eleven respondents answered questions regarding committee membership.

General Comments on Committee Membership

- One respondent commented in favor of being more inclusive with respect to committee membership.
- One respondent said that committee membership should focus on entities that move significant numbers of people and have a regional impact.
- One respondent said that the MBTA and MassDOT already have representation on the MPO and should not gain an additional seat on the MPO through a transit committee.
- One respondent noted that membership details might be best explored by the committee itself. This respondent noted that each entity representative should only have one voting seat, and that should the committee function in the same way as the Advisory Council, member permanence would only be considered with respect to voting status and would be determined by attendance. This respondent did not have any additional comments on who should be eligible to represent the committee on the MPO board, other than there should not be duplicate representation for entities that already have MPO representation.
- One respondent noted insufficient information to form an opinion on which members should be permanent.

Minimum Number of Members

The survey asked respondents to recommend a minimum number of committee members. Five respondents said five; two said seven; two said eight; and one

said 10. One respondent did not identify a minimum and said that setting a minimum was not a concern.

MWRTA and CATA Participation

- Eleven respondents indicated that MWRTA and CATA should be committee members.
- Ten respondents suggested one seat for each RTA.
- Eight of the 11 respondents affirmed they should be permanent members of the committee.
- Nine of the 11 respondents affirmed that they should be eligible to represent the committee on the MPO board.

MBTA Participation

- Eleven respondents indicated that the MBTA should be a member of the committee. Of these, one specified that it should be a nonvoting member.
- Nine respondents suggested assigning one seat to the MBTA.
- Nine respondents affirmed that the MBTA should be a permanent member of the committee.
- None of the respondents indicated that the MBTA should be eligible to represent the committee on the MPO board.

MassDOT Rail and Transit Division Participation

- Eleven respondents indicated that the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division should be a member of the committee. Of these, one specified that it should be a nonvoting member.
- Nine respondents suggested assigning one seat to the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division.
- Nine respondents indicated it should be a permanent member of the committee.
- None of the respondents indicated that the MassDOT Rail and Transit Division should be eligible to represent the committee on the MPO board.

Other Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Participation

- Eleven respondents indicated that the other RTAs that serve the region, such as the Lowell Regional Transit Authority or the Brockton Area Transit Authority, should be members of the committee.
- Eight respondents suggested assigning them one seat, while one suggested three seats (noting that this amount may depend on the

number of RTAs in the region). One respondent indicated that any RTA that operates fixed route service in the Boston Region should have a seat on the committee, if desired.

- Eight respondents indicated that other RTAs that are operating in the region should be eligible to be permanent members of the committee.
- Five of the respondents indicated that these entities should be eligible to represent the committee on the MPO board.

Transportation Management Association (TMA) Participation

- Eleven respondents indicated that the TMAs that serve the region, such as the 128 Business Council and Middlesex 3, should be members of the committee.
- Seven respondents suggested assigning them one seat, while two suggested three seats (with one noting that this amount may depend on the number of TMAs in the region). One person specified one seat specifically for MassCommute, which is a coalition of TMAs operating in Massachusetts.
- Five respondents indicated that TMAs should be eligible to be permanent members of the committee.
- Six respondents indicated that these entities should be eligible to represent the committee on the MPO board.

Participation by Municipalities that Provide Transit Service to the Public

- Ten respondents indicated that municipalities that provide service to the public, such as Lexington and Dedham, should be members of the committee. One respondent indicated uncertainty.
- Six respondents suggested assigning this type of entity one seat, one respondent suggested two seats, and one suggested three seats. One suggested that any of these entities that wished to participate should be able to do so.
- Three respondents indicated that these entities should be eligible to be permanent members of the committee. One said no, and noted that this should depend on the funding level and type of transit service.
- Four respondents indicated that these entities should be eligible to represent the committee on the MPO board.

Participation by Municipalities that Provide Any Kind of Transit Service

- Five respondents indicated that municipalities that provide any kind of transit service, including council on aging service, should be members of the committee. One respondent indicated they were not sure. One respondent said no and that only municipalities that provide fixed route service to the public should be eligible for a seat.
- Five respondents suggested assigning this type of entity one seat.
- Three respondents indicated that this type of entity should be eligible to be a permanent member of the committee.
- None of the respondents indicated that these entities should be eligible to represent the committee on the MPO board.

Transit Committee Expansion

The survey asked respondents whether the committee should seek MPO approval to expand its membership. Eleven respondents answered the question.

- Six said yes.
- One respondent replied with a qualified yes, noting that this was unlikely to be an issue in the early days of the committee and that a productive committee size would be 10 to 15 members.
- Three said no, with one of the respondents noting that MPO approval should only be required when adding voting members to the MPO board. The respondent added that the MPO should determine the makeup and proportionality of voting weights in consultation with the transit committee.
- One respondent said that the committee should consult the MPO if it seeks to add a member that provides service statewide or primarily outside the MPO area.

Committee Representation on the MPO Board

The survey asked members questions regarding the selection of the transit committee's representative to the MPO board. Eleven respondents answered these questions.

General Comments on Committee Representation

- One respondent noted that the transit committee representative that votes on the MPO board should be accountable to other interested parties, including other RTAs, municipalities, MassDOT, the MBTA, and the TMAs.

- One respondent replied that MWRTA or CATA should not be the permanent transit committee chairs, and that the most equitable way to provide additional public transit provider representation—and a greater variety of representation—on the MPO board would be for the transit committee chair to be elected. In addition, the respondent replied that there is an open question—perhaps specifically for the committee itself—of whether MWRTA would be eligible to run for the committee chair position after its initial three-year term, unless no other candidates express interest.

Selection of MPO Representative

The survey asked respondents whether the MPO should appoint the committee's representative; whether the committee should elect its representative; or if they felt another method should be used. Eleven respondents answered the question.

- Ten said the committee should elect its own representative. One noted that the representative would need to be from MWRTA or CATA.
- One said that the MPO should appoint its representative and that the committee representative must be from an RTA.

Committee Relationship to the Advisory Council

The survey asked whether members of a transit committee should be eligible to vote on the Advisory Council. The Advisory Council includes both voting and nonvoting members, with voting membership dependent on attendance and whether the member entity serves on the MPO board. Ten respondents answered this question; one noted insufficient information to provide a response.

- Six respondents said yes, with one respondent noting support of this policy as long as it does not violate the Advisory Council Bylaws.
- The MPO representative to the Advisory Council said no, although transit committee members could participate in the Advisory Council meetings and conversations as nonvoting members.
- Two other respondents said no.
- One respondent deferred the question to the Advisory Council. This respondent replied that not all members of the transit committee should be able to vote on the Advisory Council, and suggested that the transit committee appoint a liaison to the Advisory Council, who would be a voting member of that body.