

APPENDIX 1: TRANSIT WORKING GROUP EVENTS AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2021

General information about the Transit Working Group is available on the [Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization \(MPO\) website](#). The list below includes links to meeting recordings and materials, where available.

January 30, 2020, General Meeting

- Pilot Overview
- Transit-Related MPO Activities
 - Overview of MPO activities and resources
- Future Transit Working Group Activities discussion
- Public Comments

July 20, 2020, General Meeting

Recording

- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Service Changes and Pandemic Response Planning
- MPO Transit-Related Activities Update
 - COVID-19 Transit Technical Assistance
 - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Criteria Update
 - Community Connections Program Update (including Round 1 projects)
- Transit Provider Exchange
- Public Comments

November 12, 2020, General Meeting

Recording

- MPO Transit Activities Update
 - Community Connections Program Update–2020 Application Phase
 - Regional Transit Service Planning Technical Assistance Program
 - Updates on current MPO studies (Future of the Curb Phase 2 and Access to Central Business Districts Phase 2)
 - TIP Criteria Update Process Conclusion
- Taxi/Livery Transportation Partnerships Grant Program
 - Information about a grant program for municipal and state agencies, regional transit authorities, health and human service providers, and nonprofit organizations to partner with taxicab, livery, or hackney businesses to fill transportation gaps and meet transportation and delivery needs
- Transit Provider Exchange
- MBTA Forging Ahead Plan and Service Options

- Presentation of the MBTA's Forging Ahead planning process and proposed service options to be implemented in the spring and summer 2021
- Public Comments

March 19, 2021, General Meeting

Recording

- MPO Transit-Related Activities Update
 - Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2022–26 TIP Process Update
 - FFY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Process Update
 - Travel Demand Management Forum Recap
 - Regional Transit Service Planning Technical Support Program
 - Update on current MPO studies
 - Proposed Transit Chat Series
- Transit Provider Items
- Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Regional Rail
 - Presentation of the MBTA's plans for regional rail transformation, including a presentation and discussion of upcoming Regional Rail schedules
- Boston Region MPO's MBTA Park-and-Ride and Bicycle Parking Dashboard
 - Presentation of an interactive application describing data about park-and-ride and bicycle parking amenities, capacity, and utilization near MBTA stations
- Public Comments

May 7, 2021, Microtransit Chat

May 11, 2021, Medical and Human Services Transportation Chat

May 12, 2021, Partnerships for Ongoing Transit Recovery Chat

May 19, 2021, Improving Connections and Closing Gaps Chat

May 26, 2021, Transportation Demand Management Chat (invitation only)

June 30, 2021, Regional Rail Coordination Chat (invitation only)

July 9, 2021, General Meeting

Recording

- MPO Transit-Related Activities Update
 - FFY 2022 UPWP Program Process Update
 - Public Outreach Plan Update
 - Update on Access to Central Business Districts Phase 2 study
- Transit Working Group Chats Update
- Transit Provider Items
- Transit Regionalization and Consolidation
 - Presentation and discussion of transit regionalization and consolidation initiatives in central Pennsylvania
- Preview of Interactive Bus Delay Application
 - Presentation and discussion of MPO staff's ongoing work on an interactive bus delay application for the MBTA
- Public Comments

October 12, 2021, General Meeting

Recording

- MPO Transit-Related Activities Update
 - Transit Working Group Pilot Update
 - Regional Transit Service Planning Technical Assistance Program
 - Community Connections Program Update
- Transit Provider Items
- Implications of Federal Legislation for Transit:
 - Summary of the implications for transit of recent federal legislative activity related to the new infrastructure bill, including a question-and-answer period
- Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Discretionary Grant Program
 - Introduction to this state-funded program designed to test innovative solutions to local mobility challenges and to provide targeted operating assistance, technology improvements, service evaluation, and program design that best demonstrate compliance with the Task Force on RTA Performance and Funding's recommendations
- Taxicab, Livery, and Hackney Transportation Partnership Grants Program
 - Information about a grant program for municipal and state agencies, regional transit authorities, health and human service providers, and nonprofit organizations to partner with taxicab, livery, or hackney businesses to fill transportation gaps and meet transportation and delivery needs
- Public Comments

October 26, 2021, Human Services Transportation Chat

[Recording](#)

November 5, 2021, Improving Bus Access to MBTA Regional Rail Stations Chat (restricted to transit providers and supporting entities)

November 8, 2021, Closing Regional Transit Gaps Chat

[Recording](#)

November 17, 2021, Confronting Driver Recruitment Shortfalls (restricted to transit providers and supporting entities)

APPENDIX 2: TRANSIT WORKING GROUP EVENT PARTICIPANT AFFILIATION DETAILS

Tables 2-1 through 2-4 in this document provide details about the affiliations of people who participated in Transit Working Group (TWG) events, including general meetings and coffee chats. In these tables, the “Other Government” group includes people representing federal, county, or regional agencies, the Massachusetts state legislature, and Massachusetts agencies besides the Massachusetts Department of Transportation or the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. The “Other” group includes people representing private sector consulting organizations, organizations outside of Massachusetts, and other groups not reflected by the other categories.

Table 2-1
Transit Working Group Participants by Affiliation Category and Number of Events Attended

Category	1	2	3	4	5 or More	Total
Advocacy Organization or Advisory Group	22	3	3	3	2	33
Human Service Transportation Organization	3	2	1	0	0	6
MassDOT	9	3	1	0	3	16
MBTA	19	8	4	0	1	32
Municipality	24	8	4	5	3	44
Other	17	4	4	2	0	27
Other Government	10	10	1	1	2	24
Public	14	1	1	0	0	16
Regional Transit Authority	6	2	3	0	3	14
Transportation Management Association	9	2	1	3	5	20
Total	133	43	23	14	19	232

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MassDOT= Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

Source: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Staff.

**Table 2-2
Transit Working Group General Meeting Registrations and Attendance by Affiliation Category**

Category	1/30/2020*	7/20/2020		11/12/2020		3/19/2021		7/9/2021		10/12/2021	
	Attended	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended
Advocacy Organization or Advisory Group	11	14	10	10	6	18	13	10	5	9	7
Human Service Transportation Organization	0	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
MassDOT	6	6	4	8	7	6	4	6	5	8	6
MBTA	2	17	14	9	8	14	9	7	4	3	1
Municipality	4	22	15	22	16	21	14	13	9	18	13
Other	2	8	5	11	5	18	13	7	4	9	8
Other Government	0	10	8	9	6	12	9	8	7	10	7
Public	1	5	2	3	1	13	8	10	3	5	2
Regional Transit Authority	2	5	5	3	1	7	6	2	2	9	7
Transportation Management Association	4	17	11	13	8	11	10	10	5	9	5
Total	32	107	76	90	60	121	87	75	45	81	57

Note: The January 30, 2020, meeting was held in person. While RSVPs were requested, no advance registration was required.

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MassDOT= Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

Source: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Staff.

**Table 2-3
Spring 2021 Transit Working Group Coffee Chat Registrations and Attendance, by Affiliation Category**

Category	Microtransit (5/7/2021)		Medical and Human Service Transportation (5/11/2021)		Partnerships for Ongoing Transit Recovery (5/12/2021)		Improving Connections and Closing Gaps (5/19/2021)		Transportation Demand Management (5/26/2021) ^{a,b}	Regional Rail Coordination (6/30/2021) ^a	
	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended	Attended	Registered	Attended
Advocacy Organization or Advisory Group	4	1	3	2	1	1	3	1	0	0	0
Human Service Transportation	0	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MassDOT	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
MBTA	1	0	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	2	2
Municipality	6	3	3	3	1	1	4	3	9	2	0
Other	5	3	0	0	0	0	4	2	0	4	3
Other Government	2	1	2	2	2	1	4	1	1	0	0
Public	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Regional Transit Authority	5	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	6	4
Transportation Management Association	1	1	0	0	5	5	5	2	0	3	3
Total	25	13	14	11	13	11	24	10	10	17	12

^a This coffee chat was invitation-only.

^b Advance registrations were not required for this coffee chat.

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MassDOT= Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

Source: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Staff.

Table 2-4
Fall 2021 Transit Working Group Coffee Chat Registrations, by Affiliation Category

Category	Human Services Transportation (10/26/2021)		Improving Bus Access to MBTA Regional Rail Stations (11/5/2021) ^a		Closing Regional Gaps (11/8/2021)		Confronting Driver Recruitment Shortfalls (11/17/2021) ^a	
	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended	Registered	Attended
Advocacy Organization or Advisory Group	5	1	4	1	4	2	4	0
Human Service Transportation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MassDOT	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	1
MBTA	0	0	2	1	4	4	8	5
Municipality	6	4	2	1	7	3	4	2
Other	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Other Government	6	5	2	0	7	4	3	0
Public	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Regional Transit Authority	1	1	4	2	5	5	5	2
Transportation Management Association	1	1	5	1	3	2	3	2
Total	22	14	23	7	31	20	29	12

^a Participation in this coffee chat was restricted to transit providers and supporting agencies. MPO staff reviewed registrants against this criterion before admitting participants.

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MassDOT= Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

Source: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Staff.

Appendix 3: Questions Used for the Transit Working Group Focus Group and Survey

Message to Focus Group Invitees

Thank you for your participation in the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) [Pilot Transit Working Group](#). As the Transit Working Group moves out of the pilot phase, we would appreciate feedback about your experience and suggestions for improvement. We expect to incorporate this feedback into a report for the MPO board sometime this fall. If you have questions, please contact Michelle Scott (msscott@ctps.org) or Sandy Johnston (sjohnston@ctps.org).

We will discuss the following questions, time permitting, during the virtual feedback session on September 10, 2021, at 10 AM. We also welcome your feedback on these questions by email or this form through close of business on September 17, 2021. If you need a refresher on past meeting topics, additional information is provided below under Past Transit Working Group Discussion Topics. (Note: See Appendix 1).

Feedback Questions

1. What Transit Working Group meeting and coffee chat topics have been the most interesting or useful to you?
2. Has your participation in Transit Working Group events (meetings or coffee chats) helped you to better coordinate with other transit providers or other organizations relevant to your work? If so, how?
3. Past Transit Working Group events have included information about the Boston Region MPO and its activities. What information about the MPO has been the most useful to you?

Examples of MPO-related information include updates about (1) technical assistance offerings and funding opportunities, (2) MPO studies, and (3) MPO planning processes and public comment periods.

4. Do you feel that you understand the functions of the Boston Region MPO better than before you participated in the Transit Working Group? If so, what Transit Working Group activities have helped with this?
5. Have you participated more in other MPO activities since you began participating in the Transit Working Group? If so, how? Do you feel more inclined to participate in other MPO activities than before?

Examples of participating in other MPO activities include attending MPO Board meetings, attending other MPO events, commenting on MPO plans, or applying for MPO technical assistance or capital funding.

6. What questions do you have about the MPO, its activities, or its decisions that you would like to see discussed at Transit Working Group events?
7. What role, if any, would you like to see the Transit Working Group have in MPO decision-making?
8. What would you like to see more of at future Transit Working Group events?
9. What would you like to see less of at future Transit Working Group events?
10. What presentation or discussion topics would you suggest for future events? Do you have any suggestions for presenters?
11. Is there anything we should consider when selecting dates and times for future Transit Working Group meetings and coffee chats?
12. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

APPENDIX 4: FEEDBACK THEMES FROM THE TRANSIT WORKING GROUP SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP (SUMMER AND FALL 2021)

This Appendix summarizes feedback collected at a focus group about Transit Working Group (TWG) activities through August 2021, through a survey issued to focus group invitees in September 2021, and other written comments submitted in October 2021. Focus group invitees included transit providers and transit-supporting agency representatives that had attending TWG meetings or events. Feedback has paraphrased and been summarized by topic area. Comments made by multiple participants are indicated with an asterisk (*). Comments made by Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) members that participated in the focus group are indicated with a hashtag (#).

TWG Event Formats

- Participants from transit providers and supporting organizations found coffee chats to be particularly valuable because they allowed for more focused discussion and coordination. *
 - These sessions provided opportunities to share learning experiences and have in-depth conversation with colleagues. *
 - The written summaries of these chat sessions were helpful.
 - The guided discussion format was helpful.

Information Provided at TWG Events

- Participants reported that information shared at working group events has generally been interesting and educational. **
- TWG events have provided a way for transit providers to hear about what's going on at the MPO in a digestible way. *
 - The information about funding opportunities is valuable. *
 - It is important to provide coordinated information about grant programs for starting shuttle services.
 - The TWG has been helpful in explaining what the MPO's activities are and what studies and technical assistance offerings are available.
 - The MPO information presented at TWG events can help people stay up to date and improve their understanding of MPO activities. It is helpful to have a chance to ask questions in a smaller format more focused on transit providers.
- It was good to have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback at the meeting where the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) Forging Ahead plan was presented.

- It has been helpful to hear what transit agencies have been doing regarding the pandemic.
- It can be challenging to apply lessons from presenters from outside of the region if their operating context is different.

General Regional Transit Coordination

- Coordination needs are still being addressed outside the group to meet transit providers' needs. Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) support coordination discussions for specific geographic areas. Other coordination discussion supports how to improve transfers between services.
- Transit providers had hoped this would be a venue where all the transit services in the region could be mapped and discussions could be had about how to provide service more efficiently, close gaps, and generally look at regional transit service in a more comprehensive way. *
 - Participants raised the following questions: What transit services are serving major connection points to reduce crowding and congestion? How can connections to the MBTA be maintained? How can mobility hubs play a role? *
 - One participant asked the following question: What is the best entity to take on this kind of work?
 - Transit-related coordination would be helpful given all that has changed during the pandemic, as well as the amount of change that can happen between Long-Range Transportation Plans or Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plans.
 - It is important to capture both when and where transit services are being provided when mapping transit information. For example, how does transit service availability change at night or on weekends?
- The TWG has been helpful in terms of learning who to go to for information about certain subjects, topics, or ideas.
- The TWG discussions have been helpful; it takes time to put new connections to use.
- One participant suggested clarifying the purpose of the group and what the group is trying to accomplish through more coordination and documenting the value of coordination.
- The MPO may be best positioned to answer questions of regional coordination, given its regional coordination and its work with subregional groups. The MPO's technical assistance resources could support this work. #

- The MPO wants to continue coalition building and breaking down barriers between municipalities and subregions. The MPO board is being intentional in terms of showing how suburban transit and regional transit authority (RTA) operations are essential to servicing the Inner Core and the whole region's interests. #

Coordination with the MBTA

- One participant asked the following: Could this group have been more of a resource for the MBTA's Forging Ahead Plan by allowing for the collection of feedback from transit providers responding to changes brought about by the plan? For example, transit providers could have suggested alterations to routes to support more efficiency.
- One MPO member noted the following: This group should not be a venue that duplicates outreach that the MBTA can do on its own. #
 - One participant suggested the following: The TWG mailing list could let people know about MBTA outreach events.
- An MPO member asked the following: How can the TWG serve functions that are not being served by the MBTA right now, in terms of helping services make connections? #
- An MPO member asked the following: How do municipalities have a stronger voice when engaging with the MBTA about the need for specific transit services, including those that have been suspended during the pandemic? Is the MBTA Advisory Board or the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) a better venue for these discussions? #

Other Coordination Partners

- An MPO member noted that there has been a renaissance in the MBTA advisory board in the past year and a half. This group represents 170 municipalities and captures a lot of mobility patterns. People should support their work and advocacy. #

TWG Participants

- Some participants suggested reaching out to MetroWest Regional Transit Authority and the Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) to see how to make this group more useful to them so that they participate. *
- One participant noted that there needs to be more RTA participation in general because RTAs need additional support and could benefit from coordination efforts.

Topics of Interest and Future Opportunities

- Several participants suggested that this group can be an opportunity to elevate the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan and its purpose. *#
 - Transit providers are encouraged to coordinate their services when applying for funding, but there does not seem to be a good mechanism to make sure that happens.
 - The TWG could reflect on the work of the Community, Social Service, and Paratransit Transportation Commission (Executive Order 530 from the Patrick Administration), see what updates there have been since the commission was formed, and assess where further progress could be made.
 - There are opportunities to make the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan more of a living document if the group talks more regularly about those recommendations/goals and brainstorms about how they may be addressed, particularly when organizations apply for grants.
- A participant asked the following: What is the best way to provide information and resources to passengers? They noted that regional bodies can help coordinate this information for local and private operators.
 - How can the group let people know not only how services connect, but what services riders can access?
 - How can the group improve General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) feeds as part of this process? Improved GTFS feeds can be part of communicating changes to schedules. *
- A participant asked the following: Could this group be an opportunity to dig deeper into the planning of transit and routes?
- One participant suggested that TWG members could present on topics that their agencies and organizations are doing in the transit space.
- One participant said that it would be great to do more active problem solving at TWG meetings.
- A participant asked the following: How can transit providers secure translation services at a regional level? Could they partner with the MBTA and/or the RTAs?
- A participant asked the following: Could the group connect with a representative from TransitApp about representing all the transit services in the region in that application?

- One participant noted that it would be interesting to have Jarrett Walker (Human Transit blog) as a speaker at a future TWG event.

Interactions with the MPO and MPO Staff

- The TWG is a good educational tool and a good way to get input from communities and transit providers.
- Connections to the MPO's core services is where this group can provide a lot of value, both to the members and the MPO board.
 - How can this group be a source of potential Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) studies?
- One MPO member noted that the MPO wants to continue to strengthen the transparency, accountability, and collaboration of the MPO board, so information about how transit providers are interacting with the MPO is valuable. #
- One participant said that the best understanding that they have gained about the MPO is from reading documents and talking to staff. They did not recall much discussion about how the MPO operates at the TWG events. They also get a lot of information about the MPO from emails and social media.

Other Comments

- Several participants noted that time constraints during the COVID-19 pandemic have inhibited participation for some people. *
- One person said that participants are interested in seeing the TWG continue to grow, and that it would be good to see the TWG develop as a voice for the range of transit operators in the region.
- A participant said it would be helpful to understand more how the Regional Transportation Advisory Council relates to this TWG and to providing input on regional transportation.
- A participant said that it is good to have this group and that a refresh can be helpful. The work is necessary for the MPO and MPO staff and for transit coordination.
- A participant suggested the following topic: How much more money might come to the Boston Urbanized Area if more services reported their ridership and data to the Federal Transit Administration?

APPENDIX 5: FEEDBACK THEMES FROM TRANSIT WORKING GROUP POST-EVENT SURVEYS (JULY 2020 TO NOVEMBER 2021)

This Appendix summarizes feedback through post-event surveys for Transit Working Group (TWG) events held between July 2020 and November 2021. Feedback has been summarized by event type and topic area. Comments made by multiple participants are indicated with an asterisk (*).

Feedback from General TWG Meetings

Three people completed four post-event surveys following general TWG meetings.

Supportive Feedback

- Appreciated learning about changes to Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) ridership and service reduction scenarios as part of the Forging Ahead plan
- Appreciated discussion of transit models used in other states, including their history

Suggestions for Improvement

- Support more direct problem-solving discussions about how to improve transit coordination in the region, with action-oriented activities
- Develop a map with all the transit services in the region to support more visioning and coordination
- Discuss possibilities for sharing payment systems, apps, and opening more services to the public (if they are not open to them already)
- Allow attendees to direct chat other participants using Zoom

Future Topics for Discussion

- Equity and social justice in transportation
 - This topic could include social justice issues affecting transit drivers, employees, and contractors, as well as those related to paratransit
- Presentations focused on transit services outside of the Boston region
- Spending on school bus services and whether financial resources could be reallocated to services that transport both students and other riders

Feedback from Coffee Chats

Fourteen people completed 17 post-event surveys following TWG coffee chat sessions.

Supportive Feedback

- Appreciated opportunities for open discussion that are possible in a small group *
- Appreciated diversity of participants in individual sessions *
- Liked hearing from people outside of their immediate region *
- Appreciated diversity of issues raised during the discussions *
- Appreciated participants' willingness to discuss experiences, challenges they are facing, questions, and ideas for solutions *
- Liked the meeting facilitation style
- Liked the focused attendance for individual sessions
- Appreciated having participants who work on similar issues as a sounding board
- Liked learning about new resources
- Liked learning about other forms of community transit

Suggestions for Improvement

- Send out discussion questions ahead of time so that people can consider them before the meeting. *
- Find ways of make space for other attendees to participate if they have not spoken. *
- Explore whether to add more people to individual sessions to allow for an even more diverse set of participants.
- Consider organizing sessions geographically at first, because organizations working in different parts of the region experience different challenges.
- Explore small group discussions for riders with similar systems.
- Share participant contact information so that people can connect outside of the meeting.
- Raise awareness of the sessions so that more people know to participate.
- Make the coffee chats problem-and-solution oriented.
- Consider sharing background information about the discussion topic at the beginning of the chat so that people less familiar with the topic can better participate.

Future Topics for Discussion

- Grant programs and funding opportunities *
- Continued discussions of microtransit and demand-response services *
- Fare integration *
- Service consolidation
- Regional transit authorities
- Follow-on sessions for previously discussed topics
- Highlights about model transportation programs
- Youth use of transit, including for school trips
- Chats focused on specific transportation corridors (which affect multiple municipalities)
- Providing transportation outside the core of the region
- Closing technology literacy gaps for transit
- New technologies in the transit space
- Public-private partnerships
- Improving alignment of routes, schedules, and service plans across providers
- Transportation demand management best practices and new technologies
- Strengthening medical and human service transportation networks
- Improving marketing and communications
- Improving wayfinding, navigation, and amenities at key stations and facilities