

FACT SHEET: PROPOSED BOSTON REGION MPO TRANSIT COMMITTEE

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is exploring whether to create a transit committee, which could (1) support coordination among different types of transit providers in the Boston region, and/or (2) enhance the representation of transit interests in MPO activities.

Background

The Boston Region MPO began exploring ways to expand transit provider involvement and representation on the MPO board in response to a recommendation from the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. This recommendation focuses on increasing representation for the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) and the Cape Ann Transportation Authority (CATA) on the MPO board; however, discussions among the MPO board members about this recommendation inspired conversations about how to increase transit provider involvement in MPO activities in general.

One option to address this recommendation would be for the MPO board to create a standing MPO transit committee, where various transit providers in the region could discuss the board's decisions, MPO activities, and other topics of interest. The board considered a proposal for a committee at its April 11, 2019, meeting (see materials at <https://www.bostonmpo.org/calendar/day/2019-04-11>), and is now seeking feedback from the region's transit providers on whether they would be interested in participating on a committee.

Proposed Transit Committee Features

Mission

Under the current proposal, the purpose of this transit committee would be to

- represent public transportation providers serving the Boston region;
- advise the MPO board on matters pertaining to public transit to inform transportation planning and decision making; and
- provide a forum for the region's public transportation providers to discuss topics of mutual interest and concern.

Given this mission, the committee could discuss MPO activities, planned or proposed programming of transportation funds, or ways for transit providers to coordinate with one another.

Members

The current proposal for the committee provides for two types of member seats:

- **Designated seats:** Some seats would be reserved for agencies that would participate consistently in the committee over time. These agencies would include MWRTA, CATA, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Rail and Transit Division.
- **Other seats:** Other seats would have fixed terms, and the organizations that hold them would likely change over time. Organizations that would hold these seats could include (1) other regional transit authorities that operate in the Boston region, (2) transportation management associations that provide transit service, or (3) municipalities that provide transit service (excluding council on aging services). A specific number of seats would be established for each type of organization.

The committee, which would be supported by MPO staff, would likely meet several times during a calendar year. Organizations that hold member seats would be able to vote on formal actions the committee might take. Committee meetings would be open to the public, so other interested parties, such as transportation advocates, could attend and participate in discussions.

Structure and Representation

Under the current proposal, either MWRTA or CATA would represent this transit committee on the MPO board, though the board may explore other approaches to represent the committee or include its input in the board's discussions. The committee chair would be responsible for developing meeting agendas and facilitating discussions. Members of the transit committee would not have voting privileges at the MPO's Regional Transportation Advisory Council, although they would be able to attend and participate in meetings of both groups.

How to Be Involved

The MPO board would appreciate your feedback about the proposed transit committee. Opportunities to provide feedback include the following:

- The MPO plans to hold a public meeting to discuss this committee in the evening on June 4, 2019, at the State Transportation Building in Boston (more details to come).
- MPO staff also will be contacting transit providers to collect feedback prior to this event.

If you would like more information or to share your thoughts about the proposed transit committee, please contact a member of the MPO staff:

- Michelle Scott (857.702.3692, mscott@ctps.org)
- Sandy Johnston (857.702.3710, sjohnston@ctps.org)

General information about the Boston Region MPO is available at www.bostonmpo.org.