

# Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Unified Planning Work Program Committee Meeting Summary

## October 26, 2023, Meeting

1:00 PM–2:00 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Derek Krevat, Chair, representing Monica Tibbits-Nutt, Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

## Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee agreed to the following:

- Approval of August 16, 2023, meeting summary
- Vote to recommend endorsement of Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 UPWP Adjustment One

## Materials

Materials for this meeting included the following:

1. FFY 2024 UPWP Adjustment One Memo
2. August 16, 2023, Meeting Summary

## Meeting Agenda and Summary of Discussion

### 1. Introductions

See page 5 for attendance.

### 2. Public Comments

There were none.

### 3. Summary of August 16, 2023, meeting—*Approval of this summary*

A motion to approve the summary of the meeting of August 16, 2023, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (Amira Patterson). The motion carried.

#### **4. Action Item—Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 UPWP Adjustment One—*Srilekha Murthy, MPO Staff***

Adjustment One to the FFY 2024 UPWP adds a Federal Transit Administration (FTA)-grant funded MBTA project to design battery electric bus charging infrastructure at Ashmont Station. This project is funded through the FTA's Areas of Persistent Poverty Grant, and is included in Appendix A of the UPWP.

S. Murthy noted that because this project is not funded by the MPO it is therefore considered an administrative modification to the UPWP and does not require a 21-day public comment period.

##### ***Discussion***

D. Krevat asked if this was a planning or design grant. Ali Kleyman (MBTA) responded that it is for design and needs to be programmed onto the UPWP, but it will also likely need to be programmed onto the TIP.

E. Bourassa asked if the MBTA maintains a list of discretionary grants they have been awarded. A. Kleyman confirmed that they do, that such a list is presented to the MBTA Board of Directors monthly, and that she would be able to share it.

Steve Olanoff (Town of Westwood) asked whether other MBTA stations with bus activity could have on-road charging facilities as well. A. Kleyman responded that this project is piloting design and implementation of such facilities, so ideally in the future more stations could take advantage of such infrastructure.

##### ***Vote***

A motion to approve the adjustment was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Three Rivers Interlocal Council (S. Olanoff). The motion carried.

#### **5. Agenda Item—Presentation on Transportation Equity Program—*Betsy Harvey, MPO Staff***

B. Harvey opened her presentation with an overview of the framework and guiding principles for the Transportation Equity Program. The MPO's new Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), *Destination 2050*, has an updated equity goal, which is to "facilitate an inclusive and transparent transportation planning process and make investments that eliminate transportation-related disparities borne by people in disadvantaged communities." There are three main areas of work within the program: Civil Rights and Title VI, Analysis and MPO Support, and Public Engagement. Some work planned for the coming year includes updating the Language Assistance Plan,

mitigating disparate impacts and disproportionate burdens caused by projects funded in the LRTP, and developing an Equity Baseline Metrics Dashboard.

## **6. Agenda Item—Presentation on Public Engagement Program—*Stella Jordan, MPO Staff***

S. Jordan provided an overview of the Public Engagement Program, which outlines the MPO's strategy to engage the public in the transportation planning process and guides public-facing MPO activities and communications. The Public Engagement Program is responsible for developing the Public Engagement Plan (PEP) and supports the Regional Transportation Advisory Council. The program operates under the principles of transparency, inclusion and equity, early and continuous public involvement opportunities, relationship building, and continuous evaluation and improvement.

In FFY 2024, the Public Engagement Program anticipates an update to the PEP, expanding the membership of the Advisory Council, improving equitable engagement processes, and continued support of MPO activities and plan development.

S. Jordan then asked members for feedback on areas of interest between the two programs presented, elements of work they would like to hear more about, and activities of interest.

D. Krevat asked how the MPO would translate equity flag areas into project evaluation.

B. Harvey responded that she hopes the equity dashboard would be used to initiate projects in areas with higher inequities. It could also be used in TIP project scoring.

Lenard Diggins asked how staff are gauging success or improvement in engaging with people with limited English proficiency (LEP). S. Jordan stated that the update to the Language Assistance Plan will provide more comprehensive documentation about the region's LEP communities, which can in turn allow MPO staff to tailor engagement and outreach strategies accordingly. The engagement program is still working to quantify how success should be measured, but emphasis is placed on meaningful conversations and relationship building. Additionally, the Public Engagement Program presents a yearly summary memo to the MPO board, which provides one way to track who staff are engaging with. B. Harvey added that the Equity Program tracks translation statistics for people who translate the website, surveys, or MPO documents, which serves as an indication for some of the people the MPO reaches.

David Koses (City of Newton) asked how outreach conducted by the MBTA on projects such as the Bus Network Redesign fits into the MPO's work to support its equity communities. B. Harvey responded that the MPO is aware of the outreach work the

MBTA is doing to support their transit planning work. As developments are made to the transit network, they will be reflected in the equity analysis the MPO conducts.

S. Jordan stated that working closely with partner agencies on outreach work is an area the MPO is looking to improve in the future, but currently the Public Engagement Program is focused on developing relationships and engaging people directly on their experiences with the transit system.

Tom Bent (Inner Core Committee/City of Somerville) asked S. Jordan about her experience attending in person public events across the subregion. He encouraged her to keep MPO board members updated on the events she attends, and he encouraged members to also share their events so staff can attend. S. Jordan responded saying that her experience at the in person events has been a positive and fun way to engage the public on the MPO's work in creative ways, such as through a street design game or visioning boards. The in person engagement has been productive in publicizing the work of the MPO and kicking off the development of the next Long-Range Transportation Plan's Needs Assessment as well.

Jen Rowe (City of Boston) asked staff to share any updates they may have on compensating people for their participation in engagement activities. S. Jordan responded that staff were able to provide gift card incentives to members of the public who participated in engagement activities for an intersection improvement study in Lynn, which was an overwhelming success. Staff are actively working with federal partners to identify the best methods of providing meaningful incentives to encourage authentic participation in engagement work.

## **7. Next Meeting**

To be announced.

## **8. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (A. Patterson). The motion carried.

## Attendance

---

<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Office of Transportation Planning)	Derek Krevat
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Jen Rowe
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tom O'Rourke
Three Rivers Interlocal Council alternate (Town of Westwood)	Steve Olanoff
City of Framingham (Metrowest Regional Collaborative)	

---

---

### **MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

---

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

---

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) operates its programs, services, and activities in compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations. Title VI prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs and requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency), be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that receives federal assistance. Related federal nondiscrimination laws administered by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, or both, prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, sex, and disability. The Boston Region MPO considers these protected populations in its Title VI Programs, consistent with federal interpretation and administration. In addition, the Boston Region MPO provides meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to individuals with limited English proficiency, in compliance with U.S. Department of Transportation policy and guidance on federal Executive Order 13166.

The Boston Region MPO also complies with the Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law, M.G.L. c 272 sections 92a, 98, 98a, which prohibits making any distinction, discrimination, or restriction in admission to, or treatment in a place of public accommodation based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or ancestry. Likewise, the Boston Region MPO complies with the Governor's Executive Order 526, section 4, which requires that all programs, activities, and services provided, performed, licensed, chartered, funded, regulated, or contracted for by the state shall be conducted without unlawful discrimination based on race, color, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, disability, veteran's status (including Vietnam-era veterans), or background.

A complaint form and additional information can be obtained by contacting the MPO or at [http://www.bostonmpo.org/mpo\\_non\\_discrimination](http://www.bostonmpo.org/mpo_non_discrimination). To request this information in a different language or in an accessible format, please contact

**Title VI Specialist**

Boston Region MPO  
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150  
Boston, MA 02116  
[civilrights@ctps.org](mailto:civilrights@ctps.org)

**By Telephone:**

857.702.3700 (voice)

For people with hearing or speaking difficulties, connect through the state MassRelay service:

- **Relay Using TTY or Hearing Carry-over:** 800.439.2370
- **Relay Using Voice Carry-over:** 866.887.6619
- **Relay Using Text to Speech:** 866.645.9870

For more information, including numbers for Spanish speakers, visit <https://www.mass.gov/massrelay>