

MPO Meeting Minutes

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting

February 15, 2024, Meeting

10:00 AM–12:45 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Steve Woelfel, 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 (MPO) agreed to the following:

- Approve the minutes of the meeting of December 21, 2023
- Approve the work scope for Exploration of Bluebikes Transit Connections
- Approve the work scope for Lab and Municipal Parking Phase II
- Approve the work scope for the 2024 MBTA Count Program
- Approve the 2024 Transit Safety Performance Targets
- Endorse the Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2024–28 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Four

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

See attendance on page 15.

2. Chair’s Report—*Steve Woelfel, MassDOT*

There was none.

3. Executive Director’s Report—*Tegin Teich, Executive Director, Central Transportation Planning Staff*

T. Teich stated that the first meeting of the Vision Zero Task Force was held on February 13, 2024. This group will guide the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan, funded by the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant.

4. Public Comments

Robert Dolan, Town of Lynnfield, advocated for continued programming of the Wakefield Rail Trail.

Patrice Garvin and Glenn Clancy, Town of Belmont, advocated for continued programming of the Belmont Community Path.

Brad Rawson, Inner Core Committee and the City of Somerville, discussed the Vision Zero Task Force and provided project updates on the McGrath Boulevard project.

JR Frey, Town of Hingham, discussed the Vision Zero Task Force and stated that the Hingham Route 3A Improvement Project has submitted a 75 percent design.

5. Committee Chairs' Reports

Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee and the City of Somerville, stated that the Memorandum of Understanding Update Committee met to discuss regional transportation authority representation and review staff-led document updates.

Jen Rowe, City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department), stated that the TIP Process, Engagement, and Readiness Committee will meet following this meeting to further discuss readiness updates shared in this meeting.

6. Regional Transportation Advisory Council Report—*Lenard Diggins, Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council*

L. Diggins stated that the previous meeting discussed the Learning from Roadway Pricing study and TIP development.

7. Action Item: Approval of December 21, 2023, MPO Meeting Minutes Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. December 21, 2023, meeting minutes [\(pdf\)](#) [\(html\)](#)

Vote

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 21, 2023, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the Town of Arlington (John Alessi). The motion carried.

8. Action Item: Work Scope for Exploration of Bluebikes Transit Connections—*Tanner Bonner, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Work Scope for Exploration of Bluebikes Transit Connections [\(pdf\)](#) [\(html\)](#)

T. Bonner stated that this project is funded with MassDOT-Directed PL funds for \$65,401 and is expected to take seven months to complete. The objective of this project is to leverage available trip and survey data to identify existing Bluebike trip flows to transit and identify potential future locations of Bluebikes stations to improve transit

connections, particularly in Environmental Justice communities. The project has four tasks: conduct a literature review, synthesize available Bluebikes data, conduct accessibility analyses, and communicate and document findings to stakeholders. The final work product will be a memorandum summarizing work efforts.

Discussion

L. Diggins expressed interest in the findings of this study.

J. Alessi requested that any data that might be useful to municipalities be shared.

Seth Gadbois, Conservation Law Foundation, asked what assumptions will be made about the state of bike infrastructure in the analysis. T. Bonner stated that the bicycle level of traffic stress will be included in the analysis.

J. Rowe discussed bicycle level of traffic stress developed by the City of Boston.

David Koses, City of Newton, discussed opportunities to integrate the Bluebikes and MBTA fare systems.

Derek Shooster, MassDOT, stated that findings from the study could be beneficial for projects in design that are programmed in the TIP.

Vote

A motion to approve the work scope for Exploration of Bluebikes Transit Connections was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by the MBTA (L. Gilmore). The motion carried.

9. Action Item: Work Scope for Lab and Municipal Parking Phase II— *Sophie Fox, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Work Scope for Lab and Municipal Parking Phase II ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

S. Fox stated that this study is budgeted for \$45,000 and is scheduled to take seven months after work commences. Objectives of the study are to use materials drafted in Phase I to measure the actual parking supply and utilization at lab and life sciences facilities and to synthesize the results of the analysis into recommendations to support a variety of stakeholders. Work is divided into four tasks: pilot data collection at lab facilities, expand data collection activities, analyze data, and synthesize this information into a technical memorandum, to be presented to the board.

Vote

A motion to approve the work scope for Lab and Municipal Parking Phase II was made by the Inner Core Committee (T. Bent) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (Brian Kane). The motion carried.

10.Action Item: Work Scope for FFY 2024 MBTA Count Program—Rose McCarron, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Work Scope for FFY 2024 MBTA Count Program ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

R. McCarron stated that this work scope is supported by MassDOT-directed PL funds, is budgeted for \$40,000, and will take seven months to complete. Manual counts will be taken at key MBTA locations where data is insufficient or not automated. Staff will conduct passenger counts on the Green Line and Commuter Rail. Staff will provide data to the MBTA.

Vote

A motion to approve the work scope for FFY 2024 MBTA Count Program was made by the City of Boston (J. Rowe) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

11.Action Item: Transit Safety Performance Targets—Sam Taylor, MPO Staff

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. Transit Safety Performance Targets Memo ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))
2. Transit Safety Performance Targets Appendix ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

S. Taylor stated that performance metrics for transit safety fall under four categories: fatalities, injuries, safety events, and system reliability. Measures in fatalities include the number of fatalities and the fatality rate per vehicle-revenue mile (VRM); injuries are the number of injuries and the injury rate per VRM; safety events are the number of safety events and safety event rate per VRM; and system reliability is measured in VRM per major mechanical failure.

MBTA calendar year 2024 safety targets are shown in Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4. The Cape Ann Transportation Authority and MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) safety targets are in Tables 5 and 6, respectively.

Table 1
MBTA 2024 Bus Safety Targets

Metric and Calendar Year	Actual Performance		
	2020–22	2023 Target	2024 Target
Fatalities	0.67	0.0	0.0
Fatality Rate (per one million VRM)	0.03	0.0	0.0
Injuries	257	286	252
Injury Rate (per one million VRM)	11.53	12.23	11.3
Safety Events	89	98	88
Safety Event Rate (per one million VRM)	4.01	4.21	3.93
System Reliability	27,358	29,500	28,500

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. VRM = Vehicle-revenue mile.

Table 2
MBTA 2024 Heavy Rail Safety Targets

Metric and Calendar Year	Actual Performance		
	2020–22	2023 Target	2024 Target
Fatalities	0.33	0.0	0.0
Fatality Rate (per one million VRM)	0.02	0.0	0.0
Injuries	173	180	170
Injury Rate (per one million VRM)	8.3	7.99	8.13
Safety Events	23	24	23
Safety Event Rate (per one million VRM)	1.13	1.07	1.11
System Reliability	46,335	44,500	49,000

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. VRM = Vehicle-revenue mile.

Table 3
MBTA 2024 Light Rail Safety Targets

Metric and Calendar Year	Actual Performance		
	2020–22	2023 Target	2024 Target
Fatalities	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fatality Rate (per one million VRM)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Injuries	180	79	79
Injury Rate (per one million VRM)	14.33	14.35	14.04
Safety Events	27	27	27
Safety Event Rate (per one million VRM)	4.83	4.94	4.74
System Reliability	7,680	7,650	7,900

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. VRM = Vehicle-revenue mile.

Table 4
MBTA 2024 Paratransit Safety Targets

Metric and Calendar Year	Actual Performance		
	2020–22	2023 Target	2024 Target
Fatalities	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fatality Rate (per one million VRM)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Injuries	24	27	23
Injury Rate (per one million VRM)	2.58	2.27	2.53
Safety Events	30	20	29
Safety Event Rate (per one million VRM)	3.35	1.74	3.28
System Reliability	N/A	62,500	25,900

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. VRM = Vehicle-revenue mile.

**Table 5
 Cape Ann Transportation Authority 2024 Safety Targets**

Metric and Calendar Year	Fixed Route Actual Performance 2019–		Demand Response	
	23	Fixed Route 2024 Target	Actual Performance 2019–23	Demand Response 2024 Target
Fatalities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fatality Rate (per 100,000 VRM)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Injuries	0.2	1.0	0.2	1.0
Injury Rate (per 100,000 VRM)	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.5
Safety Events	2.4	2.5	1.2	1.5
Safety Event Rate (100,000 VRM)	0.2	1.5	0.8	1.0
System Reliability	119,622	115,000	154,352	135,000

VRM = Vehicle-revenue mile.

**Table 6
 MetroWest Regional Transit Authority 2024 Safety Targets**

Metric and Calendar Year	Fixed Route Actual Performance 2019–		Demand Response	
	23	Fixed Route 2024 Target	Actual Performance 2019–23	Demand Response 2024 Target
Fatalities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Fatality Rate (per 100,000 VRM)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Injuries	0.8	10	1.0	8
Injury Rate (per 100,000 VRM)	0.1	0.8	0.1	1
Safety Events	1.2	10	1.6	8
Safety Event Rate (per 100,000 VRM)	0.1	0.8	0.2	1.0
System Reliability	149,558	75,000	79,358	75,000

VRM = Vehicle-revenue mile.

S. Taylor stated that the next steps, once safety targets are supported, are to incorporate them into the FFYs 2025–29 TIP and provide information about how planned investments impact safety performance measures.

Discussion

Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council, asked for clarification on what is considered a safety event. S. Taylor stated that safety events can include events where a fatality or injury takes place and refers to the event itself, such as crashes, derailments, or events at transit stations.

J. Rowe asked the MBTA for elaboration on how performance targets were set. Mike Catsos, MBTA, stated that performance targets are established with a methodology from the National Public Transportation Safety Plan and the three year rolling average can conceal month-to-month trends of particularly strong or weak performance, leading to some fluctuations in the annual targets.

J. Rowe asked the MWRTA for elaboration on how performance targets were set. Jim Nee, MWRTA, stated that performance targets have gotten more aggressive annually.

L. Diggins asked why safety, injury, and reliability metrics have more variability associated with them. M. Catsos stated that there are numerous factors that can impact the metrics, including location and vehicle age.

Vote

A motion to approve the transit safety performance targets was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the MAPC (E. Bourassa). The motion carried.

12. Action Item: FFYs 2024-28 TIP Amendment Four—*Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff*

Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. FFYs 2024–28 TIP Amendment Four ([pdf](#))

E. Lapointe stated that the FFYs 2024–28 TIP Four proposes

- cost increases to one Regional Target and two Statewide Highway projects;
- acceleration of paving on Route 2 in Acton, Littleton, and Boxborough;
- cost revisions to the Interstate-90/I-495 project in Hopkinton and Westborough;
- funding adjustments to two MWRTA projects;
- carbon reduction funding for Quincy Bus Garage; and
- programming of FFY 2024 Community Transit Grants for operations.

E. Lapointe stated that one comment was received during the comment period from the I-495/MetroWest Partnership expressing support for changes to projects 609054: Littleton- Reconstruction of Foster Street, 605313: Natick- Bridge Replacement Route 27 over Route 9, and 610722: Acton-Boxborough-Littleton- Pavement Preservation on Route 2.

Vote

A motion to endorse the FFYs 2024–28 TIP Amendment Four was made by the Town of Brookline (Erin Chute) and seconded by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane). The motion carried.

13. Updates on the Use of Conveyal in Disparate Impact and Disproportionate Burden (DI/DB) Mitigation and TIP Project Scoring—*Betsy Harvey and Srilekha Murthy, MPO Staff*

B. Harvey stated that six disparate impacts and disproportionate burdens would likely result from the Long-Range Transportation Plan, *Destination 2050*. It was decided that Conveyal would be used to assess if any TIP scenarios mitigate disparities related to destination access and travel time. B. Harvey stated that Conveyal uses a multimodal network, builds detailed transportation scenarios and compares impacts, conducts regional or single-point analyses, and assesses impacts of different demographic groups.

S. Murthy stated that work has been coordinated with the Disparate Impact Mitigation work when selecting projects to study and add to Conveyal and when setting analysis parameters. Next steps are to run Conveyal with TIP scenarios and develop scoring recommendations. Projects added to Conveyal fall under seven categories: fixed route transit, microtransit, Complete Streets, off-street paths, bridge reconstruction, Intersection Improvements, and climate resilience improvements. Parameters needed to analyze destination access include travel mode, destinations, travel time cut offs, population data, and transportation projects.

B. Harvey reviewed findings related to Conveyal to date. Strengths include a fast run time, results by demographic group, and the use of small-scale and regional analyses. Limitations include not being able to measure everything important, only two levers are used to change access: speed and new connections, and there is difficulty in representing bikeshare and microtransit.

Discussion

J. Rowe asked how quickly a Conveyal run can be set up and if it can be used to compare different scenarios to one another. Tanner Bonner, MPO Staff, stated that a run can take between five and 20 minutes.

Jim Fitzgerald, City of Boston (Boston Planning and Development Agency) asked how Conveyal calculates transit travel time improvements. T. Bonner stated that segments of routes can be scaled by a factor, depending on the improvements.

14. TIP Readiness Days Update—Ethan Lapointe, MPO Staff
Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar

1. TIP Readiness Days Update ([pdf](#)) ([html](#))

E. Lapointe reviewed the purpose of TIP Readiness Days and stated that the updates lay out and account for changes on current projects before considering new projects to fund in FFYs 2025–29. The draft financial outlook for the FFYs 2025–29 TIP are in Table 7.

Table 7
Draft Financial Outlook FFYs 2025–29 TIP

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Total available					
Regional Highway					
Target Funds	\$128,427,689	\$125,285,687	\$155,132,142	\$158,052,175	\$161,030,608
Draft total					
programmed					
Regional Highway					
Target funds	\$55,813,413	\$90,610,293	\$235,817,183	\$184,091,988	\$109,840,000
Regional Highway					
Target Funds					
unprogrammed	\$72,614,276	\$34,675,394	-\$80,685,041	-\$26,039,813	\$51,190,608
Percent					
unprogrammed	56.5%	27.7%	-52.0%	-16.5%	31.8%

FFY = Federal Fiscal Year.

E. Lapointe stated that 11 projects saw cost changes of 10 percent, 12 projects are at risk for future delay, and 14 projects recommended for delay.

There are two updates to the FFY 2024 program: a cost increase of 11 percent for project 110980: Newton-Weston-Bridge Rehabilitation, Commonwealth Avenue (Route

30) over the Charles River, flagged for medium risk due to National Environmental Policy Act permitting and a cost decrease of four percent for project 610544: Peabody-Multi-Use Path Construction of Independence Greenway at I-95 and Route 1, flagged for medium risk of delay due to Chapter 91 Massachusetts Public Waterfront Action environmental permits.

Information about delayed projects, projects with high delay risk, moderate delay risk, and projects with cost changes higher than 10 percent can be found in Table 8, 9, 10, and 11, respectively.

**Table 8
 Delayed Projects**

Project Name	Current Year	New Year	Revised Budget
606453- Improvements on Boylston Street, from Intersection of Brookline Avenue and Park Drive to Ipswich Street	2025	2026	\$9,011,654
609532- Chelsea- Targeted Safety Improvements and Related Work on Broadway, from Williams Street to City Hall Avenue	2025	2026	\$9,807,515
605168- Hingham- Improvements on Route 3A from Otis Street/Cole Road Including Summer Street and Rotary; Rockland Street to George Washington Boulevard	2025	2026	\$33,754,352
609257- Everett- Reconstruction of Beacham Street	2025	2027	\$11,392,842
609252- Lynn- Rehabilitation of Essex Street	2025	2027	\$21,274,531
605168- Ashland- Rehabilitation and Rail Crossing Improvements on Cherry Street	2025	2028	\$1,316,340

609204- Belmont- Community Path, Belmont Component of the Massachusetts Central Rail Trail (Phase I)	2026	2027	\$22,139,730
612989- Boston- Bridge Preservation, B-16-066 (38D), Cambridge Street over MBTA	2026	2027	\$17,297,280
609437- Salem-Peabody- Boston Street Improvements	2026	2027	\$26,122,722
608954- Weston- Reconstruction on Route 30	2026	2027	\$20,740,442
610662- Woburn- Roadway and Intersection Improvements at Woburn Common, Route 38 (Main Street), Winn Street, Pleasant Street, and Montvale Avenue	2026	2027	\$18,077,904
605743- Ipswich- Resurfacing and Related Work on Central and South Main Streets	2026–27	2027–28	\$12,197,846
610932- Brookline- Rehabilitation of Washington Street	2027	2028	\$30,155,078
609246- Lynn- Rehabilitation of Western Avenue (Route 107)	2027–29	2028–30	\$45,897,600

MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

Table 9
Projects with High Delay Risk

Project Name	Year	Revised Budget
608051- Wilmington- Reconstruction on Route 38 (Main Street), from Route 62 to the Woburn City Line	2025	\$22,818,682
613088- Malden- Spot Pond Brook Greenway	2027	\$4,684,622
608158- Westwood-Norwood- Reconstruction of Canton Street to University Drive	2028	\$22,854,846
613145- Wakefield- Comprehensive Downtown Transportation Improvement Project	2028	\$18,435,976
606226- Boston- Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue from City Square to Sullivan Square	2027–32	\$197,759,449

Table 10
Projects with Moderate Delay Risk

Project Name	Year	Revised Budget
608067- Woburn- Intersection Reconstruction at Route 3 (Cambridge Road) and Bedford Road and South Bedford Street	2025	\$3,438,311
608940- Weston- Intersection Improvements at Boston Post Road (Route 20) at Wellesley Street	2026	\$3,362,335
611983- Chelsea- Park and Pearl Street Reconstruction	2027	\$11,705,708
613121- Everett- Targeted Multi-Modal and Safety Improvements on Route 16	2027	\$5,059,530
607981- Somerville- McGrath Boulevard Construction	2027–29	\$98,840,000
610666- Swampscott- Rail Trail Construction	2028	\$8,624,000

Table 11
Projects with Cost Changes Above 10 Percent

Project Name	Year	Current Budget	Revised Budget
610544- Peabody- Multi-Use Path Construction of Independence Greenway at I-95 and Route 1	2025	\$15,777,132	\$13,966,099
608045- Milford- Rehabilitation on Route 16, from Route 109 to Beaver Street	2026	\$9,758,201	\$13,548,565

Discussion

E. Bourassa stated that the amount of unprogrammed balance in FFY 2025 is among the greatest amount that the MPO has seen to date.

E. Chute asked how risk is established in the TIP Readiness Days. E. Lapointe stated that readiness is determined from input from MassDOT Highway districts, program managers, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program manager, environmental division, right-of-way division, and director’s office, resulting in an ultimate readiness conclusion.

Ken Miller, Federal Highway Administration, discussed strategies to address funding discrepancies in the FFYs 2025–29 TIP.

J. Fitzgerald discussed the structure of TIP Readiness Days and opportunities to integrate the perspectives of municipal project proponents.

B. Kane asked what the mechanism would be to move funding from one federal fiscal year to the other. B. Kane asked about the process to update the formula to distribute Regional Target funds.

15.Members’ Items

J. Rowe provided project updates on Rutherford Avenue.

16. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the MBTA Advisory Board (B. Kane) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Eric Molinari
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	John Alessi
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Erin Chute
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency)	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Jen Rowe
Federal Highway Administration	Ken Miller
Federal Transit Administration	
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
	Brad Rawson
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Steve Woelfel
	John Bechard
MassDOT Highway Division	John Romano
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	Laura Gilmore
Massachusetts Port Authority	
MBTA Advisory Board	Brian Kane
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Darlene Wynne
North Suburban Planning Council (Town of Burlington)	
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
South Shore Coalition (Town of Hull)	
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Wrentham)	
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood)	Tom O'Rourke
	Steve Olanoff

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Sarah Bradbury	MassDOT
Mike Catsos	MBTA
Glenn Clancy	
Julie Dombroski	MassDOT
Daniela Espinosa	BPDA
JR Frey	Town of Hingham
Seth Gadbois	Conservation Law Foundation
Patrice Garvin	Town of Belmont
Anil Gurcan	MassDOT
Amy Ingles	Town of Brookline
Kristina Johnson	Town of Hudson
Raissah Kouame	MassDOT
Derek Krevat	MassDOT
Barbara Lachance	MassDOT
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
Jeremy Marsette	
John McQueen	WalkMassachusetts
Benjamin Muller	MassDOT
Jim Nee	MWRTA
Sheila Page	Town of Lexington
Allison Patton	HEI
Austin Sanders	
Cheryll-Ann Senior	MassDOT
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
Anson Stewart	
Tyler Terrasi	MWRTA
John Tomasz	
Frank Tramontozzi	Quincy
Megan Willis-Jackson	MBTA

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Tanner Bonner

Abigail Cutrumbes

Judy Day

Annette Demchur

Sabiheh Faghieh

Sophie Fox

Betsy Harvey

Dave Hong

Jia Huang

Stella Jordan

Ali Kleyman

Ethan Lapointe

Erin Maguire

Rose McCarron

Srilekha Murthy

Gina Perille

Sarah Philbrick

Bradley Putnam

Sean Rourke

Roger Roy

Samuel Taylor

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