



## BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary and CEO and MPO Chair  
Karl H. Quackenbush, Executive Director, MPO Staff

### ***TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM***

**DATE: December 20, 2018**  
**TO: Boston Region MPO**  
**FROM: Sandy Johnston**  
**RE: Community Transportation Program Framework**

This memorandum presents the proposed structure of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Community Transportation (CT) Program. Section 1 traces the program's background from its origins in earlier MPO programs to its inclusion in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) in 2015 to background research that staff conducted to inform the development process for this new program. Section 2 discusses eligible types of grantees and projects, and Section 3 discusses program administration. This memorandum follows presentations made to the MPO on October 18, 2018, and December 6, 2018, and incorporates feedback from a survey sent to MPO members during the week of October 29, 2018.

#### **1 PROGRAM BACKGROUND**

The CT program that this memorandum defines originates in the MPO's 2015 LRTP, *Charting Progress to 2040*, where it was known as the Community Transportation/Parking/Clean Air and Mobility Program. It is one of four operations and maintenance-focused MPO investment programs developed to strengthen the link between spending and improvements to transportation performance.

Over the last several years, staff and the MPO have sought to define the program to fulfill the LRTP's mandate to make funding available to the region. In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2018, the MPO funded, through the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), a study known as Community Transportation Program Development to complete the definition of this program and lay the groundwork for future funding rounds. This is the second memorandum produced as a result of that study; a technical memorandum titled Community Transportation Program Development Review summarizing background research, including a literature review and a survey of other MPOs with similar programs, was presented to the MPO at the October 18, 2018, meeting.

## 1.1 Previous MPO Programs

The CT Program presented in this document is an evolution of previous MPO programs and incorporates their lessons. The MPO maintained the Suburban Mobility Program from 2004 to 2009, and the Clean Air and Mobility Program from 2009 to 2011. More information on these programs can be found in the Community Transportation Program Development Review memorandum.

## 1.2 Inclusion in *Charting Progress to 2040*

In light of lessons from the previous programs, specifically problems with financial sustainability once MPO funding ceased, the MPO included a new Community Transportation/Parking/Clean Air and Mobility Program in the LRTP endorsed in 2015, *Charting Progress to 2040*. *Charting Progress* defined three project categories, as explained below.

### *Project Categories in Charting Progress to 2040*

*Charting Progress to 2040* defines three types of projects eligible for funding in the CT program:

- **Community Transportation**—Provides funding to launch locally developed transit services that support first-mile/last-mile connections to existing transit services and other destinations by purchasing shuttle buses and/or funding operating costs.
- **Park-and-Ride Infrastructure**—Targets funding to construct additional parking at transit stations that are at capacity, or at other viable locations.
- **Clean Air and Mobility**—Funds projects that improve mobility and air quality and promote mode shift. Examples include bike-share projects or shuttle-bus services.

### *Program Funding*

Through *Charting Progress to 2040*, the MPO adopted an overall funding strategy known as Operations and Management (O&M), whereby a larger proportion of the MPO's target funding would be spent on smaller O&M-type projects rather than major infrastructure. As part of the O&M strategy, *Charting Progress to 2040* provided for the Community Transportation/Parking/Clean Air and Mobility Program to be funded at a level of 4 percent of overall available funds. Funding for the CT investment program is set to begin in FFY 2021. In the current FFYs 2019–23 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), \$2 million is dedicated for FFY 2021 and \$2 million is dedicated for FFY 2023. There is currently no funding for the CT program in FFY 2020 because of adjustments to the TIP during the FFY 2018 programming process. It is possible that funding for this program could be restored in future TIP cycles.

### 1.3 Literature Review and Survey

Staff conducted research on background topics as part of the Community Transportation Program Development study. Research included the following topics:

- A review of existing CT-type operations in the Boston region
- A literature review of best practices and lessons learned for such programs
- A survey of staff at other MPOs that host similar or parallel programs

Results of this research may be found in the Community Transportation Program Development Review memorandum, and were used extensively in the development of the program structure described in this memorandum.

### 1.4 Key Questions

Taking into consideration the MPO's priorities and conducting extensive background research on previous MPO programs, existing CT-type operations around the Boston region, and similar programs at other MPOs, staff generated a set of key questions to frame the development of the Community Transportation Program:

- What value can the MPO program add?
- What gaps can the program fill?
- How can this program facilitate coordination?
- How can the MPO ensure its money is well spent on fiscally sustainable projects?

These key questions guided staff through the development of the draft program structure.

## 2 PROPOSED ELIGIBLE PROJECT PROPONENTS AND TYPES

### 2.1 Proposed Eligible Project Proponents

Drawing on experience from around the region and the country, staff propose that the following types of entities be eligible for grants under the CT program:

- Municipalities
- Regional Transit Authorities (RTA)

- Transportation Management Associations (TMA)
- Other public agencies
- Public-private partnerships involving a public-sector partner and either
  - Community organizations or social service agencies
  - Local businesses or business groups
- Partnerships involving a public sector entity between any combination of these types of entities

Federal funding requirements mean that a public-sector partner must be involved with all grants. A possibility explicitly raised in Federal Highway Administration Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) guidance is that CMAQ funds may be used to establish a new TMA. Although many parts of the Boston region are already covered by a TMA, others are not; MPO funds have helped to establish at least one TMA—CrossTown Connect, in the northwestern part of the MPO region.

## 2.2 Proposed Eligible Project Types

In developing the proposed types of projects to be eligible for funding under the CT Program, staff drew on several sources, keeping in mind the MPO's emphasis on using this program to help solve first- and last-mile solutions. First, staff analyzed the requirements attached to CMAQ funding. These rules apply because the CT program is currently programmed in the TIP to be funded with CMAQ funds. However, the MPO could choose to fund the CT program with different funds in the future. Second, staff examined the research conducted on other MPOs' experiences to learn the types of projects funded by parallel programs in other regions. Finally, staff reviewed comments received during LRTP Needs Assessment outreach activities conducted in Fall 2017 to identify needs in the Boston region.

Federal CMAQ guidance lays out certain requirements for the types of projects that are eligible for funding.<sup>1</sup> When used for capital investment, CMAQ funds “may be used to establish new or expanded transportation projects or programs that reduce emissions, including capital investments in transportation infrastructure, congestion relief efforts, vehicle acquisitions, diesel engine retrofits, or other capital projects.” Guidance around use of CMAQ funding for operating costs is somewhat complex but revolve around the idea of helping to “start up viable new transportation services that can demonstrate air quality benefits and eventually cover costs as much as possible.” Initially, CMAQ funds

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<sup>1</sup> See [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/Environment/air\\_quality/cmaq/policy\\_and\\_guidance/2013\\_guidance/index.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/Environment/air_quality/cmaq/policy_and_guidance/2013_guidance/index.cfm)

could be spent over three years of operational costs, with the federal share declining each year; newer guidance allows stretching three years of funding (with the absolute amount unchanged) over five years, should the awarding agency so choose. CMAQ can also fund projects that fall under the umbrella of travel demand management strategies. Notably, and in line with the MPO's goals for the CT program, CMAQ funding may not be used for projects that add capacity on the transportation network for single-occupancy vehicles (SOV).

Research on other MPOs has been summarized in the Community Transportation Program Development Review memorandum. The surveyed MPOs reported funding some or all of the following types of projects:

- Transit priority infrastructure or systems
- Transit vehicle purchases
- Systems and technology upgrades
- Retrofitting and rehabilitation activities
- Access to transit (for example, safe routes to transit)
- Bicycles on transit
- Improvements to parking and park-and-ride facilities
- Educational programs
- Travel training/assistance
- Marketing initiatives
- Bicycle education and outreach programs
- Temporary or pilot infrastructure improvements
- Transit-related capital expenses

Potentially eligible project concepts generated from the MPO's Needs Assessment outreach for *Destination 2040* and from previous UPWP-funded studies and technical assistance projects are included in the Draft Universe of Community Transportation Projects, accompanying this memo. Drawing on these materials, and on the three project categories presented for the CT program in *Charting Progress to 2040*, staff propose that projects eligible for the CT program be divided into the following four project types.

### ***Transit Operations and Improvements***

This project type funds projects that close gaps in the transit network, including first- and last-mile solutions and needs not covered by existing fixed route transit or paratransit services. Eligible projects include, but are not conclusively limited to the following projects:

- Shuttle operations

- Partnerships with Transportation Network Companies (TNCs)—companies such as Uber and Lyft
- Transit enhancements
  - Constructing physical transit priority measures such as dedicated lanes or queue jumps
  - Installing or upgrading signals incorporating transit signal priority (TSP) technology
  - Improving bus stops
- Coordinating service or small capital (for example, bus shelter) improvements with existing or future fixed-route service<sup>2</sup>
- Technology updates (such as to dispatching or vehicle tracking software)

### *Parking Management*

Staff recommend expanding the park-and-ride infrastructure category defined in *Charting Progress to 2040* to include the adoption of innovative parking management strategies such as leasing remote parking lots that are located near transit stations and underused during the week, for example, those belonging to churches or synagogues. In conjunction with a shuttle, such a strategy has been successful in Acton. Staff recommend that eligible projects under the Parking Management strategy include the following:

- Leasing or arranging for off-site parking spaces near transit stations to supplement existing parking, and shuttles to connect them if necessary
- Constructing additional parking for automobiles and bicycles

### *Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements*

*Charting Progress to 2040* includes bicycle and pedestrian improvements under the Clean Air and Mobility section of what has become the CT program. In addition, several MPOs (as well as other transportation-related agencies) maintain programs known as Safe Routes to Transit, often using CMAQ funds. These programs fund minor infrastructure improvements near transit stations, with the goal of making walking or biking to transit safer, thereby facilitating first- and last-mile connections. Staff propose that the CT program fund the following types of projects, among others, in this vein:

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<sup>2</sup> The extent to which CMAQ funds may be used to enhance service on existing fixed-route transit (for example, by funding additional service on an existing route) is not entirely clear from established guidelines and would likely require additional input from the MPO's federal partners.

- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements for transit access
- Improvements to non-automotive transportation infrastructure for travelers with mobility impairments
- Training and equipment for bringing bicycles on transit

This list is not intended to be permanent or comprehensive; the MPO can approve other types of projects as compelling examples are uncovered.

### *Education and Wayfinding*

The Clean Air and Mobility category under the CT program in *Charting Progress to 2040* also envisioned funding projects relating to education on transportation options and wayfinding (practical navigation in and around transportation facilities). These types of projects can help solve first- and last-mile problems and shift trips from SOV to other modes, thereby reducing air pollution by reaching potential riders and users who would not otherwise be aware of or able to fully make use of available options. Potentially eligible projects may include the following projects:

- Travel instruction
- Training on new technologies
- Signage and other wayfinding strategies
- Pilot or demonstration projects

There are numerous opportunities for small-scale projects of this type. For example, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) Office of Systemwide Accessibility employs travel trainers, but they are busy and can only work on the MBTA system.<sup>3</sup> MPO-funded travel training projects could work with multiple RTAs, or even help solve rider confusion over the gaps between RTAs, which is a subject about which MPO staff have received frequent feedback.

## 2.3 Possible Project Considerations

Staff have identified several considerations that might prove challenging to the implementation of projects. As discussed elsewhere in this document, CMAQ funding has certain restrictions on the types of projects for which it can be used. Successful projects will also require a local financial match; the MPO has prioritized funding projects with local matches that show an ability to continue beyond the period of MPO funding. Given the relatively small amount of funding dedicated to the program, and the consequent small scale of the projects to be funded, staff from Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) have

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<sup>3</sup> MPO staff gained this insight from discussions with Systemwide Accessibility staff.

raised the question of whether small capital projects will be worth the complexity and expense of going through the full federal process and MassDOT's right-of-way process. The fast-changing nature of dealing with TNCs means that the MPO will have to carefully monitor what partnering with such companies could look like, and adapt to an evolving environment.

### 3 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

With the MPO's guidance, staff have developed a proposed framework for administering the CT program, including evaluation of projects; the application process; and future reporting to the MPO. This evaluation process fits into the broader TIP cycle, with applications accepted in the winter and evaluated in early spring. As proposed to the MPO, the first funding round will work slightly differently from following rounds. A detailed explanation and timeline are provided below.

#### 3.1 Project Evaluation Framework

When developing the proposed framework, staff drew on the experiences of other MPOs with similar programs and the criteria they use; analysis of local programs, such as MassDOT's Community Transit Grant Program<sup>4</sup>; and suggestions from the MPO and other staff with whom the program had been discussed to develop a basic framework and a list of potential criteria. Staff presented the basic structure for project evaluation to the MPO on October 18, 2018, consisting of the following stages:

Stage 1: Fatal Flaw Analysis

Stage 2a: General Criteria

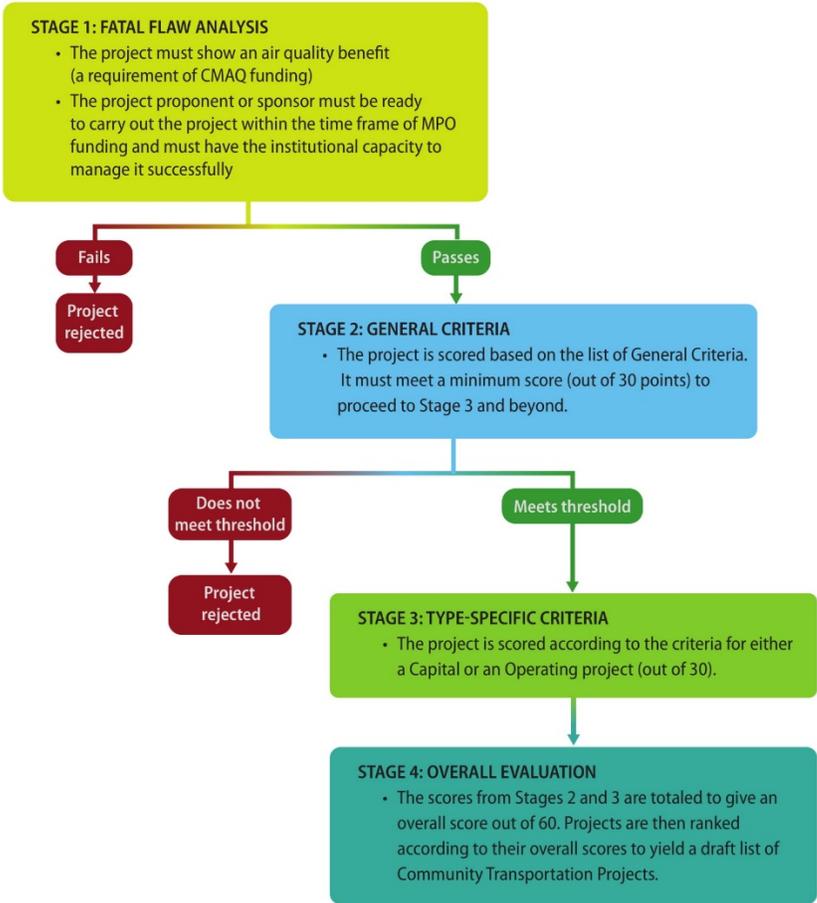
Stage 2b: Type-Specific Criteria (Capital/Operating)

Staff then conducted a survey of MPO members asking them to rate and comment on various potential criteria. The survey and a table summarizing its results are attached as Appendices A and B, respectively, to this memorandum. Staff received nine responses to the survey from MPO members. Based on feedback from the survey and internal discussions, staff proposed a slightly modified and more comprehensive structure for project evaluation at the December 6, 2018, MPO meeting. That structure is illustrated in Figure 1.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/community-transit-grant-program>

**Figure 1  
Community Transportation Program Project Evaluation Process**



Project scores will be based on a detailed set of criteria presented to the MPO on December 6, 2018. Table 1 provides details on the criteria.

**Table 1**  
**Community Transportation Program Project Evaluation Criteria**

<b>Scoring Criterion</b>	<b>Criterion Explanation</b>	<b>Median Survey Rank</b>	<b>Proposed Evaluation Points</b>	<b>Evaluation Method</b>
<b>Fatal Flaw Analysis 1: Positive impact on air quality</b> • Does the project show a positive impact in the MPO's air quality analysis process?	The Community Transportation Program is currently funded with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. As part of the requirements for use of those funds, each project funded through this program must show an air quality benefit when analyzed through the MPO's air quality analysis process.	n/a	n/a	MPO staff analysis
<b>Fatal Flaw Analysis 2: Proponent readiness and institutional capacity</b> • Can the project proponent adequately carry out the project? • Does the project proponent have appropriate support from the necessary stakeholders? • Is the proponent ready to start the project within the MPO's timeframe?	The Community Transportation Program is programmed in the TIP to begin awarding funds in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2021. Projects must be ready to begin construction or operation by October 2020 (dates here apply to the first round of project awards). Project sponsors or proponents must demonstrate that they have gained support from stakeholders and have the institutional capacity to carry out the project within the MPO's designated time frame.	n/a	n/a	Documentation in application materials and MPO staff analysis
<b>General Criteria</b>				
<b>Network or connectivity value</b> • Does the project enhance capacity and/or utility of existing facilities, services, and infrastructure? • Does the project fill gaps in the transit, bicycle, or pedestrian network? • Does the project allow trips that could not otherwise be made? • Does the project reduce travel time or number of necessary transfers for existing trips?	One of the primary purposes of the Community Transportation Program is to close gaps in the transportation network, especially those in the "first or last mile" between transit and a destination. Staff propose to award points based on how effectively a proposed project closes different types of gaps and makes travel easier or more efficient.	5	6	Documentation in application materials and MPO staff analysis
<b>Inclusion in or consistency with local or regional plans</b> • Is the project included in the local comprehensive plan? • Has the project been identified as a "need" through developing the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Needs Assessment or another regional plan? • Does the project conform to and support the goals stipulated in local and regional plans?	A comprehensive planning process is important to ensure that projects occur in an environment of collaboration and careful consideration rather than independently as if in a vacuum. This criterion proposes to award points based on the extent to which a proposed project has been included in prior plans at both the local and regional levels, and whether it meets the goals of those plans.	4	6	Documentation in application materials
<b>Equity considerations</b> • Does the project primarily serve a low-income, minority, or other Transportation Equity (TE) population? • Is the project located in a TE neighborhood?	Equity in the transportation system is one of the MPO's core goals. The MPO's LRTP calls for targeting investments to areas where they will benefit a high percentage of low-income and minority populations. This criterion proposes to award points to projects based on their location in an area of equity concern and/or their service to a population of concern.	3	6	Documentation in application materials
<b>Coordination or cooperation between multiple entities</b> • Does the project have multiple sponsors or proponents? • Does the project involve ongoing collaboration between multiple entities to solve a transportation-related problem? • Does the collaboration involved in this project fill an existing gap in the transportation network?	As a cooperative body, the MPO prioritizes collaboration among different entities in the transportation planning process. Cooperative project planning and execution is particularly important for "first/last mile" connections of the type that the Community Transportation Program is intended to solve. This cooperation can involve actors from both the public and private sectors.	3	4	Documentation in application materials
<b>Demand projections</b> • How many people will use the infrastructure or service provided through this project?	Having an estimate of the demand for a project or service is important when evaluating it. Project sponsors and proponents will be asked to provide a rough estimate of how many people will use the new infrastructure or service.	4	4	Documentation in application materials and MPO staff analysis
<b>Generation of mode shift</b> • Will the project allow new trips that would not otherwise have been possible without a car? • Does the project shift existing trips from single-occupancy vehicles (SOV) to other modes?	Another of the primary purposes of the Community Transportation Program is to enable modal shift from SOV to transit or other modes. This criterion would award points based on the project's effectiveness at creating mode shift and/or enabling trips that were previously impossible by non-SOV modes.	4	3	Documentation in application materials and MPO staff analysis
<b>Total</b>			<b>30</b>	

**Table 1 (continued)**  
**Community Transportation Program Project Evaluation Criteria**

Scoring Criterion	Criterion Explanation	Median Survey Rank	Proposed Evaluation Points	Evaluation Method
<b>Type-Specific Criteria—Select Capital or Operating</b>				
<b>Capital Project</b>				
<b>Safety benefits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project improve bicycle safety?</li> <li>• Will the project improve pedestrian safety?</li> </ul>	Improving safety on the regional transportation network is one of the MPO's key goals. This criterion would award points to projects that improve safety for the most vulnerable users of the network—pedestrians and bicyclists.	4	12	Documentation in application materials and MPO staff analysis
<b>Cost effectiveness over life cycle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project be cost-effective compared to alternatives?</li> <li>• Will the local maintenance budget be able to sustain the project after the MPO funds construction?</li> </ul>	In addition to the initial construction costs, the MPO is concerned that projects funded through the Community Transportation Program remain fiscally sustainable after MPO-awarded funding runs out. Thus projects proposed to the program should be cost-effective compared to potential alternatives, and proponents should demonstrate that local maintenance budgets will be able to accommodate the increased costs of maintaining the project.	3	9	Documentation in application materials
<b>Resilience to weather and environmental hazards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project have a negative impact on an area of environmental concern?</li> <li>• Will the project be resistant to damage from storms, floods, and other natural disasters?</li> </ul>	Resilience in the face of increasingly destructive storms and weather hazards is a growing concern in the Boston region, and codified in the MPO's System Preservation goal. Project proponents should demonstrate that their project will not cause damage to a sensitive ecosystem and that it will be able to resist damage from extreme weather events.	3	9	Documentation in application materials
<b>Total</b>			<b>30</b>	
<b>Operating Project</b>				
<b>Financial sustainability and realistic budget</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the project be able to continue operating after MPO funding ends?</li> <li>• Is the project budget viable and realistic?</li> <li>• Are the projected operating costs reasonable and realistic?</li> </ul>	In light of experiences with past programs similar to the Community Transportation Program, the MPO has placed a heavy emphasis on the ability of a funded operating project to continue running past the period of MPO funding. MPO staff will evaluate submitted applications based on: the availability of funds to continue operating the service after the expiration of MPO support; whether or not the original budget is realistic; and whether operating costs appear realistic and within regional norms.	4	12	Documentation in application materials
<b>Service plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the project include a detailed, realistic service plan?</li> <li>• Does the service plan include service for the general public?</li> </ul>	Operating projects will be evaluated based on the practicality and detail of their projected service plan. They will receive additional points if services are intended to be open to the general public in addition to a particular target market.	4	9	Documentation in application materials and MPO staff analysis
<b>Performance monitoring plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the proposal include a plan for measuring performance and reporting to the MPO?</li> <li>• Does the performance monitoring plan incorporate the MPO's recommended and/or mandated metrics?</li> </ul>	Ongoing monitoring of project performance is key to understanding the nature of Community Transportation projects and improving evaluation going forward. The MPO will create guidelines for a performance monitoring plan, possibly including recommended or mandatory metrics. Projects will be scored higher for generating more rigorous reporting and data.	4	9	Documentation in application materials
<b>Total</b>			<b>30</b>	

The points assigned to each criterion in the scoring framework correspond to the priorities indicated by MPO members in the criteria evaluation survey. In some instances, the scoring points assigned to an individual criterion vary from the averages returned from the survey. Staff made some adjustments to bring the framework into alignment with the LRTP's goals and objectives, and the goals of the Community Transportation Funding Program. One of these circumstances is the distribution of weighting between the general and the type-specific criteria. Survey respondents returned a median response that would distribute 40 percent of the overall scoring to the general criteria and 60 percent to the type-specific criteria. Because the general criteria reflect the goals and objectives of both the LRTP and the CT program more so than the type-specific criteria, staff proposes weighting them at least equally. Additionally, there are fewer individual type-specific than general criteria; should the weighting scheme between the two categories be weighted more heavily toward the type-specific criteria, each individual criterion within that category would count far more heavily toward the overall project score than any of the individual general criteria. As a result, the framework presented to the MPO on December 6, 2018, and reflected here, weights the general and type-specific criteria evenly.

While developing the final form of the CT program application, staff will review program materials and the Universe of Potential Community Transportation Projects to further detail the functioning of the evaluation criteria. Some will be scored all or nothing based on the presence or absence of certain features or data in the application (for theoretical example, receiving 0 points if a criterion is not met and 5 if it is). Others will be scored on a sliding scale, able to receive anywhere between (again, in a theoretical example) 0 and 5 points based on the *extent* to which an application meets the requirement of a particular criterion. Reflecting that framework, project applicants will be expected to provide information to the MPO in two broad ways. The information required for some of the evaluation criteria can be provided through **documentation in the application materials**—applicants will document facts about or elements of their project as required, and MPO staff will apply the correct scoring. Other criteria will require the applicant to provide data or information to **be analyzed for accuracy, thoroughness, and appropriateness by MPO staff**. In some cases, both methods will apply. In other cases (such as the Equity Considerations criterion), staff will provide data or an interface for applicants to be able to document certain elements of their application (in this case, staff would provide data and/or mapping of the MPO's designated Transportation Equity areas so that applicants will be able to determine whether their project serves one).

### 3.2 First Funding Round

Funding for the CT program is first programmed in the TIP in FFY 2021. Because past funding programs have had to revise their structure and/or criteria after the first funding round revealed practical difficulties, staff propose to use the first funding round as a pilot to assess whether the proposed program structure, project evaluation paradigm, and criteria agreed on by the MPO work as intended.

For the first funding round, the MPO will award funds to projects selected from a Universe of Potential Community Transportation Projects. Staff generated the Universe (Appendix C) from the following sources:

- Comments gathered from previous outreach, especially *Destination 2040* Needs Assessment outreach in Fall 2017. Staff outreach efforts included MAPC subregional groups, advocacy/interest groups, and other stakeholders
- Recommendations made in MPO-funded studies and technical assistance projects
- Discussions with partner agencies, particularly through a small inter-agency group known as the Community Transit/Mobility Working Group that includes staff from Central Transportation Planning Staff, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, MBTA, and MassDOT

Following MPO approval of the structure for the CT program, staff will evaluate the first round of projects, according to the following schedule:

- **December 2018 through January 2019:** Staff will contact project proponents for each project concept, identifying a project proponent where none has yet been identified, to confirm that they are interested in pursuing funding for the project within the MPO's time frame. Staff will also review the evaluation criteria and the Universe of Potential Community Transportation Projects to identify the extent and types of data necessary to accurately score projects, and develop paths for applicants to submit that information.
- **Spring 2019:** Staff will apply the criteria contained in Section 3.1 to the projects whose sponsors have provided the requisite data and information. This will produce a draft Ranked List of Community Transportation Projects, which staff will present to the MPO along with any feedback about the criteria and process.
- **Spring 2019:** Staff will incorporate any MPO feedback on the draft Ranked List of Community Transportation Projects, and return to the MPO

with a final list. The final list will be included in the FFYs 2020–24 TIP, programmed in FFY 2021 as per current plans.

- **Late Spring/Summer 2019:** If necessary, staff will prepare a memo summarizing lessons learned from the first funding round and how they can be applied to future funding rounds of the CT program. Staff will present proposed changes to the program structure to the MPO for approval.

Having gained the experience of one funding round, and being able to adjust as necessary, the MPO can proceed into a more robust process beginning Fall 2019.

### 3.3 Program Cycle—Second Round and Beyond

After the first year, the process and calendar for generating and evaluating CT program projects will essentially follow that of the TIP. Drawing on the experience of the first funding round (evaluated FFY 2019/programmed FFY 2021), staff will create a detailed application for the program. Beginning Fall 2019, staff will conduct outreach for the CT program alongside the other primary MPO documents. Project proponents will fill out the application, thus creating a Universe of Potential Community Transportation Projects. Staff will evaluate and score projects in the Universe and then present to the MPO in draft form in the spring of 2020. Staff will then present the final list of Community Transportation projects to the MPO together with the FFYs 2021–25 TIP and program the projects for funding beginning in 2023. This cycle will repeat every year thereafter.

## CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This memorandum has described the proposed overall structure of the MPO's CT program, and explains how it will function. Should the MPO approve this structure, staff will move forward with evaluating the first round of projects. A draft Universe of Community Transportation Projects accompanies this memo; as noted above these are project concepts about which staff have received feedback through outreach or other means, and as such are not yet fully developed. With the MPO's approval, staff will immediately begin contacting potential project proponents to confirm their interest and timeline and to develop more detailed project proposals. These proposals will then be evaluated as outlined above.

# **APPENDICES**

# APPENDIX A: PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA SURVEY

This survey is a follow-up to the presentation of the conceptual framework of the Community Transportation Program that was presented to the MPO on October 18, 2018. In this survey, members are asked to rate the importance of various proposed project evaluation criteria. There is also an opportunity to enter written feedback. Details about each criterion can be found in an image adjacent to the relevant question, and in the Guide to the Community Transportation Project Evaluation Criteria document: <https://goo.gl/VKb3Tx>. Please complete the survey by the close of business on Monday, November 5. You can contact Sandy Johnston, [sjohnston@ctps.org](mailto:sjohnston@ctps.org), with any questions.

\* Required

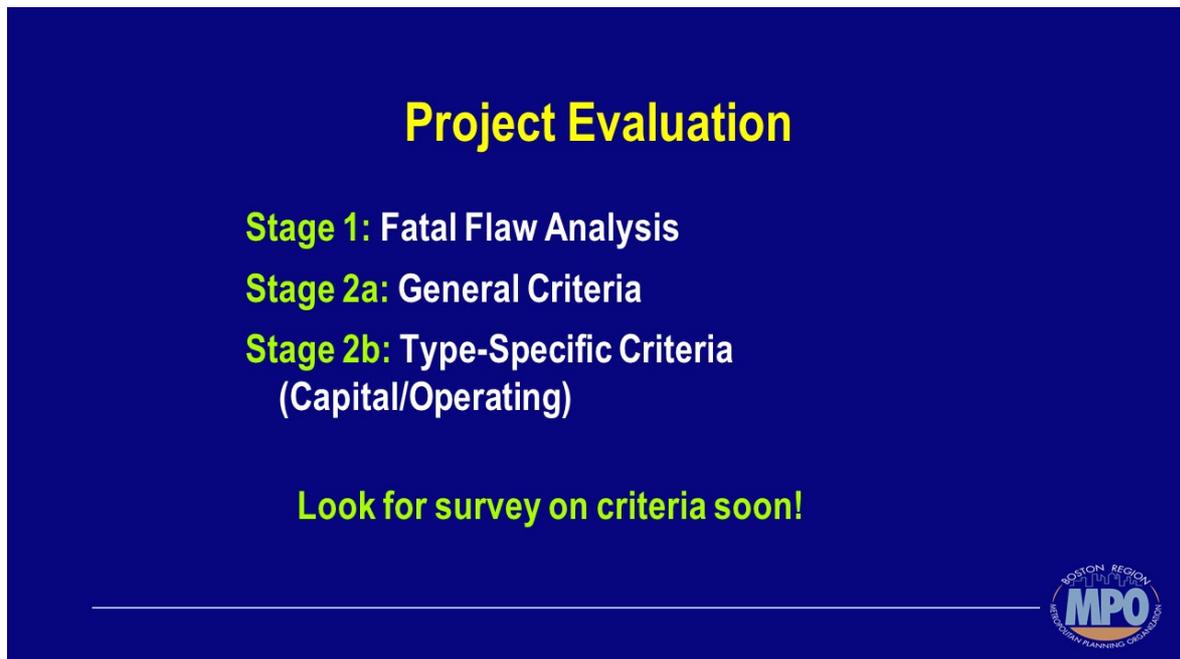
1. Email address \*

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## Proposed Criteria Structure

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Staff presented an overall proposed structure for project evaluation together with the conceptual framework for the Community Transportation Program on October 18, 2018. The image below, which is a slide shown during that presentation, illustrates the structure as presented.



The slide features a dark blue background with yellow and white text. At the top, the title 'Project Evaluation' is written in large yellow font. Below it, three stages are listed in yellow font: 'Stage 1: Fatal Flaw Analysis', 'Stage 2a: General Criteria', and 'Stage 2b: Type-Specific Criteria (Capital/Operating)'. At the bottom, a yellow call-to-action reads 'Look for survey on criteria soon!'. In the bottom right corner, there is a circular logo for the 'MPO' (Metropolitan Planning Organization) with the text 'NORTH REGION' and 'METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION' around it.

## Fatal Flaw Analyses

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Fatal Flaw Analysis 1: Positive impact on air quality\*  
--Project must show a positive impact in the MPO's air quality analysis process

\*Would only apply as long as the Community Transportation Program continues to be funded with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds; the MPO may choose to allocate other funds to this program.

Fatal Flaw Analysis 2: Proponent readiness and institutional capacity  
--Can the project proponent adequately carry out the project?

- Does the project proponent have appropriate support from the necessary stakeholders?
- Is the proponent ready to start the project within the MPO's time frame?

**2. Do you have any comments on these proposed Fatal Flaw Analyses?**

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## General Criteria

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These proposed criteria will be used to evaluate all projects considered for the Community Transportation Program.

**3. Network or connectivity value \***

- Does the project enhance capacity and/or utility of existing facilities, services and infrastructure?
- Does the project fill gaps in the transit, bicycle, or pedestrian network?
- Does the project facilitate trips that could not otherwise be made?

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least Important	<input type="radio"/>	Most Important				

**4. Coordination or cooperation between multiple entities \***

- Does the project have multiple sponsors or proponents?
- Does the project involve ongoing collaboration between multiple entities to solve a transportation-related problem?
- Does the collaboration involved in this project fill an existing gap in the transportation network?

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least Important	<input type="radio"/>	Most Important				

**5. Inclusion in or consistency with local or regional plans \***

- Is the project included in the local comprehensive plan?
- Has the project been identified as a "need" through developing the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Needs Assessment or another regional plan?
- Does the project conform to and support the goals stipulated in local and regional plans?

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least Important	<input type="radio"/>	Most Important				

**6. Equity considerations or location in equity area \***

- Does the project primarily serve a low-income, minority, or other Transportation Equity (TE) population?
- Is the project located in a TE neighborhood?

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least Important	<input type="radio"/>	Most Important				

**7. Alignment with MPO's and Community Transportation Program's goal of increasing use of non-automotive modes \***

- Does the project facilitate new trips that would not otherwise have been possible without a car?
- Does the project shift existing trips from single-occupancy vehicles (SOV) to other modes?

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least Important	<input type="radio"/>	Most Important				

**8. Usage projections \***

How many people will use the infrastructure or service provided through this project?

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least Important	<input type="radio"/>	Most Important				

**9. Other**

Please list any other criteria that you think should be considered for all projects. Please review the proposed type-specific criteria below before answering. Comments on the proposed sub-criteria (bullet points) are also welcome.

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## **Type-Specific Criteria**

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The Community Transportation Program is expected to fund two broad types of projects: capital and operating. In addition to the set of general criteria described above, which will be applied to all projects, staff propose to use type-specific criteria, depending on whether the project is requesting capital or operating funding. Each project would then be evaluated using the general criteria and EITHER capital or operating criteria. In addition to ranking the importance of each of these criteria, you will be given an opportunity to rate the relative importance of the general and type-specific criteria.

## **Criteria Specific to Capital Projects**

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10. **Safety benefits \***

- Improves bicycle safety
- Improves pedestrian safety

Mark only one oval.

1      2      3      4      5

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Least Important                  Most Important

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11. **Cost-effectiveness over life cycle \***

- Project will be cost-effective compared to alternatives
- Project will not excessively burden local maintenance budget after MPO funds construction

Mark only one oval.

1      2      3      4      5

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Least Important                  Most Important

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12. **Resilience to weather and environmental hazards \***

- Project is not located in an area of environmental concern
- Project will be resistant to damage from storms, floods, and so on

Mark only one oval.

1      2      3      4      5

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Least Important                  Most Important

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13. **Other**

Do you have any other criteria that you think should be considered for capital projects, or comments on the sub-criteria (bullet points) used to define them? Let us know here.

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**Criteria Specific to Operating Projects**

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**14. Financial sustainability and realistic budget \***

- Project will be able to continue operating after end of MPO funding
- Project budget is viable and realistic
- Projected operating costs are reasonable and realistic

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least Important	<input type="radio"/>	Most Important				

**15. Service plan \***

Project includes detailed, realistic service plan

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least Important	<input type="radio"/>	Most Important				

**16. Performance monitoring plan \***

- Project includes a plan for measuring performance and reporting to the MPO
- Performance-monitoring plan incorporates MPO's recommended and/or mandated metrics

*Mark only one oval.*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least Important	<input type="radio"/>	Most Important				

**17. Other**

Do you have any other criteria that you think should be considered for operating projects, or comments on the sub-criteria (bullet points) used to define them? Let us know here.

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## Criteria Weighting

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These questions ask you to assess the relative importance of the general criteria and type-specific criteria in overall project evaluation. Please ensure that your answers add up to 100 percent.

18. What percentage of the overall project score should be assigned to the general criteria? \*

Mark only one oval.

- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%

19. What percentage of the overall project score should be assigned to the type-specific criteria? \*

Mark only one oval.

- 10%
- 20%
- 30%
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- 100%

## Further Questions

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20. Do you have any further questions or comments?

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## Thank you!

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Send me a copy of my responses.

**APPENDIX B: PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA SURVEY RESULTS**

	Median Score	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3	Respondent 4	Respondent 5	Respondent 6	Respondent 7	Respondent 8	Respondent 9
<b>Fatal Flaw</b>										
Do you have any comments on these proposed Fatal Flaw Analyses?			No negative comment. Should a fatal flaw be proposal too expensive?	No	How will the applicant be able to provide the positive impact on MPO air quality analysis - is this feasible? Agreed with Fatal Flaw 2 although very subjective but be cautious about biasing completely against newer ideas and players.				First question is vague - how is "positive impact" defined; and is the positive impact related to the outcome of improved air quality or on the analysis / modeling process?	Positive impact on AQ may be very, very small, but I don't think that should disqualify a project.
<b>General Criteria</b>										
Network or connectivity value	5	2	5	4	5	5	5	5	3	4
Alignment with MPO's and Community Transportation Program's goal of increasing use of non-automotive modes	4	3	4	3	5	5	4	4	5	5
Inclusion in or consistency with local or regional plans	4	4	3	5	3	4	4	5	5	2
Equity considerations or location in equity area	3	3	3	4	5	3	3	4	5	3
Coordination or cooperation between multiple entities	3	2	4	4	3	3	3	5	4	3
Usage projections	4	5	4	3	1	4	1	4	4	3
Other	Blank	The criteria should include some measure of cost-effectiveness, i.e., cost per rider/user, etc.	1) Readiness, at some point, will be relevant? 2) Local Champion: Not sure how to capture impact, but the "right" person may determine success / failure	Blank	Relying on projections seems unrealistic for this kind of initiative. This type of initiative is probably most important to analyze qualitative versus quantitatively. Most importantly, these projects should reduce SOV for anyone and improve access for TE populations if possible. Add criteria that gives extra consideration to services that are NOT closed to the general population.	Blank	Sub-criterion 3 under cooperation seems to be more about filling the network gap and more relevant to the first criterion related to network gaps more generally. Related to Criterion addressing plan consistency; this criterion should consider plans/ studies that explore projects specifically related to alternative modes of transportation such as bicycle plans, complete street plans, and/or last mile studies.	Blank	Blank	Since projects could vary quite a bit, I don't think failing to meet one or more criteria should disqualify any project. Of course, the projects that meet the most criteria will score much higher than others. Should we add a cost/benefit analysis without comparison to alternates?
<b>Capital Criteria</b>										
Safety benefits	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	5	4
Cost-effectiveness over life cycle	3	4	3	5	3	4	3	4	2	3
Resilience to weather and environmental hazards	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	2	2
Other			MOBILITY as a criteria		Gaps/connectivity should also be discussed - best if connecting strong services or providing access to TE population		wondering if there is room for another criterion or sub-criterion that speaks to capital projects that will improve access to alternative modes of transportation. I.e. covered bike racks at a transit station or near a transit stop, covered waiting areas for transit. information kiosks/ technology that improves user's experience, and/or other components of a mobility hub.		Projected safety benefits for pedestrians and bicycle riders is a priority, but I am curious about how MPO can consider past performance data for similar treatments in similar locations to bring a level of rigor to our sincere hope that an intervention would produce the desired outcome.	Projects should not be rejected simply because they are in an ACEC. If depends upon whether they adversely affect the ACEC.
<b>Operating Criteria</b>										
Financial sustainability and realistic budget	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	4
Performance monitoring plan	4	5	3	5	5	4	4	4	5	2
Service plan	4	4	4	4	5	4	3	4	4	3
Other	Blank	Each project should be evaluated after each year to determine if it's meeting performance goals, and to determine if funding should continue.	Blank	Blank	We should approach funding operating very carefully and if possible to achieve greater chances of success commit to a longer step down period. It is unrealistic to think that this pot can fund many initiatives over multiple years of operation. Perhaps it could help bolster MassDOT's funds by supplementing their amount or length during the step down to help a project succeed if it seems strong in the first year. Add criteria that gives extra consideration to services that are NOT closed to the general population.	Blank	Blank	Blank	Blank	This looks good.
<b>Weighting</b>										
What percentage of the overall project score should be assigned to the general criteria?	40%	30%	40%	30%	50%	40%	70%	80%	40%	40%
What percentage of the overall project score should be assigned to the type-specific criteria?	60%	70%	60%	70%	50%	60%	30%	20%	60%	60%
<b>Other</b>										
Do you have any further questions or comments?		Funds should not be used to buy rolling stock or other equipment for operational projects - rolling stock/equipment should be leased or service should be obtained by contract.							Happy to discuss if helpful. Thanks!	

**APPENDIX C**  
**DRAFT UNIVERSE OF POTENTIAL COMMUNITY**  
**TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Project Concept</b>	<b>Potential Project Sponsor/Proponent*</b>
<i>ICC</i>			
Boston	Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	Implement some of the recommendations contained in the Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis, <a href="http://www.ctps.org/fairmount-station-access">http://www.ctps.org/fairmount-station-access</a> .	City of Boston
Boston	Transit Operations and Improvements; Education and Wayfinding	Implement signage for commuter and intercity buses stopping curbside in downtown Boston, in accordance with recommendations in Chapter 4 of the Massachusetts Regional Bus Study, <a href="http://www.ctps.org/2013_mass_bus_study">http://www.ctps.org/2013_mass_bus_study</a> .	City of Boston, MassDOT, bus carriers
Boston	Transit Operations and Improvements	Improve the waiting area for EZRide shuttle buses on Nashua Street outside of North Station with weather-resistant shelters and seating	City of Boston, <b>Charles River TMA</b>
Cambridge	Transit Operations and Improvements; Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	1) Pilot or permanent implementation of two bus lanes on access roads connecting the Alewife T with Route 2, to benefit MBTA, TMA, and shuttle buses. 2) Safer crossing of Alewife Brook Parkway near Rindge Towers (public housing project), better access between Rindge Ave. housing, Fresh Pond Mall, and Alewife train station 3) Pedestrian bridge from Alewife to Fresh Pond	City of Cambridge, Route 128 BC, Alewife TMA
Cambridge, Somerville	Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	1) Linking the Community Path Extension with the partially built Grand Junction Path (and the People's Pike near the I-90 project), the proposed Mystic to Charles Connector Friends of the Mystic to Charles Connector, and the GLX Project. 2) Link the Rose Kennedy Greenway with the Charles River Paths. Fix the Charles River path near the Museum of Science, including a dedicated bike lane in both directions.	City of Cambridge, City of Somerville, DCR
Everett, Somerville	Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	Extension of Northern Strand Community Trail from Everett to Assembly Square.	City of Everett, City of Somerville, MBTA
Everett, Chelsea	Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	Improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and other routes to transit along the route of the 112 and other local buses.	City of Everett, City of Chelsea
Malden	Transit Operations and Improvements; Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	Implement more dedicated space for bicyclists, pedestrians, buses, and pickup/drop-off near Malden Center Station.	City of Malden
Melrose	Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	Improving bike and pedestrian access between neighborhoods, transit stations, commercial districts, and schools and parks.	Town of Melrose
Waltham, Newton	Transit Operations and Improvements	Shuttle from Riverside MBTA station to Brandeis campus	Route 128 Business Council, Brandeis University
Watertown	Transit Operations and Improvements	The Pleasant Street corridor, which has five new residential rental developments and an existing redeveloped office park, is completely unserved by public transportation. The WTMA is currently studying establishing shuttle service along the Pleasant Street corridor, to connect residents and employees to Watertown Square, where they can access buses to the Red Line and downtown. (More details available in documentation from Laura Wiener.)	<b>Town of Watertown</b> , Watertown TMA

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Project Concept</b>	<b>Potential Project Sponsor/Proponent*</b>
<b>MWRC</b>			
Ashland	Transit Operations and Improvements; Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	1) First-mile/last-mile connections to commuter rail 2) Improve transit access to Ashland Commuter Rail station (shuttle to downtown/MWRTA Route 5)	Town of Ashland, MWRTA
Framingham	Transit Operations and Improvements	1) Shuttle connection from Golden Triangle to downtown 2) Shuttle to Dennison Facilities	City of Framingham
Framingham	Parking Management	Expand park-and-ride in downtown Framingham	City of Framingham
Natick	Parking Management	Parking expansion at Natick Center commuter rail station	Town of Natick
Natick	Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	Connect Cochituate Rail Trail to Natick Center commuter rail station	Town of Natick
Wellesley	Parking Management	Expanded parking at all three Wellesley commuter rail stations	Town of Wellesley
Weston, Wayland	Parking Management; Transit Operations and Improvements	Shuttle from downtown Wayland to Weston commuter rail stations	<b>Town of Weston, Town of Wayland</b>
<b>MAGIC</b>			
Concord	Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements; Transit Operations and Improvements; Education and Wayfinding	1) Improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections to West Concord station 2) Implement wayfinding strategies and signage along the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail 3) Recommendations pursuant to 2016 CTPS technical assistance memos	Town of Concord
Lexington	Transit Operations and Improvements	Consolidate multiple shuttles operating on Hayden Ave. in Lexington	Town of Lexington, Route 128 Business Council
<b>NSTF</b>			
Beverly	Transit Operations and Improvements	1) Make Beverly Depot a mobility hub. Connect to bikeshare, uber, car-sharing in an organized way. 2) Connections for Cherry Hill manufacturing employees from Lynn, Beverly Depot	<b>City of Beverly</b>
<b>NSPC</b>			
Reading	Transit Operations and Improvements; Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	1) Better connectivity from Walkers Brook to downtown, including possibly establishing a multimodal path next to the MBTA tracks to accommodate the many people who already walk along the tracks because it's the shortest way to get from the Walker's Brook area to downtown. 2) Creation of remote parking with a shuttle service to open up prime parking spaces by the commuter rail, which are currently occupied all day by commuters and thus aren't available to patrons of downtown businesses 3) More bike lanes and sidewalks. Road diet on South Main (Rte. 28) as a start.	<b>Town of Reading</b>
Winchester	Parking Management	Parking will be lost at Winchester Center during (and after?) reconstruction. Provide a shuttle from off-site parking to compensate.	Town of Winchester
<b>SSC</b>			

Municipality	Project Type	Project Concept	Potential Project Sponsor/Proponent*
Cohasset	Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	Bicycle and pedestrian approaches to station are dangerous, especially on Sohier St.	Town of Cohasset
Hingham	Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	Bicycle and pedestrian approaches to station are dangerous, especially intersection of Kilby St./Route 3A	Town of Hingham
Hull	Transit Operations and Improvements	Better (shuttle?) connections from town to commuter rail	Town of Hull
<b>TRIC</b>			
Canton	Transit Operations and Improvements; Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Improve pedestrian, cyclist, or transit accommodations for the many senior living and low-income multifamily developments along Rte. 138 in Canton.</li> <li>2) The 716 bus doesn't run frequently enough and has no sheltered bus stop locations along the Washington Street corridor.</li> <li>3) Implement the recommendations made in the Boston MPO study of the Route 138 corridor</li> <li>4) Reestablish first and last mile connections for Royall St. Once served by the RailLink Shuttle (NVTMA) to the Route 128 Commuter Rail, Quincy Adam, Mattapan, and Ashmont Red Line Stations. Originally, two shuttles were funded with CMAQ funds and contributions from several employer partners. Once funding ended many businesses dropped out. One shuttle remained in service, which was privately funded by Reebok and Computershare. Reebok added an Express shuttle to the commuter rail from March 2016–October 2017. Due to Reebok's move to the Seaport and a significant workforce reduction at Computershare, service was suspended in April 2018.</li> </ol>	Town of Canton, <b>Neponset Valley TMA</b>
Dedham, Norwood, Foxborough, Walpole	Transit Operations and Improvements; Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Legacy Place fixed-route and shuttle improvements</li> <li>2) Patriot Place shuttles</li> <li>3) Employee access to Route 1 from MBTA 34E and other transit stops, especially safe pedestrian/bicycle environment</li> <li>4) Shuttle from Norwood commuter rail stations to Moderna and/or new 40B developments in the same area</li> </ol>	Towns of Dedham, Norwood, Foxborough, Walpole; <b>Neponset Valley TMA</b>
Sharon	Parking Management	Shuttle or innovative carpooling/ridesharing arrangement from off-site parking to Sharon train station. Town is considering building a parking structure.	<b>Town of Sharon, Neponset Valley TMA</b>

\***Bold red text** indicates a project proponent or sponsor with whom MPO staff have had advanced conversations about the relevant project

CTPS = Central Transportation Planning Staff. DCR = Department of Conservation and Recreation. GLX = Green Line Extension. ICC = Inner Core Committee. MAGIC = Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination. MassDOT = Massachusetts Department of Transportation. MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization. MWRC = Metrowest Regional Collaborative. MWRTA = Metrowest Regional Transit Authority. NSPC = North Suburban Planning Council. NSTF = North Shore Task Force. NVTMA = Neponset Valley Transit Management Association. SSC = South Shore Coalition. TMA = Transit Management Association. TRIC = Three Rivers Interlocal Council. WTMA = Watertown Transit Management Association.