

# **MPO Meeting Minutes**

## **Draft Memorandum for the Record**

### **Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting**

#### **February 17, 2022, Meeting**

10:00 AM–11:59 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

David Mohler, Chair, representing Jamey Tesler, 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 16, 2021
- Approve the work scope for the North Shore Busway Study
- Approve Amendment Two to the federal fiscal years (FFYs) 2022-26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

#### **Meeting Agenda**

##### **1. Introductions**

See attendance on page 17.

##### **2. Chair's Report—*David Mohler, MassDOT***

There was none.

##### **3. Executive Director's Report—*Annette Demchur, Director of Policy and Planning, Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)***

Tegin Teich, Executive Director of CTPS, could not attend the meeting. A. Demchur provided the Executive Director's report in T. Teich's absence.

A. Demchur provided CTPS staff updates. The interview process for the new TIP Manager is ongoing, as Matt Genova, the current TIP Manager, will leave CTPS by mid-2022. Róisín Foley, Communications Associate, will depart CTPS on March 4, 2022. A. Demchur stated that, in her five years with CTPS, R. Foley improved communications efforts and consequently helped broaden and diversify the audience that participates in the MPO planning process. In addition, she has played a fundamental role in organizing and supporting MPO meetings.

A. Demchur provided an overview of MPO staff's recent outreach efforts. The Transit Working Group held its first quarterly meeting on February 10, 2022. Materials from that meeting are available on the [MPO meeting calendar](#), and the recording is available on the [MPO's YouTube channel](#). In addition, MPO staff hosted an Inner Core Committee (ICC) transportation meeting on February 9, 2022. This meeting included a presentation from the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) on a bus priority toolkit, which is currently under development; a discussion on the MPO's recovery guidebook for commercial business districts in the Boston region, led by Betsy Harvey; and Sandy Johnston led a discussion on ongoing travel demand management work.

#### **4. Committee Chairs' Reports**

There were none.

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

L. Diggins stated that Kate Fichter, Assistant Secretary and Chief of Climate and Decarbonization for MassDOT, attended the February 9, 2022, Advisory Council meeting. He encouraged MPO members to watch the [recording of her presentation](#), which is available on the MPO's YouTube channel.

#### **6. Action Item: Approval of December 16, 2021, MPO Meeting Minutes—*Róisín Foley, MPO Staff***

[December 16, 2021, MPO Meeting Minutes](#)

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

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of December 16, 2021, was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Eric Bourassa) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (Tom Bent, City of Somerville). The motion carried.

#### **7. Action Item: Work Scope, North Shore Busway Study—*Bruce Kaplan, MPO Staff***

***Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar***

[Work Scope: North Shore Busway Study](#)

The MBTA is currently working on conceptual ideas to transform roadways between Wonderland Station and the City of Lynn. These concepts include Complete Streets improvements and bus rapid transit along North Shore Road, General Edwards Bridge, the Lynnway, and Broad Street. After improvements, the corridor would feature a center-running bus lane and dedicated bicycle facilities. The MBTA has asked that MPO staff analyze the impact of these modifications on the corridor using the MPO's travel

demand model. Specifically, MPO staff would study changes in travel patterns along the corridor, as well as diversions of traffic onto local, parallel roads. The tasks outlined in the work study would be fully funded by the MBTA and would have no impact on other MPO work. The conceptual analysis requested by the MBTA consists of four tasks. An additional four tasks are included in the work scope and consist of work the MBTA may ask MPO staff to conduct: additional analyses (Option A) and exploratory modeling (Option B).

### ***Discussion***

Daniel Amstutz (Town of Arlington) asked if the project would remain within its proposed budget if Options A and B were conducted. B. Kaplan stated that Options A and B are accounted for in the budget. The first four tasks will inform whether Options A and B are necessary.

L. Diggins expressed his support for the project, adding that the impacts of the proposed improvements could result in more transit-oriented development along the corridor.

Ken Miller (Federal Highway Administration) asked if vehicle delay and level of service will be considered as part of the proposed analysis. B. Kaplan stated that this could be integrated into the analysis.

K. Miller asked who owns the roads in the proposed corridor, noting that the work scope does not include communicating with the municipalities and agencies that own the roads. B. Kaplan stated that the MBTA is facilitating discussions with owners of the roads. He added that the Lynnway is owned by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); the General Edwards Bridge is owned by MassDOT; and North Shore Road is owned by the City of Revere.

K. Miller asked if MPO staff will analyze how the proposed bus lane will affect parking.

B. Kaplan stated that MPO staff will not specifically analyze the impact on parking.

K. Miller encouraged the MBTA and MPO staff to take parking impacts into account.

T. Bent supported K. Miller's comments, stating that the loss of parking due to the implementation of bus lanes has impacted local businesses in the Somerville. He asked if MPO staff will analyze altered traffic patterns on roads outside of the main corridor.

B. Kaplan stated that analyzing diversions and changes in traffic on local roads will be a significant part of MPO staff's work. D. Mohler expressed that there is no parking on the Lynnway, and no room for parking on North Shore Road.

***Vote***

A motion to approve the work scope for the North Shore Busway Study was made by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (Tom Bent, City of Somerville). The motion carried.

**8. Action Item: FFYs 2022-26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment Two—Matt Genova, MPO Staff**

***Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar***

[FFYs 2022-26 TIP Amendment Two](#)

M. Genova stated that the MPO voted to release Amendment Two to the FFYs 2022-26 TIP for public comment at the January 20, 2022, MPO meeting. No public comments were received during this period.

The proposed amendment removes one bridge project from the FFY 2022 Statewide Highway Program: Deck Replacement and Superstructure Repairs, Fellsway West over Interstate 93, in Stoneham (#612028). The project was initially programmed at \$3 million. As the project developed, MassDOT determined that the deterioration of the structure necessitated an expanded scope of work. The updated project will likely be proposed for programming in the FFYs 2023-27 TIP. M. Genova noted that because this project is funded with MassDOT statewide funds, rather than the MPO's Regional Target funds, it is not subject to the MPO's cost and scope change policies.

***Vote***

A motion to approve Amendment Two to the FFYs 2022-26 TIP was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (E. Bourassa) and seconded by the Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Tom O'Rourke, Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce). The motion carried.

**9. FFYs 2023-27 TIP Project Readiness Updates—Matt Genova, MPO Staff**

***Documents posted to the MPO meeting calendar***

1. [FFYs 2023-27 TIP Readiness Scenario](#)
2. [Belmont School Committee comment on the Belmont Community Path](#)

M. Genova stated that the TIP development timeline and current MPO meeting schedule put the draft FFYs 2023-27 TIP on track to be released for a 21-day public comment by the MPO in late April, and the final TIP will be eligible for endorsement in late May.

MPO staff received one comment letter since the February 3, 2022, MPO meeting from Amy Checkoway on behalf of the Belmont School Committee. This comment letter supported programming of the Belmont Community Path. The full letter is available on the MPO meeting calendar.

M. Genova stated that much of the TIP project readiness information originates from TIP Readiness Day, an annual meeting between MPO staff, MassDOT District offices, MassDOT Highway Division engineers, right-of-way and environmental teams, and MassDOT's Office of Transportation Planning. This meeting is held every February and is intended to bring together input from the involved parties on project schedule changes, cost changes, and potential future risks for delays and cost increases. This input is summarized in the TIP Readiness Scenario table, which provides a snapshot of where every project programmed with Regional Target funds stands. This information may evolve in the coming weeks based on proponent feedback and additional project design submissions. M. Genova stated that as more information becomes available, MPO staff will highlight significant adjustments.

M. Genova explained the assumptions used by MPO staff to arrive at a baseline programming scenario:

- All cost changes that MPO staff are aware of are reflected in the table.
- All existing funding commitments to programmed projects are included.
- Funds for the Community Connections program and the Transit Modernization program have been set aside in FFY 2027.
- Projects recommended to be delayed are shown as such in the table, with their respective funding amounts reallocated in the proposed FFYs.
- A four percent, non-compounding annual inflation rate has been added in each TIP year, beginning in FFY 2024. This inflation rate reflects current MassDOT standards and is a longstanding practice of the MPO board.

M. Genova noted that the readiness scenario also accounts for increased funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The BIL will provide approximately \$20 million in new regional target funding annually, beginning in FFY 2023. MPO staff do not anticipate additional funding from the BIL in FFY 2022.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This comment reflects information available at the time of the February 17, 2022, MPO meeting. There has since been an increase in approximately \$19.5 million in regional target funding in FFY 2022.

M. Genova stated that three projects were identified by MassDOT as high risk for not meeting their advertisement dates:

- Project #608443 (Intersection Improvements on Route 2A at Willow Road and Bruce Street in Littleton and Ayer). This project was identified as high risk because it is currently at 75 percent design and needs to be advertised before September 30, 2022.
- Project #608933 (Rehabilitation of Central Street in Peabody). This project has significant right-of-way requirements, and there is a lack of clarity on the project's design schedule.
- Project #607777 (Rehabilitation of Mount Auburn Street in Watertown). This project has complex right-of-way requirements and significant coordination with the MBTA and Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) will be required.

Although these projects are flagged as high risk, MassDOT believes they are deliverable within their current fiscal years. As such, MassDOT did not recommend moving these projects into later TIP years.

M. Genova stated that MassDOT identified two projects to move into later fiscal years, both of which are programmed in FFY 2023.

- Project #606453 (Improvements on Boylston Street in Boston) is recommended to be delayed from FFY 2023 to FFY 2024 due to evolving design considerations at the western end of the project along the Muddy River. This portion of the project requires significant coordination with DCR and may require an Article 97 action.
- Project #606226 (Reconstruction of Rutherford Avenue in Boston) is recommended to be delayed from FFY 2023 to FFY 2025 because the City is exploring a new design that would provide more robust transit priority along the corridor. The delay is also recommended due to the large, complex nature of the project.

M. Genova noted that three projects have exceeded the new cost change threshold set by the MPO in fall 2021:

- Project #608348 (Rehabilitation of Bridge Street in Beverly) increased \$5 million (65 percent).

- Project #609253 (Intersection Improvements at Lowell Street and Woburn Street in Wilmington) increased \$1.9 million (42 percent).
- Project #609211 (Independence Greenway Extension in Peabody) increased \$760,300 (25 percent).

Proponents have been notified that they are required to attend an upcoming MPO meeting to provide background information on these cost increases.

M. Genova provided a summary of funding in each TIP year through FFY 2027, which can be found at the [bottom of page two of the TIP Readiness Scenario table](#). Currently, \$283 million are unallocated in total across all five years of the TIP. The MPO must determine which programming scenario best meets the vision of the board. Of particular importance, the MPO must prioritize allocation of the approximately \$51 million currently unprogrammed in FFY 2023, as this is the first year of FFYs 2023-27 TIP currently under development.

M. Genova provided an overview of the current distribution of MPO funds according to project types compared to the goals set in the Long-Range Transportation Plan. After applying project readiness updates and BIL funds, each project category is under-programmed, as 44 percent of available funds in FFYs 2023-27 are unallocated. He noted that this distribution will be updated as the MPO continues discussion of how to allocate available funds.

M. Genova explained potential implications of the new TIP project cost policy changes. Implementation of the new 25 percent design submission requirement may impact upcoming project funding decisions. Seven of the fourteen projects previously evaluated for the FFYs 2022-26 TIP met this requirement. The MPO must discuss how to be flexible with this requirement for projects that did not meet the threshold, given the available funding for the FFYs 2023-27 TIP. M. Genova noted that the TIP Ad Hoc Committee had a goal of flexibility in policy implementation, especially in the first year of the new policies taking effect.

### ***Discussion***

D. Amstutz, referencing the [table of projects to be evaluated](#) presented at the February 3, 2022, MPO meeting, asked how the total estimated cost of evaluated projects compares to available funding in FFYs 2023-27. M. Genova stated that the total cost of evaluated projects is approximately \$350 million, although this total will fluctuate as projects advance in design. However, not all evaluated projects will be able to be programmed within the timeline of the upcoming TIP, particularly larger projects which would require funding over multiple years. He stated that upcoming TIP discussions at

the MPO could involve seeking out projects that were not evaluated by MPO staff but would be eligible for programming in earlier TIP years.

D. Amstutz asked if MPO members should assume that the removed funds for Rutherford Avenue in FFYs 2023-24 will need to be reallocated in later TIP years.

M. Genova stated that this is true. Specifically, funding for Rutherford Avenue is anticipated to be reallocated in FFY 2027 and in future years, adding that the funding timeline for Rutherford Avenue is five years, with the first year of funding being programmed in FFY 2025.

E. Bourassa expressed that it would be useful to know the specific status of projects that have not reached the 25 percent design stage. As an example, he stated that a project could have been approved by the Project Review Committee (PRC) but little progress may have been made following the approval. However, a project could have been discussed during MassDOT's formalized pre-25 percent design meeting, which would put the project in a better standing to advance in design. This information would help inform programming decisions. M. Genova stated that he will prepare this information for the upcoming MPO meeting.

Jay Monty (City of Everett) asked if, when evaluating readiness of a project, there is consideration given to how a project could be accelerated to be programmed in an earlier fiscal year. With respect to the unallocated \$51 million in FFY 2023, he asked if some projects could be accelerated by providing assistance to municipalities. D. Mohler stated that MassDOT analyzes projects for potential programming in earlier TIP years, adding that there is a possibility that new information received after TIP Readiness Day may allow earlier programming for some projects. John Bechard (MassDOT) stated that TIP Readiness Day is a snapshot of currently available information on projects, and decisions to accelerate projects are based on discussions with multiple MassDOT departments and MPO staff.

Dennis Giombetti (City of Framingham) asked if MPO members will be provided with a list of projects that could potentially be programmed in FFYs 2023-24. He asked if this list could include the risk factor for each project based on cost and readiness.

M. Genova stated that project details will be discussed in upcoming MPO meetings, which will include information requested by E. Bourassa. He stated that MPO staff will need to research projects that may be eligible for programming in FFYs 2023-24 that are not included in the TIP Universe of Projects. MPO staff will work with MassDOT to source these projects.

T. Bent expressed that the City of Somerville hoped the McGrath Boulevard project would be further in design. He asked if it would be possible to accelerate the design process. D. Mohler noted the importance of the McGrath Boulevard project and stated that MassDOT will determine if there are ways to expediate the design process.

T. Bent stated that he has observed highly inflated costs of construction materials but noted that there were few project cost increases in the presented scenario. He speculated that the inflation rate applied to projects may not cover construction materials in the short term, and he asked if the procurement of construction materials were considered for all projects. D. Mohler stated that MassDOT tracks this actively as bids open for construction. Some projects have raised more concern than others, such as those that require significant amounts of steel. J. Bechard stated that the inflated costs of construction materials are factored into decisions on project readiness. MassDOT actively monitors industrial trends to maintain an understanding of how material costs could impact projects. T. Bent noted that, in addition to the cost of construction materials, issues with the supply chain could adversely impact projects.

Rich Benevento (WorldTech Engineering) stated that the initial programming cost of the Bridge Street project in Beverly was determined during PRC approval. He noted that discussions of changing the inflation rate of four percent per year was discussed in the TIP Ad Hoc Committee, and he expressed that the current rate may not be sufficient. He stated that WorldTech Engineering's cost estimate of the Bridge Street project is \$10 million, adding that the \$12.5 million listed in the readiness scenario table likely accounts for add-on costs such as police details. He added that the reason for the cost increase likely stems, in part, from the cost inflation of materials discussed by T. Bent, emphasizing that the project scope for Bridge Street did not expand. Regarding the Independence Greenway Expansion in Peabody, he stated that WorldTech Engineering has been coordinating with MassDOT on its readiness, and 75 percent design plans will be submitted in March or April 2022. Regarding Mount Auburn Street in Watertown, he stated that the Town's coordination with the MBTA has been beneficial, and the 75 percent design plans are anticipated to be submitted in May or June 2022.

## **10. New Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Briefing—David Mohler, Chair**

D. Mohler provided an overview of funding provided through the BIL. The five-year apportionments for FFYs 2022-26 for Massachusetts under the BIL include approximately \$5.4 billion in highway formula funds. The BIL's highway formula funds are composed of \$3.5 billion in reauthorized amounts already programmed in the FFYs 2022-26 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and \$449 million in

increased funding for existing STIP programs. The remaining \$1.4 billion in formula funds include the following:

- \$1.125 billion for a new bridge program
- \$106.5 million for a new resiliency program (PROTECT)
- \$93.7 million for a new carbon reduction program
- \$63.5 million for a new electric vehicle infrastructure program
- \$9.1 million for ferry boats and terminals

D. Mohler stated that federal transportation funding in the BIL is divided into three types: Contract Authority, Supplemental Appropriations, and Authorizations Subject to Appropriation.

- Contract Authority is used for programs from the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). This is not subject to annual appropriation. However, Congress annually imposes an overall obligation limitation that constrains the maximum amount of contract authority each year. Contract Authority accounts for approximately 83 percent of the transportation funding in the BIL.
- Supplemental Appropriations are appropriations made in a reauthorization act instead of the annual appropriations bill. They are self-effectuating and not subject to the annual obligation ceiling. Supplemental Appropriations account for approximately thirteen percent of the transportation funding in the BIL.
- Authorizations Subject to Appropriation are intentions to implement a program in a future year, but no money is available until an appropriations act makes the money available. Authorizations Subject to Appropriation account for four percent of the transportation funding in the BIL.

Congress has not passed a Transportation Appropriations Act, and MassDOT currently operates under a Continuing Resolution (CR) that expires on March 11, 2022. The CR is based on the FAST Act and does not provide sufficient obligation authority for the FFY 2022 increases contained in the BIL, nor does it allow the implementation of any new programs under Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Contract Authority, such as the new carbon reduction and PROTECT formula programs.<sup>2</sup> Programs funded

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<sup>2</sup> These comments reflect information available at the time of the February 17, 2022, MPO meeting. The President signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act into law on March 15, 2022, making funds available in FFY 202.

with Supplemental Appropriations, such as the new Formula Bridge Program and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program, do not rely on Contract Authority. They are not subject to obligation limitation and can be implemented regardless of the CR.

D. Mohler stated that Regional Target funding in each region's TIP is based upon formula funds annually apportioned to the Commonwealth from the HTF. The Commonwealth distributes approximately one third of these funds among the state's MPOs based upon a formula developed by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies. Based upon an assumed obligation authority of an average five-year rolling average of 90 percent, the statewide increase in STIP funding for FFYs 2023-26 is \$442.2 million; the increase in overall Regional Target funding is \$150.7 million; and the increase in Boston Region MPO target funding is \$64.7 million. FFY 2027 TIP funding will be based on an assumed amount consistent with the BIL's annual amounts. D. Mohler noted that these funding totals are federal aid only.

Statewide funding in the Commonwealth's TIPs is based upon a combination of formula funds annually apportioned to the state from the HTF and formula funds apportioned to Massachusetts from BIL's Supplemental Appropriations. The Commonwealth distributes approximately two thirds of HTF funds to statewide projects and programs. This includes highway, bridge, and bicycle and pedestrian projects; repayment of Grant Anticipatory Notes; MPO planning funds; and extra work orders.

The BIL's Supplemental Appropriation formula funds include the Formula Bridge Program, the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program and the Ferry Boat and Terminal Program. These will be funded through the MassDOT portion of the STIP. D. Mohler noted that programs funded with Supplemental Appropriations are not subject to obligation limitation, nor to the typical STIP "use it or lose it" requirement. Instead, each program is governed by specific statutory language. Annual funding under the program is available for obligation for a period of four years; as an example, D. Mohler stated that FFY 2022 funds can be obligated between FFY 2022 and FFY 2025.

The Commonwealth's apportionment under the new Electric Vehicle Infrastructure program is estimated to be \$63.5 million over five years, and funding under the program is available until expended. However, an FHWA-approved State Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Plan is a prerequisite to obligating program funds.

D. Mohler stated that during FFYs 2022-26, the BIL will increase the Commonwealth's transportation formula by more than 34 percent and provide the following:

- \$449 million in increased apportionments for existing programs

- \$200 million for the new, HTF-funded Carbon Reduction and PROTECT programs
- \$1.2 billion for two new Supplemental Appropriation funded programs (Formula Bridge and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure)

The failure to pass an Appropriations Act, coupled with the language of the existing CR, prohibits the BIL's FFY 2022 increases from taking effect and constrains the implementation of the Carbon Reduction and PROTECT programs. The current TIP will need to be amended to program the BIL's increased FY 2022 funding, should Congress address this issue.

Transit funding for FFY 2022-26 in the Commonwealth under the BIL is approximately \$2.8 billion, of which \$2.2 billion is allocated to the MBTA. The increased MBTA formula funding under the BIL is approximately \$581 million. The MBTA's transit formula funds under the BIL consist of the following:

- \$968 million in Urbanized Area funds, an increase of \$193 million
- \$1.2 billion State of Good Repair funds, an increase of \$389 million
- \$31 million in Bus and Bus Facility funds, a reduction of \$1 million

D. Mohler noted that the BIL did not establish new transit formula programs.

D. Mohler stated that the BIL includes authorizations for over 35 discretionary competitive programs administered by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Office of the Secretary and the operating agencies, with total funding exceeding \$110 billion. Eighteen existing programs are reauthorized for an aggregate amount of \$77.3 billion, and nineteen new programs are authorized for \$36.1 billion. D. Mohler outlined the entities that will administer these grants:

- The Office of the Secretary will administer five programs authorized at \$19 billion.
- FHWA will administer seventeen programs authorized at \$28.4 billion.
- The Federal Transit Administration will administer ten programs authorized at \$19.4 billion.
- The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will administer four programs authorized at \$44.3 billion.

- The Maritime Administration has one program authorized at \$2.3 billion.

D. Mohler noted that this only accounts for projects administered by the Office of the Secretary and operating agencies. He added that transit projects may be eligible for funding under FHWA or FRA programs depending upon the statutory language and the particular project.

D. Mohler outlined three large programs administered by the Office of the Secretary:

- The Local and Regional Project Assistance Grants (RAISE) program is an existing program reauthorized at \$7.5 billion over five years. A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for FFY 2022 was issued February 4, 2022, and applications are due April 14, 2022. The total amount of funding available in FY 2022 is \$1.5 billion, a 50 percent increase over FFY 2021.
- The National Infrastructure Project Assistance Grants (Mega Projects) program is a new program authorized at \$5 billion over five years. A description of the selection criteria is available on the [USDOT website](#). The program is included in a joint NOFO announced on March 23, 2022.
- The Safe Streets and Roads for All program is a new program authorized at \$5 billion. USDOT expects to release a NOFO in the second quarter of calendar year (CY) 2022. This program is open to MPOs, local governments, and federally recognized Tribes. However, state DOTs are not eligible to apply.

D. Mohler outlined six large programs administered by FHWA:

- The Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highway Projects (INFRA) program is an existing program reauthorized at \$8 billion over five years. This program includes \$750 million set aside for a state incentives pilot program. The BIL includes an additional \$6 billion authorized subject to appropriation. The program is included in a joint NOFO announced on March 23, 2022.
- The Bridge Investment Program is a new program authorized at \$12.5 billion over five years, including a \$200 million set aside for Tribal bridges and a \$100 million set aside for planning. The BIL includes an additional \$4 billion authorized subject to appropriation. This program is funded with both Supplemental Appropriations (\$9.2 billion) and Contract Authority (\$3.3 billion), which cannot be accessed under the existing CR. FHWA has not yet announced a next milestone for this program.

- The Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Grants program is a new program authorized at \$1.4 billion over five years. This includes \$375 million set aside (divided evenly) for At-Risk Coastal Infrastructure, Community Resilience and Evacuation Routes, and Planning. This program is funded with Contract Authority.
- The Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grants program is a new program authorized at \$2.5 billion, which will be divided equally between a corridor program and a community program. This program is funded with Contract Authority.
- The Rural Surface Transportation Grants program is a new program authorized at \$2 billion over five years. Ten percent of the funding is set aside from projects under \$25 million; 25 percent is set aside for Appalachian Development Highways, and fifteen percent is set aside for states with higher-than-average rural roadway lane departure facilities. This program is funded with Contract Authority and is included in a joint NOFO announced on March 23, 2022.
- The Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program is a new program authorized at \$1 billion. This program is funded with both Supplemental Appropriations (\$500 million) and Contract Authority (\$500 million). FHWA has not yet announced a next milestone for this program.

D. Mohler outlined five large programs administered by FTA:

- The Capital Investment Grants program is an existing program reauthorized at \$8 billion over five years. The BIL includes an additional \$15 billion authorized subject to appropriation. This program will fund New Starts, Small Starts, and Core Capacity projects, each with their own statutory requirements and each with a multi-step, multiyear development process.
- The Low or No Emission Bus Grants program is an existing program reauthorized at \$5.6 billion over five years. The FFY 2022 funding amount is estimated to be \$1.1 billion. The program is included in a joint NOFO announced on March 4, 2022.
- The Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Grants program is an existing program reauthorized at \$2 billion over five years. The FY 2022 funding amount is estimated to be \$376 million. The program is included in a joint NOFO announced on March 4, 2022.

- The All Stations Accessibility Program is a new program authorized at \$1.8 billion over five years. This program will upgrade the accessibility of legacy rail fixed-guideway public transportation systems for persons with disabilities. The program requirements are still being developed, and FTA has not yet announced its next milestone.
- The Rail Vehicle Replacement Grants program is a new program authorized at \$1.5 billion over five years. This program is limited to a maximum of three projects per year and multiyear projects may be funded. The FFY 2022 funding amount is estimated to be \$300 million, and FTA expects to issue a NOFO in the second quarter of CY 2022.

### ***Discussion***

J. Monty asked if the project limit per program is a national limit or if three projects will be permitted per state. D. Mohler stated that the three project limits are national.

T. O'Rourke asked if there are concerns that states may not have the capacity to manage this increased funding, considering both staff capacity and supply chain issues. D. Mohler stated that the MassDOT Highway Division is being expanded and acknowledged that there will be a significant amount of work in a relatively short period of time. He noted that supply chain issues are a particular concern in certain sectors due to Buy America provisions. MassDOT expects to have sufficient capacity to fully manage the new programs and will coordinate with its federal partners on capacity issues.

K. Miller noted that for several of the programs outlined by D. Mohler, local governments are eligible to apply for and be the direct recipient of funding. He added that municipalities and MPOs could ask their state DOT for assistance even if the state is not the direct recipient.

D. Amstutz asked which programs are eligible for direct municipal application, noting that the Safe Streets and Roads for All program was singled out as eligible for municipalities. D. Mohler stated that this aspect of the Safe Streets and Roads program was noted because it is the only program under the BIL that state DOTs are not eligible to apply for. He stated that municipalities should assume that they are eligible to apply for programs unless it is explicitly stated that they are not. He added that he will work with MPO staff to provide guidance.

Bill Conroy (Boston Department of Transportation) asked if there is an overlap with the BIL and FEMA grants, regarding waterway work. D. Mohler stated the BIL does account

for environmental remediation and suggested that B. Conroy contact the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for more detailed guidance.

Melisa Tintocalis (North Suburban Planning Council, Town of Burlington) asked how best MPO members could provide guidance on the BIL programs to municipalities. D. Mohler stated that municipal members of the MPO can look at the BIL in two ways: as an MPO member and as a municipality. From the perspective of an MPO member, the formula programs are most important; there will be significantly more Regional Target funding available in upcoming TIP years. He suggested members speak with their respective MAPC subregions to ensure that municipalities are aware of this opportunity to bring projects to the MPO. He also expressed that, prior to the BIL, some communities may have not submitted projects for TIP consideration due to concerns of competitiveness and lack of funding. From a municipal perspective, members should consider what unmet transportation needs exist in their community that could qualify for funding. He stated that MassDOT will meet with municipalities to help determine which programs will best fit a community's need.

David Koses (City of Newton) expressed interest in the All Stations Accessibility Program, noting that funds could be used to improve many legacy MBTA stations. He asked if municipalities will need to wait for additional requirements to be released by USDOT before coordinating with MassDOT on the best potential investments in the system. D. Mohler stated that MassDOT is awaiting further federal guidance, particularly for new programs. However, MassDOT is internally developing lists of potential projects that could be funded with additional formula funds. He suggested that members consider potential projects as well, adding that municipalities should apply for funds even if the potential project is not one that has been considered a priority by MassDOT.

## **10. Members Items**

L. Diggins expressed his appreciation of the work conducted by R. Foley. D. Mohler echoed this, stating that she has been a longstanding asset to the work of the MPO.

## **11. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by the Inner Core Committee (T. Bent, City of Somerville) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (L. Diggins). The motion carried.

## Attendance

<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
At-Large City (City of Everett)	Jay Monty
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Daniel Amstutz
At-Large Town (Town of Brookline)	Heather Hamilton
City of Boston (Boston Planning & Development Agency [BPDA])	Jim Fitzgerald
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	William Conroy
Federal Highway Administration	Ken Miller
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	David Mohler
MassDOT Highway Division	John Bechard
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)	John Romano
Massachusetts Port Authority	Jillian Linnell
MBTA Advisory Board	Sarah Lee
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Amira Patterson
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Eric Bourassa
Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Acton)	Dennis Giombetti Austin Cyganiewicz
North Shore Task Force (City of Beverly)	Darlene Wynne
North Suburban Planning Council (City of Burlington)	Melisa Tintocalis
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
South Shore Coalition (Town of Rockland)	Jennifer Constable
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Peter Pelletier
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tom O'Rourke Steve Olanoff

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<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Paul Alunni	
Rich Benevento	WorldTech Engineering
Todd Blake	City of Medford
Joe Blankenship	BPDA
Paul Cobuzzi	
Janie Dretler	Town of Sudbury
Brad Rawson	City of Somerville
Ali Kleyman	City of Somerville
John Liriano	Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources
Derek Krevat	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Derek Shooster	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Michelle Ho	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
Frank Suszynski	MassDOT District 4
Ben Muller	MassDOT District 6
Michael Garrity	MassDOT
Timothy Paris	MassDOT
Adi Nochur	MAPC
Josh Klingenstein	MBTA
Joy Glynn	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Tyler Terrasi	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
Marzie Galazka	Town of Swampscott
Valerie Gingrich	Town of Wilmington
Owen MacDonald	Town of Weymouth
Jon Seward	Community Design Partnership
Jonathan Rockwell	TEC Inc.
Michael Pompili	
Jay Flynn	
Kevin Weeks	
Katie Lockhart	
Duncan Richie	
John Rogan	
Catherine Bowen	
Sarah Freeman	
Gary Rennie	

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**MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Annette Demchur

Róisín Foley

Matt Genova

Sandy Johnston

Anne McGahan

Michelle Scott

Bruce Kaplan

Betsy Harvey

Gina Perille

Jonathan Church

Marty Milkovits

Stella Jordan

Sean Rourke

Srilekha Murthy

Heyne Kim

Matt Archer

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**Title VI Specialist**

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

**By Telephone:**

857.702.3702 (voice)

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

- **Relay Using TTY or Hearing Carry-over:** 800.439.2370
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