

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## WHAT IS THE BOSTON REGION MPO?

Metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) are responsible for providing forums for making decisions about how to allocate federal transportation funds for capital projects and planning studies in a metropolitan area. These decisions are guided by information and ideas collected from a broad group of people, including elected officials, municipal planners and engineers, transportation advocates, and interested residents. Each metropolitan area in the United States with a population of 50,000 or more—also known as an urbanized area—is required by federal legislation to establish an MPO for the area.



### BOSTON REGION MPO JURISDICTION AND MEMBERSHIP

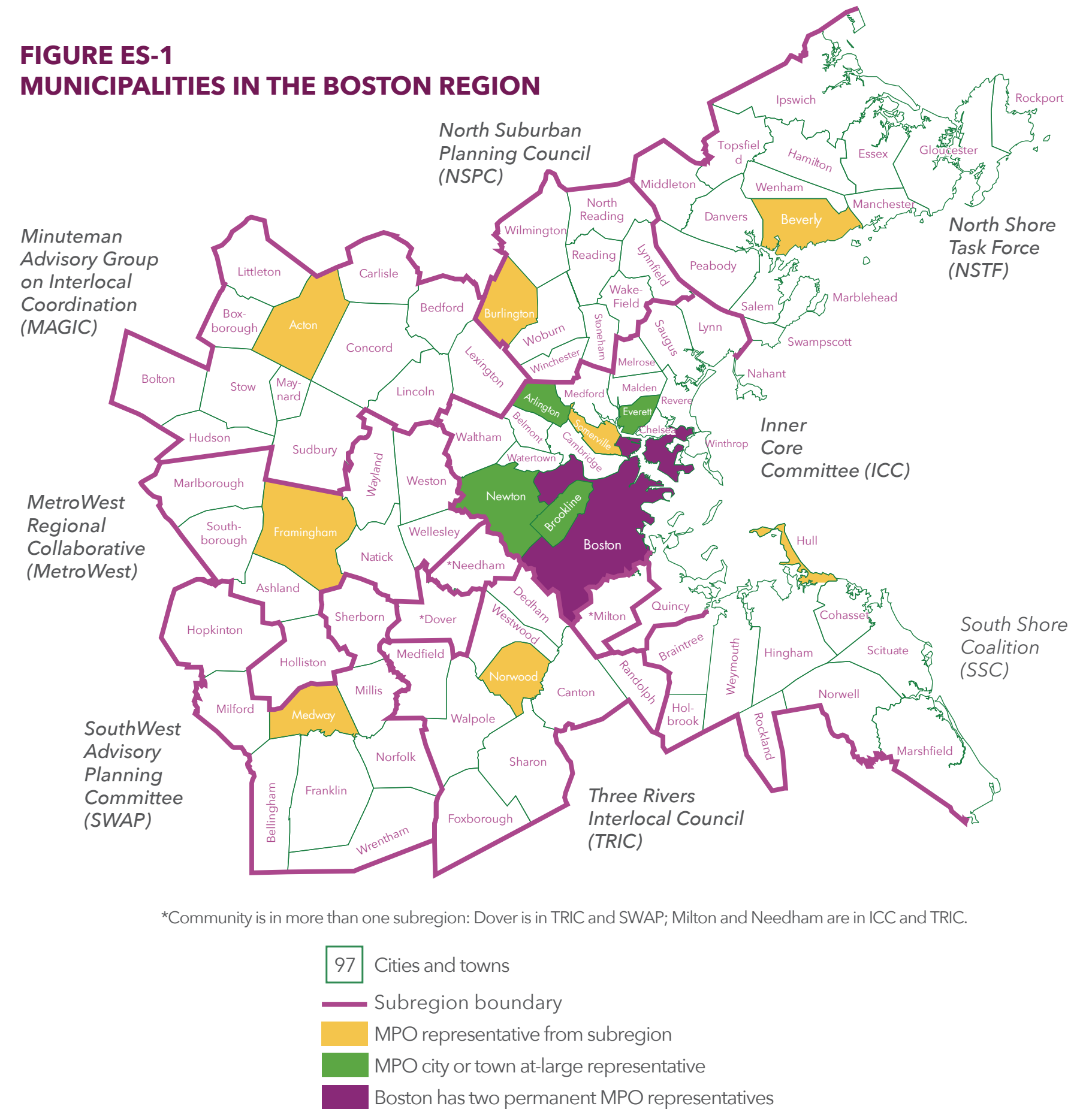
The Boston Region MPO’s planning area extends across 97 cities and towns from Boston north to Ipswich, south to Marshfield, and west to Interstate 495.

Figure ES-1 shows the map of the Boston Region MPO’s member municipalities.

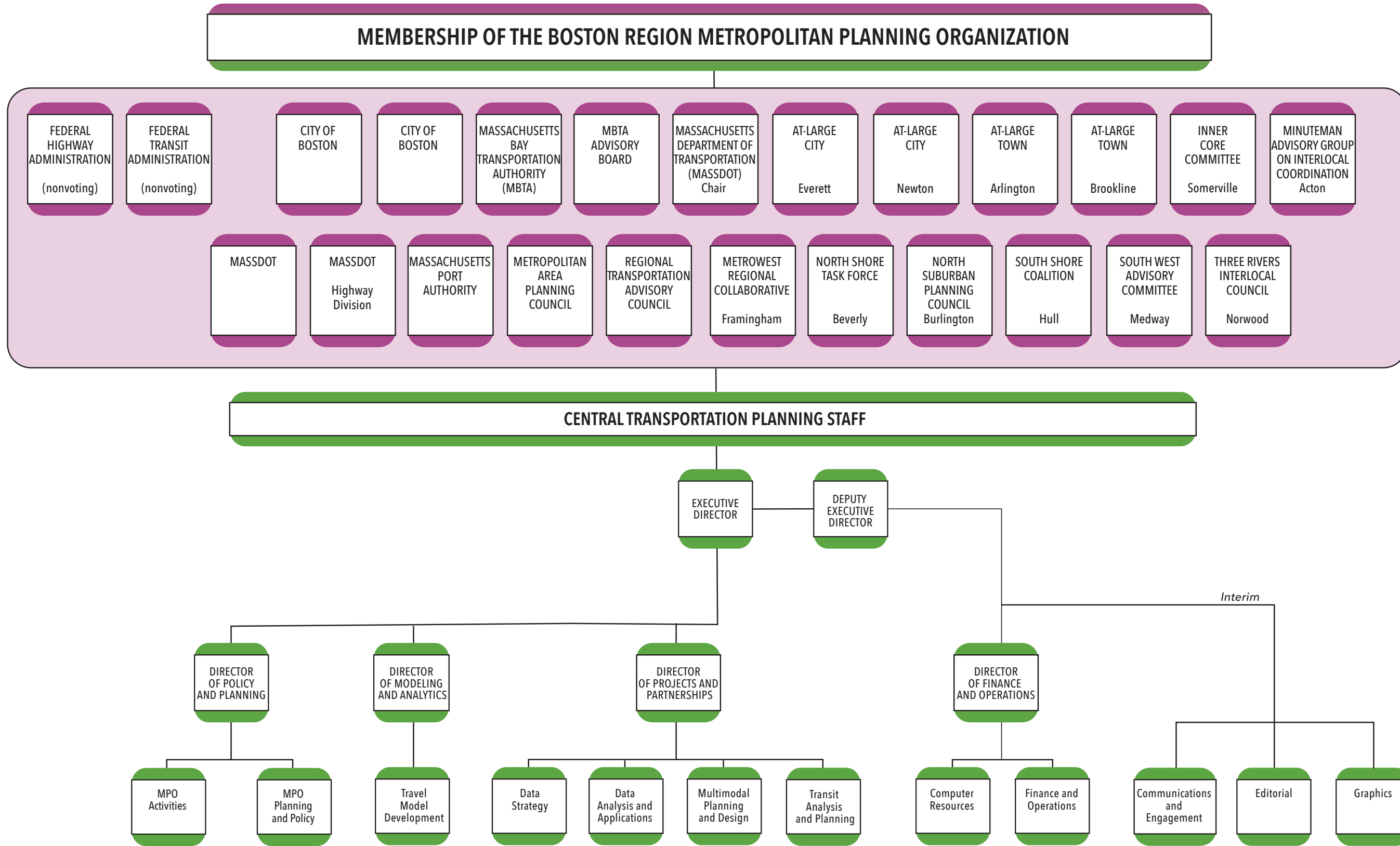
The MPO’s board has 22 voting members. Several state agencies, regional organizations, and the City of Boston are permanent voting members, while 12 municipalities are elected as voting members for three-year terms. Eight municipal members represent each of the eight subregions of the Boston region, and four represent at-large municipal seats. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) participate on the MPO board as advisory, or nonvoting, members. More details about the MPO’s permanent members can be found in Appendix F.

Figure ES-2 details MPO membership and the organization of the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS), which serves as staff to the MPO.

**FIGURE ES-1  
MUNICIPALITIES IN THE BOSTON REGION**



**FIGURE ES-2  
BOSTON REGION MPO ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



May 2023



Photo courtesy of Susana Hey



## THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

The federal government regulates the funding, planning, and operation of the transportation system through the federal transportation program, which was enacted into law through Titles 23 and 49 of the United States Code. The Federal-Aid Highway Act and the Federal Transit Act require that urbanized areas conduct a transportation planning process to be eligible for federal funds, resulting in plans and programs consistent with the planning goals of the metropolitan area.

The most recent reauthorization of the transportation law is the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which sets policies related to metropolitan transportation planning. The law requires all MPOs to carry out a continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative (3C) transportation planning process. As part of its 3C planning process, the Boston Region MPO annually produces the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). These documents, along with the quadrennial Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), are required for the MPO to be certified as meeting federal requirements. This certification is a prerequisite for receiving federal transportation funds. In addition to this requirement, the MPO must establish and conduct an inclusive public engagement process, as well as maintain travel models and data resources to support air quality conformity determinations, transportation equity analyses, and long- and short-range planning work and initiatives.

Appendix E explains the regulatory and legislative context in which the MPO operates in greater detail.

## THE 3C PLANNING PROCESS

The 3C planning process is an approach for conducting meaningful transportation planning:

- **Continuing:** Transportation planning should plan for the short- and long-range horizons, emphasizing the evolving progression from systems planning to project planning, programming, and implementation. It should recognize the necessity for continuously reevaluating data and plans.
- **Comprehensive:** Transportation planning should integrate all stages and levels of the process and examine all modes to ensure a balanced planning and programming approach. The planning process should include analysis of related non-transportation elements such as land use, economics, environmental resources, and population.
- **Cooperative:** Transportation planning should be a process designed to encourage involvement by all users of the system, including community groups, environmental organizations, freight operators, businesses, and members of the public.

Chapter 1 explains the 3C process in greater detail.

# WHAT IS THE UPWP?

The UPWP is a one-year planning document and financial plan that explains how the Boston region's federal transportation planning funds will be spent in a given federal fiscal year (FFY).

The development of the UPWP involves the prioritization of all potential transportation planning programs, studies, and technical analyses that could be undertaken to benefit the region in a given year. The scopes and budgets of the prioritized work are documented in the UPWP. The aim is to ensure that the work undertaken by the MPO supports the region's transportation goals, as established through the 3C process.



Photo courtesy of Susana Hey

The UPWP serves as a source for the following information:

- Information for government officials, municipal officials, and the public about transportation planning projects and programs expected to be conducted in the Boston region
- Budget information for federal and state officials about how the Boston Region MPO plans to spend federal metropolitan planning funds on programs and studies performed on behalf of the MPO

## HOW DOES THE UPWP RELATE TO THE GOALS OF THE BOSTON REGION MPO?

The Boston Region MPO plans for the transportation future of the Boston region. The MPO is guided by a 20-year vision for a modern, safe, equitable, sustainable, and technologically advanced transportation system for the region. This vision is described in the MPO's current LRTP, *Destination 2040*. The transportation planning work funded through the UPWP is an integral part of achieving this regional vision.

The transportation goals of the Boston region, as defined in *Destination 2040*, are as follows:

1. Safety: Transportation by all modes will be safe.
2. System Preservation: Maintain and modernize the transportation system and plan for its resiliency.
3. Clean Air/Clean Communities: Create an environmentally friendly transportation system.
4. Capacity Management/Mobility: Use existing facility capacity more efficiently and increase transportation options.
5. Transportation Equity: Ensure that all people receive comparable benefits from, and are not disproportionately burdened by, MPO investments, regardless of race, color, national origin, age, income, ability, or sex.
6. Economic Vitality: Ensure our transportation network provides a strong foundation for economic vitality.

The MPO is currently in the process of developing its next LRTP. The following paragraph is the MPO's vision statement as approved in February 2023; this UPWP was developed to be consistent with this vision.

*The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization envisions an equitable, pollution-free, and modern regional transportation system that gets people to their destinations safely, easily, and reliably, and that supports an inclusive, resilient, healthy, and economically vibrant Boston region.*

In addition to the LRTP and the UPWP, the MPO also produces the TIP for the Boston region. As the near-term capital investment plan of the MPO, the TIP describes and prioritizes transportation construction projects that are expected to be implemented during the upcoming five-year period. Figure ES-3 illustrates the relationship between the LRTP vision and goals; the planning foundation for the MPO's work, the UPWP; the TIP; and the process for monitoring and evaluating progress towards achieving the region's goals.

## WHAT ARE FEDERAL METROPOLITAN PLANNING FUNDS?

The total federal funding programmed in this UPWP is \$7,116,954. All federal funds programmed in the UPWP are awarded to the Boston Region MPO by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) as FHWA 3C Planning (PL) funds. These federal funds initially come from two sources: the FHWA and the FTA. There are two categories of funds. Federal funds originating from FHWA, known as FHWA 3C Planning funds, are distributed across MPO regions using a formula developed by the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies. Federal funds originating from the FTA are known as FTA 3C Planning (Section 5303) funds. Both FHWA 3C Planning funds and FTA 3C Planning funds programmed in this UPWP include a state match. For more detailed information on funding sources and breakdowns, please see Chapter 2.

## IS OTHER WORK DISCUSSED IN THE UPWP?

In addition to MPO-funded work, CTPS performs planning analyses and studies funded by state transportation agencies, including MassDOT, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), and the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport). More detail about these agency-funded studies can be found in Appendix A.

# WHAT PROGRAMS AND STUDIES ARE IN THE FFY 2024 UPWP?

The UPWP contains detailed information about work programs, studies, support activities, and technical analyses that are organized in the following categories:

- **Certification requirements and administrative activities:** The UPWP includes activities that the MPO must conduct to remain certified as an MPO by the federal government, to be eligible to receive and distribute federal transportation dollars, and to maintain its data resources and computer equipment properly. See Chapters 3 and Chapter 5 for more detail about these areas of work.
- **Ongoing/continuing work programs:** The MPO conducts technical analyses and planning studies for cities and towns in the region. See Chapter 4 for more detail on these studies and technical analyses.

- New studies: The UPWP funds discrete studies to enhance the staff’s knowledge of the practice, improve analytical methods, and evaluate strategies for policy implementation. See Chapter 4 for more detail on these new studies.
- Agency-funded studies, technical analyses, and regional planning work: CTPS conducts planning analyses and studies funded by state transportation agencies, including MassDOT, the MBTA, and Massport. These agency-funded studies are described in Appendix A. This appendix additionally outlines transportation planning work undertaken by other agencies or entities in the region, which may not be funded by the MPO.

Table ES-1 contains the budget allocated for the MPO’s 3C planning activities in FFY 2024. The table reflects the FHWA metropolitan PL funds and FTA Section 5303 funds, which CTPS and Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) expect to spend in FFY 2024. The table also reflects the work that CTPS will conduct with funds provided by other transportation agencies.

Chapters 3 through 5 provide detailed information about the transportation-planning activities that will be performed by CTPS during FFY 2024. The new studies chosen for funding in FFY 2024 are summarized below in Table ES-2 and described in more detail in Chapter 4.

Photo courtesy of MOTT, by Kristina Smith



**Table ES-1  
Unified Planning Work Program Budget for FFY 2024**

| <b>3C Studies and Programs by Budget Categories</b> | <b>Proposed FFY 2024 CTPS Budget</b> |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Resource Management and Support Activities          | \$395,500                            |
| MPO Certification Requirements                      | \$4,575,486                          |
| Ongoing MPO-Funded Technical Analyses               | \$146,700                            |
| New MPO-Funded Discrete Studies                     | \$150,000                            |
| MassDOT-Directed PL Funds*                          | \$359,326                            |
| Direct Support                                      | \$175,000                            |
| <b>Total FFY 2024 CTPS Budget</b>                   | <b>\$5,802,012</b>                   |

| <b>3C Studies and Programs by MAPC Budget Categories</b>         | <b>Proposed FFY 2024 MAPC Budget</b> |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| MAPC Planning Studies and Technical Analyses                     | \$769,942                            |
| MAPC Administration, Resource Management, and Support Activities | \$545,000                            |
| <b>Total MAPC FFY 2024 UPWP Programmed Funds</b>                 | <b>\$1,314,942</b>                   |

| <b>Agency Supporting MPO/3C Work</b> | <b>Proposed FFY 2024 Budget</b> |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| CTPS                                 | \$5,802,012                     |
| MAPC                                 | \$1,314,942                     |
| <b>3C Budget Subtotal</b>            | <b>\$7,116,954</b>              |
| <b>FFY 2024 UPWP Budget</b>          | <b>\$7,116,954</b>              |

Note: This budget includes salary, overhead, and direct support costs.

\* Projects in this category are conducted on behalf of MassDOT but funded through the MPO 3C contract.

**Table ES-2  
New Discrete Funded Studies in FFY 2024**

| Universe ID                           | Project ID | Study or Program  | Proposed FFY 2024 CTPS Budget |
|---------------------------------------|------------|---|-------------------------------|
| M-1                                   | 14001      | Lab and Municipal Parking Phase II                          | \$45,000                      |
| A-1                                   | 14002      | Parking in Bike Lanes: Strategies for Safety and Prevention | \$20,000                      |
| R-2                                   | 14003      | Strategies for Environmental Outreach and Engagement        | \$25,000                      |
| TE-1                                  | 14004      | Applying Conveyal to TIP Project Scoring                    | \$60,000                      |
| <b>Total for New Discrete Studies</b> |            |   | <b>\$150,000</b>              |

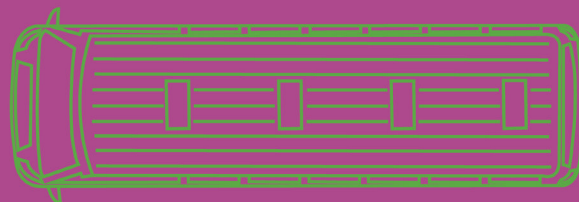
# WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR CREATING THE UPWP AND MONITORING PROGRESS ON STUDIES?

## DEVELOPING THE UPWP

The annual process of creating the UPWP includes both generating and evaluating ideas for new studies, as well as updating the scopes and anticipated deliverables for ongoing programs, technical analysis activities, certification requirements, and administrative support activities.

Ideas for studies, technical analysis activities, and deliverables for ongoing programs come from a combination of the following resources:

- Input gathered through public engagement and meetings with MAPC’s eight subregional municipal planning groups
- Regional Transportation Advisory Council input gathered from meetings in which MPO staff discuss study ideas and the transportation priorities of Advisory Council’s members





- Input gathered from the MPO's UPWP Committee, which oversees the development of the entire UPWP document and meets throughout the year
- Existing planning documents such as the MPO's Congestion Management Process and LRTP Needs Assessment; the MBTA's long-range capital plan; MetroCommon, MAPC's long-range plan for smart growth in the Boston region; and other recent studies
- Guidance issued by FHWA and FTA on studies that address the federal transportation planning emphasis areas (for more information on the federal emphasis areas, see Appendix E and Table E-1)
- Study proposals that MPO staff receive during outreach events and during the public comment period for the UPWP and other staff-produced reports
- Consultations with MassDOT, the MBTA, and MAPC that occur during document development and throughout the year as new ideas for transportation planning needs arise
- MPO staff-identified needs that emerge from continual interactions between the MPO staff, state and local agencies, organizations, and community groups

Ideas for new studies are compiled into the Universe of Proposed Studies. Each proposal is evaluated based on how it would help the region accomplish the LRTP goals. In selecting the final list of studies, the UPWP Committee also considers the utility of the projected study results to MPO stakeholders; whether sufficient staff resources are available to execute the needed work; and whether the work to be carried out is coordinated, rather than redundant, with work being done in other agencies.

The MPO continually seeks to improve its process through inclusive and collaborative decision-making. For this reason, the MPO seeks to involve a broad and diverse range of stakeholders throughout the UPWP development process.

MPO staff will continue to seek public input for ideas for the Universe of Proposed New Studies and engage participants in discussing, evaluating, and eventually prioritizing studies for inclusion in the UPWP. Staff will also continue to monitor and enhance the MPO's communication channels, such as those listed below:

- An engaging website, which serves as a resource for those seeking to influence transportation planning in the Boston region
- An active social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn accounts (@BostonRegionMPO) covering transportation planning news and publicizing MPO events, and a YouTube channel featuring recordings of MPO meetings and virtual events
- A blog that publishes MPO research and data in an approachable format
- Targeted external outreach to advocacy and community groups, especially those representing populations that historically have been less involved in the MPO's processes

- Public outreach events, hosted by MPO staff or the MPO's partners, where staff present, facilitate activities, and listen to feedback and suggestions
- Open-house style events, where those seeking feedback and advice on TIP projects, UPWP proposals, or technical assistance applications can interact one-on-one with MPO staff

## WHAT IS THE PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS FOR THE UPWP?

Toward the end of the document development process, the MPO votes to release for public review a draft UPWP. MPO staff posts the document on the MPO's website ([www.bostonmpo.org](http://www.bostonmpo.org)) and publicizes its release via an email distribution list that includes municipal contacts, interested members of the public, and other stakeholders in the region, and via social media. Email messages inform stakeholders about upcoming opportunities for public review and involvement in MPO decision-making. MPO staff also solicit public input during open houses, meetings with stakeholders, and at public events hosted by the MPO or its transportation partners (including MassDOT and the MBTA). MPO staff compile comments made during the public review period and present them to the MPO board. Information about the public review process for the Draft FFY 2024 UPWP is provided in Appendix B.

## HOW ARE PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES MONITORED?

The MPO monitors the progress of programs and studies funded through the UPWP by performing the following tasks:

- Approving detailed work programs and scopes
- Reviewing monthly progress reports
- Tracking program and study budgets and spending via quarterly reports
- Approving the release of deliverables based on whether the objectives stated in the work program or scope were met and whether the stated deliverables were produced

# OVERVIEW OF THIS DOCUMENT

This UPWP document is structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides background on the metropolitan transportation planning process and Boston Region MPO member agencies.
- Chapter 2 provides detailed background and information on the purpose of the UPWP, the process of developing and monitoring UPWP work, and how the UPWP helps the MPO achieve its regional transportation goals.
- Chapter 3 includes descriptions of the certification activities to be completed that (1) support the core MPO planning and programming functions; (2) support the 3C planning process; and (3) support the MPO board and committee operations and their decision-making process, and the current budgets assigned to each program and activity.

- Chapter 4 describes the following ongoing and discrete studies and technical analysis work:
  - Summary tables of FFYs 2022–23 UPWP studies that have been completed or are projected to be completed by the end of September 2023, in addition to work products, including reports and technical memoranda
  - MPO planning studies and technical analyses that will be carried over from FFY 2023 to FFY 2024, if any
  - Descriptions of the new planning studies chosen for funding in FFY 2024
  - Updated descriptions of the ongoing technical analysis and support work that the MPO staff conducts for municipalities and the region
- Chapter 5 provides detailed information and FFY 2023 budgets for the resource management and support activities conducted by the MPO staff.
- Chapter 6 provides details on MAPC programs funded through the UPWP, including administrative, support, liaison, and technical assistance, and study activities.
- Chapter 7 includes budget summary tables that present how federal metropolitan planning funds will be spent on the support activities, studies, and programs documented in this UPWP. This chapter provides federal and state officials with necessary information for approving the use of funds and for administering contracts.
- Appendix A includes descriptions of the agency-funded transportation planning studies and technical analyses that will be undertaken by CTPS in FFY 2023. These include recurring contracts such as the MassDOT Title VI Program and the MBTA's National Transit Database: Data Collection and Analysis, and new contracts.
 

Appendix A additionally presents descriptions of non-MPO transportation-planning projects and studies that are being (or will be) conducted in the Boston region during FFY 2024 and that are funded using federal planning dollars and/or are of regional significance. These projects have a separate review and approval process outside of the MPO's purview. They are included in the UPWP to provide a comprehensive picture of plans and studies that are expected to take place in the Boston region and to ensure that MPO planning efforts are coordinated with other ongoing work.
- Appendix B describes the public participation process used for developing and reviewing the Draft UPWP. This appendix also includes written comments on the Draft UPWP that were received during the public review period.
- Appendix C includes the FFY 2024 Universe of Proposed New Studies and describes the evaluation process that was used by the UPWP Committee and the MPO as a guide for selecting new studies.

- Appendix D contains an updated analysis of the geographic distribution of location-specific studies programmed through the UPWP.
- Appendix E gives detailed information on the regulatory framework that guides the development of the UPWP, and the studies and activities programmed for funding, as well as the overall regulations and guidance that the MPO considers in all of its work.
- Appendix F documents the membership of the MPO in detail.

