

Overview of MPO Member Responsibilities

Background:

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is established as a required part of the transportation planning process under federal law. It is responsible for planning and programming federal financial resources for a multi-modal transportation system for the Boston metropolitan region. The MPO was established in 1973.

The Boston Region MPO Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that details the governing structure and process of the MPO can be viewed at bostonmpo.org/mpo

Specific Responsibilities:

The MPO must prepare and approve several plans and programs on an annual basis. These include:

- The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which programs funds for transportation planning programs in the region;
- The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which programs federal (and matching state and local) funding for surface transportation projects (highway and transit).

The MPO also prepares and approves several other plans and programs as required. These include:

- The Long-Range (or Regional) Transportation Plan (LRTP), which provides a 20- to 25-year plan for the region's transportation infrastructure to address needs and priorities; and
- The conformity of all surface transportation plans and programs with applicable federal laws (including air quality, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Title VI and Environmental Justice).

MPO Meetings:

Meetings are held as needed to accomplish the MPO's business. Typically, two MPO meetings are held each month, and all but four are held in Boston at the state transportation building. Up to four MPO meetings (one per quarter) are held in a community outside of Boston. MPO meetings typically begin at 10 AM on the first and third Thursday of the month, and last approximately two to three hours.

The MPO has the authority to establish necessary committees to accomplish its responsibilities. Recent experience suggests that the municipal members of the MPO or their designees attend at least two meetings per month to accomplish the work of the MPO.