

**Boston Region MPO Administration & Finance Committee**  
**Operations Plan Development**  
**Worksheet for Board Member Responsibilities – November 3, 2022**

**Operation Plan Memo - Relevant Sections from Operations Plan Memo**

Board member roles and representatives

- Define roles and responsibilities of MPO board members
- Define requirements for engaging member municipalities and subregions
- Define expectations and process around assigning representatives for the appointed official
- Define roles, responsibilities, and expectations for ex officio members
- Clarify expectations around representation of the MPO to press and other stakeholders

**2011 MOU - Relevant Sections**

- Although staff shall have primary responsibility for informing local governments regarding transportation funding and for collecting local input to the MPO, ***all members of the MPO*** shall have a role in informing local governments about transportation aid and the programming process and in considering local input to the MPO

**Considerations from the 2019 Certification Review**

- “An operations plan should clarify roles and responsibilities among BRMPO members and staff, particularly among CTPS, MAPC, and MassDOT, pertaining to collaboration, communication, work assignments, and products.”
- “The BRMPO should seek to broaden the information and training opportunities available to the board members about current best practices in transportation planning.”

**Questions for Discussion**

- What does it mean to be “representing the region” and how can that be described in this section? What is the expected “role in informing local governments about transportation aid and the programming process and in considering local input to the MPO”? What should be said about coordinating with their subregions or the bodies that board members represent?
- Is there a role to describe for members in the elections process?
- Should there be requirements/guidance around board meeting attendance, preparation (reviewing materials) and participation?
  - Note recommendation in Hampton Roads MPO Best Practices report: “Any voting member that misses more than two (2) consecutive meetings shall be reminded of their responsibilities in writing. Any voting member

missing more than three (3) consecutive meetings shall not count against the quorum requirements set forth herein.”

- Should board members continue to expect to participate in off-site meetings (noting that this is required in the MOU)?
- Should there be guidance on contributions to “member items”?
- Should the draft language on interacting with the press be included, or if not, what is the alternative?
- Committee roles are separate - should any of the work or discussion currently carried out by board members be shifted into committees or should any work committees currently do shift to board members? (This was not addressed in Committee conversations)
- What distinct roles should be defined for ex-officio or non voting members in terms of information sharing, participation in discussion, etc.? (This was not addressed in Committee conversations)
- Does the committee want to include reference to Robert’s Rules of Order in this section? This is the framework that the board currently follows, although it is not the only option (e.g. Martha’s Rules, Democratic Rules, etc. - see [this resource](#) from the City of Knoxville listing several alternatives).
- Should there be a separate Code of Conduct for board members? Two sample codes of conduct can be found [here](#). Possible components:
  - Being aware of and following MOU, Operations Plan, etc.
  - Inclusive and respectful conduct
  - Commitment to participate and ask questions
  - Commitment to regional interests (versus local or personal)
  - Conflict of interest and disclosure
- What expectations might there be for staff or board members in terms of ongoing education around best practices of MPOs and board members? What training opportunities would benefit MPO Board members?

## **Draft Operations Plan Elements: Board Member Responsibilities**

### **1) Member Terms**

- a) Permanent Members - There are 10 permanent members of the Boston Region MPO. The permanent members are:
  - i) Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) - three seats, including Chair
  - ii) Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)
  - iii) Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport)
  - iv) Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
  - v) MBTA Advisory Board
  - vi) Regional Transportation Advisory Council
  - vii) City of Boston (two seats - one from the Boston Transportation Department and the other from the Boston Planning and Development Agency)
- b) Elected Members - There are 12 municipal elected members of the Boston Region MPO which include two at-large cities, two at-large towns and eight subregions. Members are elected to three year terms. Each fall, four (4) of the 12 elected municipal members are voted on by CEOs of municipalities in the region for three-year terms. The current elected members are:
  - i) At-Large City, City of Everett
  - ii) At-Large City, City of Newton
  - iii) At-Large Town, Town of Arlington
  - iv) At-Large Town, Town of Brookline
  - v) Inner Core Committee (ICC), (City of Somerville)
  - vi) Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC), (Town of Acton)
  - vii) MetroWest Regional Collaborative (MWRC), (City of Framingham)
  - viii) North Shore Task Force (NSTF), (City of Beverly)
  - ix) North Suburban Planning Council (NSPC), (Town of Burlington)
  - x) South Shore Coalition (SSC), (Town of Rockland)
  - xi) SouthWest Advisory Planning Committee (SWAP), (Town of Medway)
  - xii) Three Rivers Interlocal Council (TRIC), (Town of Norwood/Neponset River Chamber of Commerce)

### **2) Onboarding of Board Members**

- a) Within 90 days of the start of a board member's term, new board members and recurring board members shall be invited to an overview orientation meeting with MPO staff to review the purpose of MPOs, the 3c process, the TIP, UPWP, and LRTP, public engagement, and other fundamental aspects of the operations of the MPO. New Board members must work with staff to find a date within the 90 days - the orientation or reorientation is optional for returning Board members.
- b) Within 90 days of the start of a board member's term, the board member will be invited to a one-on-one conversation with the Executive Director of the MPO.

- c) Prior to the orientation of new board members, existing Board members shall be contacted by staff to ask for volunteers to meet with and assist in orienting and mentoring new board members, also within the first 90 days.
- d) At times, board members may also be invited to additional training modules organized by staff. These modules would focus more deeply on particular and timeline topics, such as one of the primary 3c documents (the UPWP, TIP, and LRTP)

### **3) Board Member Expectations**

#### a) Board Meetings and Regional Representation:

- i) In order to successfully plan and implement projects of regional significance, all members of the MPO must be able to see the larger picture of regional transportation planning. All Board members are designees for their agency, subregion, or municipality, and are invited to share their perspective in representing their entities. However, all Board members, when serving on the Boston Region MPO board, agree to act in the interests of the regional goals, even if representing different local interests.
- ii) Board members are expected to respect the work and recommendations of committees, staff and other Board members and to promote respectful relations and communications among all members of the Board, even as they may also respectfully dissent from any Board action.
- iii) Board members are expected to represent the best interests of the organization at all times and to declare any and all duality or conflicts of interests, material or otherwise, that may impede or be perceived as impeding the capacity to deliberate or act in good faith on behalf of the best interests of the organization.
- iv) Board members are expected to maintain open communications and effective partnerships with other Board members, but will ensure that any communication is made in compliance with the Massachusetts Open Meetings Law.
- v) Board members shall not speak on behalf of the MPO board outside of MPO Board meetings unless approved by the Chair or Vice Chair of the MPO Board.
- vi) When contacted by the press, board members should respond with: "Thank you for your interest in the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. All press inquiries are handled by the agency's communications and public engagement staff. Please contact them at [news@ctps.org](mailto:news@ctps.org)." They should cc [news@ctps.org](mailto:news@ctps.org) on the response. If press requests are received by phone, the board member should summarize the message, the

date received, and the reporters' contact information, and send to [news@ctps.org](mailto:news@ctps.org).

- vii) When acting as Boston Region MPO Board Members, Board Members shall listen to other members and members of the public with respect, supporting an atmosphere of welcome open dialogue and discussion.
  - (1) Board members and their staff must never: (1) use offensive language; (2) suggest or engage in inappropriate behavior; (3) behave in an abusive or discriminatory manner.

b) Informed Participation:

- i) Board members, designees, or their alternates are expected to make every effort to attend all meetings of the Board and the committees of which they are members. When not able to attend, Board members shall notify MPO staff and review minutes and video recordings after the meeting.
  - (1) Board meetings are generally the first and third Thursdays of the month at 10 AM
  - (2) Board meetings will be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, except to the extent the Board acting as a body suspends application of such Rules.
  - (3) Meetings are also held off-site quarterly - when allowed virtually virtual meetings can be substituted for off-site when allowed., virtual meetings shall replace off-site meetings.
  - (4) Staff sends/posts agenda and materials one week in advance when possible.
  - (5) Meeting minutes are presented according to Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requirements: within three meetings or thirty days, whichever is later
  - (6) Audio and video recordings are posted to website ASAP after meeting
- ii) Board members are expected to keep well informed of all MPO matters, including reading advance materials for each meeting, and asking clarification questions about those materials in advance of and at board meetings. Board members present at meetings shall review each set of meeting minutes to ensure an accurate record of decision-making and so that they are able to vote on the approval of those minutes at following meetings.
- iii) Board members are expected to participate in the decisions of the organization by bringing to the attention of the Board, its officers, and/or Executive Director any questions or comments of significance or relevance on matters of governance or policymaking.
- iv) Board members are expected to bring items from the entities that they represent that may have relevance for other stakeholders in the region in "Members Items".

- v) Board members are expected to participate in subregional meetings relevant for the entity that they represent, to be able to share information about the operations of the MPO, promote opportunities to engage with the MPO such as events and elections, as well as hear and understand transportation and related (land use, resiliency, etc.) issues in their subregion.
- c) Ensure the MPO 3C process is maintained
  - 1. A comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative transportation planning process resulting in plans, programs and operations consistent with the planning objectives of the metropolitan area
    - a. Comprehensive, including the effective integration of the various stages and levels of transportation planning and programming for the entire Region and examining all modes so as to assure a balanced planning effort. There is simultaneous analysis of various related non-transportation elements, such as land use, economic and residential development, demographics, sustainability, and equity within a total planning process.
    - b. Continuing, affirming the necessity to plan for the short and long range needs of the regional transportation system, emphasizing the iterative character of the progression from systems planning to project planning, programming, operations and implementation. Frequent updating and re-evaluation of data and plans is necessary.
    - c. Cooperative, requiring effective coordination among public officials at all levels of government, and inviting the wide participation of all parties, public or private, at all stages of the transportation planning process. A key objective of the process is to resolve issues and controversies by providing a forum for negotiation and consensus building. At the same time, the process is not intended to operate, and cannot operate, to dilute the ultimate authority or responsibility of those state, regional, or local public officials who, pursuant to statute or under contract, review and/or implement transportation plans, programs, and projects.
- d) Develop transportation planning policies in support of the Boston region's vision and goals
  - 1. Support intermodal transportation planning intended to help provide the Boston region with the ability to maintain, manage and operate a multimodal transportation system that provides a high level of mobility and safety for people and freight, consistent with fiscal and environmental resources
  - 1. Proactively support planning and funding initiatives that enhance transportation by modes other than automobiles such as: transit, pedestrian infrastructure, and bicycle facilities
- e) Recommend, participate in, review and approve plans, projects, and studies:

1. MPO members will make recommendations for plans, projects, and studies that staff can undertake to meet the goals of the region.
  2. MPO members will review and approve at meetings throughout the federal fiscal year work scopes for staff to conduct plans, projects and studies MPO Programs, such as the Long-Range Transportation Plan, TIP, UPWP Equity, Air Quality and Resilience programs are ongoing programs that will not require work scope approval.
  3. MPO members will engage with staff when appropriate to provide input and guidance when some plans, projects, and studies are underway.
  4. MPO members will review and approve final products of plans, projects and studies at meetings throughout the federal fiscal year
- f) Prioritize and select projects to be included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- g) Maintain fiscal constraint
1. Promote cost-feasible partnering to maximize opportunities for enhancing and maintaining an affordable, efficient transportation system
- h) Participate in and create opportunities for public engagement and education on transportation issues, particularly for those affected in Environmental Justice areas.
- Attending staff-led events
  - Recommend to staff ways to engage with local municipalities or subregion
  - Reach out and engage in stakeholders in the subregion or municipality.
- i) Review and approve budgets for both the UPWP and Operating budget with committee input and recommendations