

Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Unified Planning Work Program Committee Meeting

July 23, 2015 Meeting

10:00 AM to 11:15 PM, State Transportation Building, CTPS Conference Room (Room 2150), 10 Park Plaza, Boston

Sreelatha Allam, Chair, representing the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Decisions

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee agreed to the following:

- To approve the draft minutes of the June 11, 2015, UPWP Committee meeting
- To approve the proposed CTPS FFY 2015 UPWP budget adjustment
- To recommend that the MPO release Proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment One for public review and comment

Materials

Materials for this meeting included:

- An agenda
- Draft minutes from the June 11, 2015, UPWP Committee meeting
- A memo detailing a proposed CTPS FFY 2015 UPWP budget adjustment
- A memo detailing Proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment One
- A memo providing details on the MAPC portion of Proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment One
- A document detailing comments on school transportation issues from the June 11, 2015, UPWP Committee meeting
- The FFY 2015 UPWP Third Quarter spending report and schedule and staff assignment table
- An updated CTPS FFY 2016 UPWP budget

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

Sreelatha Allam, Chair, Unified Planning Work Program Committee (Massachusetts Department of Transportation) called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 AM. UPWP Committee members, other MPO members, and other attendees introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 10.)

2. Action Item: Approval of Minutes from the June 11, 2015 UPWP Committee Meeting

A motion to approve the June 11, 2015, UPWP Committee meeting minutes was made by Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) and seconded by Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council. The motion carried. Dennis Giombetti, Metrowest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) abstained.

Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC) complimented MPO staff on the quality and accuracy of the meeting minutes.

3. Action Item: Concurrence on Proposed CTPS Budget Adjustment

Overview

MPO staff reviewed the content of the proposed budget adjustment, as documented in the memorandum. Under this adjustment, seven CTPS projects and tasks would have their budgets increased, and 12 projects and tasks would have their budgets decreased. While the net change to the CTPS portion for the FFY 2015 UPWP budget is \$0, a total of \$149,100 in CTPS 3C funds would be transferred between budgets. Karl Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director, explained that this is similar to adjustments that have been implemented in the past.

Michelle Scott, MPO staff, explained that of the projects and tasks that would have their budgets reduced, two were discrete projects. One is the Safety Analysis of Intersections at MAGIC Schools, which will be discussed in Agenda Item 4; the budget for this project would be reduced by \$10,000. The other is the Household-Survey-Based Travel Profiles and Trends: Selected Policy Topics project, the budget for which would be reduced by \$25,000 in FFY 2015. MPO staff proposes to provide additional funding for this project in FFY 2016 by transferring \$23,000 from the FFY 2016 budget for the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The FFY 2016 LRTP budget is higher than is typical for the LRTP during a non-document-development year. Though MPO staff plan to do more work on scenario planning, data development and performance measures, staff has

determined that the FFY 2016 LRTP program budget could be reduced without affecting this work.

Discussion

Dennis Crowley, Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway), asked whether funds had been assigned to the Household-Survey-Based Travel Profiles and Trends: Selected Policy Topics project in the FFY 2016 UPWP. M. Scott explained that staff has allocated \$2,000 to that project in FFY 2016, prior to proposing this transfer. D. Crowley asked whether the FFY 2016 funds being transferred from the LRTP would then make it possible for the project to be completed in FFY 2016. K. Quackenbush said yes.

S. Olanoff asked how the decrease in *TRANSREPORT* funds relates to resignations in the Certification Activities group. K. Quackenbush explained that remaining Certification Activities staff people were diverted to working on the LRTP and taking over duties after staff resignations. Elizabeth Moore, MPO staff, added that *TRANSREPORT* is a bi-monthly newsletter, and the production schedule had slipped by a month. MPO staff opted to skip an additional month to return the newsletter to its standard schedule, and so fewer issues will be produced during FFY 2015.

S. Olanoff asked why the Regional Transportation Advisory Council budget would be decreased, and whether this budget had been reduced earlier in FFY 2015. E. Moore explained that MPO staff proposes to reduce the budget because there have been fewer expenditures than expected. This is the first time the Advisory Council budget would be reduced in FFY 2015, though the FFY 2016 Regional Transportation Advisory Council budget is lower than what it was in FFY 2015 because of the trend in expenditures. S. Olanoff said that it is important to build Advisory Council membership and increase meeting attendance. K. Quackenbush explained that the MPO staff will be working on building membership and attendance during the fourth quarter of FFY 2015. E. Moore added that the Certification Activities group's anticipated public participation staff person will be able to assist in these activities.

S. Olanoff asked what the Subregional Outreach budget funds, noting that the budget is small and would be reduced. M. Scott explained that MPO staff charges subregional outreach for certification documents to other project budgets. This separate Subregional Outreach budget funds staff attendance at subregion meetings not specifically pertaining to the certification documents. She added that it can be difficult for Certification Activities staff to find time to attend extra meetings when there are fewer staff people in the group.

S. Olanoff asked why the Livable Community Workshop Program budget would be reduced. He noted that the workshops produce valuable results and that some municipalities, such as Westwood, are implementing recommendations from those workshops. He asked how many workshops have been conducted in the past. Mark Abbott, MPO staff, explained that CTPS and MAPC have conducted four workshops over each of the past two years; workshops have been conducted in previous years under a different program name. He said that MPO staff has not received any requests this year, and so they are proposing to transfer the budget to other projects. K. Quackenbush said that MPO staff will continue to fund Livable Community Workshops in FFY 2016, although the program will have a smaller budget than in FFY 2015. M. Scott added that MPO staff recognizes the value of this program, but there is limited time left in FFY 2015 to spend the project budget, even if some requests come in between now and the end of September.

David Koses, At-Large Cities (City of Newton) said that the Livable Community Workshop program produces great results, but noted that a partnership comprising MassDOT, WalkBoston, and other organizations recently had been conducting similar workshops and providing funding to implement the recommended improvements. He said that several communities may be taking advantage of this alternative program, which may explain the reduced demand for Livable Community Workshops. He added that municipalities may start requesting Livable Community Workshops once the MassDOT/WalkBoston program is no longer available.

Decision

A motion to approve the proposed CTPS budget adjustment for the FFY 2015 UPWP was made by T. Bent and seconded by E. Bourassa. The motion carried.

4. Action Item: UPWP Committee Recommendation on Proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment 1

a. Safety Analysis of Intersections near MAGIC Schools project

M. Scott reviewed the CTPS portion of the Proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment One memo. MPO staff proposes to remove the Safety Analysis of Intersections near MAGIC Schools project from the FFY 2015 UPWP and to transfer its \$12,250 budget (reduced from \$22,250 by the budget adjustment) to the Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis project. This would increase the Fairmount Line Station Access Analysis budget to \$52,250, and allow for a total of five stations to be studied.

M. Scott distributed a document that described the discussion on school transportation issues that took place at the June 11, 2015, UPWP Committee meeting. MPO staff plan

to develop one or more study proposals related to school transportation as part of the FFY 2017 UPWP development process. These proposals would be based this feedback from the UPWP Committee and others.

S. Olanoff said it is important to do something on this issue in the near future, because of its impact on the region's transportation system. T. Bent noted that it can be complicated to try to change people's behavior regarding how they transport their children to and from school.

b. MAPC Corridor/Subarea Planning Studies tasks

E. Bourassa reviewed the MAPC portion of the Proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment One memo. MAPC proposes to remove the Land Use Baseline for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) task from its set of FFY 2015 Corridor/Subarea Planning Studies. MAPC had anticipated that the Greater Boston BRT Study Group would identify a single proposed BRT corridor for which MAPC would conduct a land-use analysis, but no single corridor was identified.

As part of the discussion, T. Bent noted that the circumferential transit corridor proposed as part of the Urban Ring project could be used as a basis for identifying potential BRT corridors. E. Bourassa identified some of the challenges to implementing BRT in the Boston region, including the loss of on-street parking in BRT corridors and public resistance in some neighborhoods.

E. Bourassa explained that MAPC proposes to transfer the Land Use Baseline for Bus Rapid Transit task's budget (\$11,180) to the Opportunities for and Impediments to Creating Transit Oriented Development (TOD) task within the FFY 2015 Corridor/Subarea Planning Studies. This would raise the latter project's budget to \$81,180. MAPC is already doing TOD analyses in Gloucester and Dedham, and has started an analysis in Braintree. These additional funds would support continued work on the Braintree TOD analysis in FFY 2015.

S. Allam asked how MAPC selects locations to study as part of this task. E. Bourassa said MAPC works with the region's municipalities on an ongoing basis to identify study locations.

D. Crowley asked whether the funding transfer in proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment One would support completing the TOD analysis in Braintree. E. Bourassa said that he is confident that this UPWP funding, plus additional funds from Braintree, would support completion of this work. He added that MAPC will be funding more work

on Opportunities for and Impediments to Creating Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in FFY 2016, and could tap into those resources if necessary.

Decision

A motion to recommend that the MPO release Proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment One for public review and comment was made by T. Bent and seconded by E. Bourassa. The motion carried.

M. Scott explained that MPO staff will present the Committee's recommendation on Proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment One to the MPO at its July 30 meeting. MPO staff will seek the MPO's approval to release the amendment for a 30-day public review and comment period.

5. Update on Draft FFY 2016 UPWP and Public Comments

M. Scott identified several proposed updates to the FFY 2016 UPWP:

- The budget for the Long-Range Transportation Plan would be reduced by \$23,000; these funds would be transferred to the Household-Survey-Based Travel Profiles and Trends: Selected Policy Topics project in Chapter 7.
- The McGrath Boulevard Area Traffic Analysis: Modeling Support project would be removed, because this CTPS project is expected to be complete before the start of FFY 2016.
- The UPWP would include a single MBTA Youth Pass Program Evaluation and Title VI Fare Equity Analysis project. Previously there were separate MBTA Youth Pass Program Evaluation and MBTA Youth Pass Title VI Fare Equity Analysis projects; these projects and their budgets will be combined.

At the July 30 UPWP Committee meeting, Committee members will discuss public comments on the UPWP. The public comment period closes on July 24. MPO staff has held meetings in Boston and Everett during this period. People who provided feedback on the UPWP were positive, and were most interested in the new transit-related studies. Most written public comments received so far have been suggestions for new studies or for ways to support transportation in the region. MPO staff is likely to recommend that these suggestions be considered during the FFY 2017 UPWP development process, if appropriate.

6. FFY 2015 UPWP Third Quarter Status Reports

Spending Report

M. Scott reviewed the structure of the spending report. The report organizes projects by UPWP group, and also lists projects within agency-funded contracts identified in the UPWP, projects that have carried over from previous UPWP years, and unanticipated agency-funded projects that have started since October 1, 2014. She reminded members that some MPO-funded projects, and many agency-funded projects, have a life-span of more than one year, so the percentage of the FFY 2015 UPWP project budget that has been expended may not match the percentage of the total project budget that has been expended. Also, project budget estimates were developed approximately six months before FFY 2015 began, so these estimates may differ from actual expenditures.

M. Scott explained that as of the end of the third quarter of FFY 2015, the MPO has spent down its 3C planning funds slightly ahead of schedule. MPO staff has spending down its (non-MPO) agency-funded budget ahead of schedule, more so than the 3C funds. There were some cases where MPO spent more funds on agency-funded projects during FFY 2015 than was estimated during the UPWP development process. Robin Mannion, MPO Deputy Executive Director, noted that the amount of non-MPO spending also includes agency-funded projects that have started since the beginning of FFY 2015 but were not anticipated when the UPWP was developed; this has an impact on the percentage of estimated agency funds that have been spent to date.

S. Allam asked whether MPO staff plans to charge expenses the Integrating Land Use for Regional Transportation Models project (which is currently listed as “not begun”) during the fourth quarter of FFY 2015. M. Scott explained that this project is closely related to the MPO’s ongoing Regional Model Enhancement work, particularly with regard to integrating the Cube Land land-use allocation model with the regional travel demand model. To date, MPO staff had been charging time related to land use modeling to the Regional Model Enhancement project, but will be charging land-use-modeling expenses to the Integrating Land Use for Regional Transportation Models project between now and the end of FFY 2015. R. Mannion reminded Committee members that the budget for this project had been reduced as part of the budget adjustment discussed in Agenda Item 3. K. Quackenbush said that MPO staff does not plan to have a separate project for the land-use modeling work in future UPWPs.

D. Crowley said that the 3C Planning and MPO Support project would exceed its budget if its current spending pattern continues. He asked how MPO staff plans to adjust budgets or work activities to address the anticipated budget overrun. R. Mannion

explained that the 3C Planning and MPO Support budget includes a number of tasks, such as General Graphics and Public Participation, which are not separated out on this report. Some tasks had their budgets increased or reduced as part of the budget adjustment discussed in Agenda Item 3. These budgetary changes are not reflected on this spending report, which describes spending up to June 30.

D. Crowley asked what created the 3C Planning and MPO Support budget overrun. R. Mannion explained that this year, there were many more MPO meetings—primarily for LRTP discussions—than were anticipated during UPWP development. D. Crowley asked if MPO staff charges their time at MPO meetings to a specific budget. K. Quackenbush explained that they do, which is one of the factors prompting the need for a budget adjustment.

D. Crowley asked how MPO staff estimates costs and the amount of work and time needed to complete a project, and how they determine whether they are likely to overspend a project budget. He suggested the Massachusetts Turnpike Allston Interchange Traffic Study as an example to support discussion. R. Mannion said the other quarterly status report—the schedule and staff assignment table—shows project schedules going forward. K. Quackenbush added that this report shows how much time staff expects to spend on projects during the next quarter.

K. Quackenbush also said that the budgets and schedules for agency-funded projects are defined by the project work scope, and in cases where more money is needed to complete a project, MPO staff will negotiate with the client agency to change the project contract. Project schedules are determined by the pace of the overall project (of which CTPS may only be working on a part), and these schedules are extended from time to time, usually for reasons having nothing to do with CTPS. T. Bent added that MPO staff does not lead agency-funded projects, and that MPO staff comes back to the MPO when a scope needs to be amended. R. Mannion noted that the MPO does not have the ability to pay staff to do work on a project beyond the funds available in a project contract.

D. Crowley asked what happens when an MPO-funded (3C) project goes over its budget. K. Quackenbush said that while such circumstances are not desirable, they can be addressed differently from agency-funded projects, because all MPO-funded work is covered by two large 3C contracts. When a 3C-funded project goes over its budget, MPO staff requests that the UPWP Committee approve a budget adjustment to redistribute funds between projects covered by those 3C contracts.

Schedule and Staff Assignment Table

M. Scott reviewed the structure of the schedule and staff assignment table. This table includes some of the same project information included on the spending support, such as project expenditures to date, but it only lists projects that MPO staff expects to work on in the current quarter. Projects that were completed prior to June 30 will not be listed in the main table, but will be listed in the upper right-hand corner. Projects that have had work scopes recently approved, or for which MPO staff will provide a scope to the MPO in the near future, are highlighted. Schedule information for projects is detailed in the center of the table: bolded arrows indicate that the project schedule has changed. The table also lists the amount of time members of MPO staff plan to work on each project.

7. Member Items

E. Bourassa discussed formation of a state legislative Commission on MPOs. There will be a meeting of this commission on July 28, 2015, at 10:00 AM at the Massachusetts State House. He noted that he has been appointed by Governor Baker to serve on the Commission. The purpose of this commission is to evaluate the MPO process in Massachusetts and identify opportunities for improvement. S. Allam said she could share information about meeting times with the MPO.

M. Scott also provided a summary of the Committee's discussion on Proposed FFY 2015 UPWP Amendment One. She noted that she informed Michelle Ciccolo—a Town of Lexington selectman who had been involved in the original project—of staff's proposal regarding the amendment. Ms. Ciccolo had said that she will review the ideas and themes that came out of the June 11 UPWP Committee discussion on school transportation, and that she looks forward to working with MPO staff on new project proposals this coming fall.

8. Next Meeting

The next UPWP Committee meeting will be on July 30, prior to the MPO meeting.

9. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by T. Bent. The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large Cities (City of Newton)	David Koses
City of Boston (Boston Redevelopment Authority)	Lara Mérida
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Sreelatha Allam
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)	Steve Olanoff

Other MPO Members and Alternates Affiliation

Richard Reed	Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (Town of Bedford)
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MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director
Robin Mannion, Deputy Executive Director
Mark Abbott
Hiral Gandhi
Elizabeth Moore
Michelle Scott
