

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

## February 18, 2016 Meeting

12:30 PM to 2:30 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2 and 3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

Bryan Pounds, Chair, representing the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

## Decisions

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

- Approve the January 21, 2016 UPWP Committee meeting summary and new format.
- No meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup> in anticipation of the MPO voting on the Green Line Extension at that meeting.<sup>1</sup>

## Materials

Materials for this meeting included:

- An agenda
- Draft FFY 2017 UPWP Universe of Projects

## Meeting Agenda and Summary of Discussion

### 1. Introductions

Bryan Pounds, Chair, UPWP Committee (Massachusetts Department of Transportation) called the meeting to order at approximately 12:30 PM. UPWP Committee members and MPO staff introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 9.)

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<sup>1</sup> After further consideration of the FFY 2017 UPWP document and approval schedule, it was decided that a March meeting would be beneficial for the Committee to discuss project priorities and an initial recommendation of projects. This meeting was scheduled for March 31<sup>st</sup> (a non-MPO meeting date) at 9:30 AM in the CTPS large conference room.

## **2. Action Item: Approval of UPWP Committee Meeting Summary**

At the January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 meeting, the committee agreed to try a meeting summary format rather than detailed meeting minutes. Ali Kleyman prepared a meeting summary of the January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting and committee members reviewed it prior to and at the February 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. There were no specific comments on the new format and it was decided that this format will be used for all future meetings.

A motion to approve the January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting summary was made by Tom O'Rourke (TRIC) and seconded by Thomas Bent, Somerville (Inner Core). The motion carried.

## **3. FFY 2017 UPWP Draft Universe of Projects**

### **A. Presentation of the FFY 2017 UPWP Draft Universe of Projects**

Ali Kleyman discussed some of the changes in the FFY 2017 UPWP draft Universe that took place between sending the universe to committee members and the February 18<sup>th</sup> committee meeting. These include removal of the following projects:

- Inventory of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Environment: Some ongoing work is already being done related to this. Additionally, projects like this are better undertaken after the data working group makes their conclusions and action plan.
- MassDOT Park and Ride Monitoring: It was decided this is a better fit under the Congestion Management Process (CMP) work.
- On-Street Parking Utilization Data: This was suggested by Scott Hamwey, MassDOT staff, in connection with the current project CTPS is doing prioritizing roadway segments for bus lanes. The current project is funded by MassDOT, so the thought is that this follow-on work may fit better as an agency funded project.
- Value of Time by Trip Purpose: Use of Mode Choice Estimation Model: This work will be considered under the ongoing model development work.
- Improvements to MPO All-Signals Database (there were two projects related to this and both were removed): This work will either be funded by a grant that Kathy Jacob, MPO staff, is pursuing, or will be conducted as part of the ongoing GIS/database management budget.
- MBTA Park and Ride Dashboard: This will be considered under the ongoing IT&S group's data resources budget.

The following projects were added/changed:

- Electric Vehicle Technologies for Transit (B-8). This was an idea that came out of the February 10<sup>th</sup> RTAC meeting.
- Placeholder for On-Going Data Development (F-3). This was an idea developed by MPO Staff related to the upcoming action plan that the data committee will develop to gather data to support all staff work, including the development of performance measures.
- Collecting better MBTA survey data (E-4): After further discussion with Annette Demchur, Manager of Transit Service Planning, this project description was clarified.

Ali Kleyman provided a summary of the projects in the FFY 2017 draft Universe:

- 35 projects total
- Summary of categories:
  - Active Transportation – nine projects
  - Land Use, Environment, and Economy – six projects
  - Roadway Network Performance – eight projects
  - Safety and Security – one project
  - Transit – eight projects
  - Other Technical Support – three projects

Within each of these categories, projects were grouped either as:

- Renew: Projects that have been done before and we're considering again. There are six projects in this group.
- Evolve: Projects that are closely related to a project that has been done before and the proposed project advances a tool, a body of work, or brings the MPO closer to being able to implement a solution. There are four projects in this group.
- Another Chance: Projects that were considered in last year's universe and not chosen for funding. These projects are being considered again because they are still potential priorities that may be a good fit this year. There are nine projects in this group.
- New: Projects that are new ideas and have not been considered for funding previously. There are 16 projects in this group.

As part of the initial analysis, Ali Kleyman determined the primary Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) goal area that best fit each project. The primary LRTP goal areas represented by projects in the draft universe are:

- Capacity management/mobility: 15 projects have this as a primary goal area
- Clean air/clean communities: eight projects have this as a primary goal area
- Safety: five projects have this as a primary goal area
- System preservation: two projects have this as a primary goal area
- Transportation equity: two projects have this as a primary goal area
- Economic vitality: zero projects have this as a primary goal area

Ali Kleyman discussed how the projects in the draft universe respond to interests and priorities heard from the UPWP Committee, RTAC, MAPC subregions, and other public outreach meetings.

The UPWP Committee was interested in seeing some projects related to parking and new transportation technologies. Projects in the universe that relate to these issues include E-1: MBTA Bicycle Parking/MBTA Park and Ride Lot Monitoring; and, C-6: Planning for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles.

RTAC members and meeting attendees were interested in seeing UPWP projects related to enhancing the bicycle network, measuring the effectiveness of past UPWP and TIP projects, and accommodating growth in the Boston Region. Projects in the universe that relate to these issues include A-1: Closing Gaps in the Boston Region bicycle Network; A-5: Low-Cost Complete Streets Pilot Projects for Rapid Implementation with Community Engagement; A-6: Before and After Studies of Protected and Conventional Bicycle Lanes; and B-2: Transportation Mitigation of Major Developments: Review of Existing Strategies.

Public outreach at MAPC subregion meetings and other meetings in the region revealed many similar interests to those discussed at the RTAC meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

#### **B. Discussion of the FFY 2017 UPWP Draft Universe**

Ali Kleyman went through each project category and gave a short overview of each project proposed within the category. After briefly going over the objective of each

project in a category, the committee asked questions and discussed specific projects within that category.

**Active Transportation Projects:** There was discussion about the body of work that already exists around bicycle level of service metrics and protected bicycle lanes (in relation to projects A-6 and A-8). The goal of these projects would be to develop locally-specific knowledge around these issues.

Local “Before and After” studies are very important in order for the MPO to continually understand the effectiveness of the projects that the MPO programs in the region. Often, studies completed elsewhere are very specific and cannot be generalized to make conclusions that are meaningful for the Boston Region.

Committee members voiced specific support for A-4, Municipal Pedestrian Network Studies.

Bryan discussed his concerns with A-5, Low Cost Complete Streets Pilot Projects, and potential overlap with the state-level Complete Streets Program. Committee members discussed that the project in the universe has more to do with pilot projects and very low-cost, easy to implement Complete Streets solutions. The universe project could be a good way to help communities find locations to implement low-cost, short-term, easily implementable solutions. These could then be pursued for longer-term solutions that could be funded under the state-level program. In response to Bryan’s and others’ concerns about potential overlap between A-5 and the state-level Complete Streets Program, there was discussion among MPO-staff and Committee members. One of the main points of difference between the work proposed in A-5 and the state-level program are that A-5 is geared towards helping communities test out Complete Streets types of solutions. The types of solutions that would be planned and designed under this project are separate from the in-depth and longer-term design process that communities follow with the DOT. Additionally, while the DOT program requires a thorough design process during which it can be challenging to engage the public, the types of low-cost, tactical urbanism interventions that would be implemented as part of A-5 would allow for increased public involvement in the Complete Streets process; therefore, it would be a good public outreach and communication tool.

The project description will be revised to highlight this aspect in the project description. This is a good way to differentiate this project from the state program.

**Land Use, Environment, and Economy Projects:** The SIP Commitments project (B-6) would study the air quality mitigation projects as they have actually been implemented,

rather than as they were originally imagined. This project idea of studying the regional air quality impacts of SIP commitments came from comments from the FHWA that the MPO received during the 2014 certification process. FHWA thought that it would be useful to look at the kinds of impacts that these legal commitments have had on the region's air quality.

There was also discussion of B-3 and B-5 projects, both having to do with electric vehicle technologies in the region. An understanding of the ownership and location of private electric vehicles, as well as approaches for implementing a wider infrastructure for electric vehicle charging stations, could be helpful for the region. The potential benefit of the Energy and Electric Vehicle Use in the MPO Region (B-3) project is to address the mismatch between where electric vehicles are owned and the location of charging stations. If there were more charging station locations where people need them – close to where they live or work – this could encourage the use of these technologies.

There was discussion about the proposed project entitled, Transportation Mitigation of Major Developments: A Review of Existing Strategies (B-2). This project is related to the project funded in the FFY 2016 UPWP entitled Core Capacity Constraints. There is a draft report being developed for the Core Capacity Constraints Study. This previously funded project and the pending draft report focuses on the core area of the region and identifies “choke points,” the location and scale of future developments, and areas of excess transportation capacity. The project also involved interviewing public officials in the core area to determine what types of mitigation are implemented when a major development takes place. Project B-2 would expand on the Core Capacity Constraints project to the rest of the region.

**Roadway Network Performance Projects:** A project related to autonomous and connected vehicles would have to be coordinated with MAPC. Some work along these lines is already taking place and there is current coordination between Eric Bourassa (MAPC), Scott Peterson (CTPS), and others. It was discussed that a coordinated, regional focus on this topic is important in order for these technologies to be factored into the long range transportation plan.

It was clarified that the cost for the subregional priority roadway study (C-1) listed in the Universe was carried over from the previous year's project budget. All of these projects being considered for renewal, C-1 through C-4, are scalable and we could decide to fund them at lower or higher levels than previous years. The \$110,000 budget for the subregional priority roadways study allows CTPS to accomplish one study per year. The

DOT Highway Division is in favor of the subregional priority roadway study as well as the low cost solution to express highway bottleneck project.

There was a comment by Tegin Bennett (RTAC) that it could be helpful to undertake more of a critical analysis about how we are spending money in the UPWP. These types of roadway projects make up \$200,000 of the FFY UPWP budget. It would be beneficial to understand the impact of this spending towards our achievement of LRTP goals as well as our goals for UPWP studies and for the region as a whole. Another issue to consider in funding these roadway projects is how many of them actually get implemented. The likelihood of projects to be constructed is weighed very heavily in the selection process of study locations.

**Safety and Security Projects:** There is only one project in this category currently. There were others, and they were all decided to not be included in the universe for various reasons. There was no further discussion of the proposed Study of Promising GHG Reduction Study.

**Transit Projects:** E-3, Non-Fixed Route Transportation Services, builds off the Shared Use Mobility Study. CTPS is anticipating concluding the Shared Use Mobility Study this year; it has been challenging to get the data. We may want to consider ensuring that the Shared Use Mobility Study is complete before undertaking this newly proposed study that builds off the first study using different data.

There are several areas of un-used and underused right-of-ways (ROWs) related to project E-2. These ROWs would be considered for bicycle/pedestrian as well as transit uses. MAPC has conducted studies related to new and improved uses on underused ROWs. CTPS could enhance this work by incorporating travel demand modeling as well as attempting to understand the potential impact on mode shift if those corridors had transit or shared-use path uses.

The project entitled, Low Cost Improvements to Transit Service (E-8), needs better definition. CTPS needs to define the range of possible improvements that would be studied for this proposed budget.

**Other Technical Support Projects:** The main difference between the proposed projects F-2 and F-3 is that F-2 is focused identifying the best *methods* of data collection while F-3 is focused on actually *collecting* the data. The main issue with F-3 is a timing issue: the internal CTPS Data Committee is currently identifying data needs and prioritizing a plan to obtain data. Therefore, F-3 would set aside a certain amount of funds for CTPS to be able to obtain datasets identified by the Data Committee.

For F-1, funds this year (FFY 2016) have been awarded to a study that will examine using driver's license acquisition data to predict transit dependence.

**Other Discussion:** In general, one of the challenges of the annual UPWP process is that the committee and MPO are asked to choose to fund projects without, in some cases, the benefit of being able to see the outcomes from similar or related projects that were funded in the past FFY.

#### 4. Member Items

There were none.

#### 5. Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for March 17<sup>th</sup> following the MPO meeting on that day. It was discussed that the MPO meeting on March 17<sup>th</sup> has the potential to be very long given the agenda item of voting on the Green Line Extension funds. Committee members also discussed that it was acceptable to do the project priority ranking over email and discuss the staff and committee recommendation at the following UPWP Committee meeting scheduled for April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

This decision was later changed and a meeting to discuss project priorities and the staff recommendation was scheduled for March 31<sup>st</sup> at 9:30 AM, see footnote 1. A UPWP Committee meeting is also scheduled for April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

#### 6. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Tegin Teich Bennett, Cambridge (RTAC) and seconded by Thomas Bent, Somerville (Inner Core). The motion carried.



## Attendance

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### Members

Bryan Pounds, MassDOT-OTP (Chair)  
Dennis Giombetti, Framingham (MetroWest)  
Dennis Crowley, Medway (SWAP)  
Tom O'Rourke, Norwood (TRIC)  
Thomas Bent, Somerville (Inner Core)  
Tegin Teich Bennett, Cambridge (RTAC)

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### Representatives and Alternates

Steve Olanoff, Norwood

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### MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

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Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director  
Robin Mannion, Deputy Executive Director  
Elizabeth Moore, Director of Policy and Planning  
Scott Peterson, Director of Technical Services  
Lourenço Dantas, Certification Activities Group Manager  
Ali Kleyman, UPWP Manager  
Mark Abbott, Manager, Traffic Analysis and Design Group

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