

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

## April 3, 2014 Meeting

1:15 PM to 2:30 PM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

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

## Materials

Materials for this meeting included:

- A copy of the meeting agenda
- A federal fiscal year (FFY) 2015 TIP and UPWP Development schedule
- A draft CTPS FFY 2015 UPWP budget
- A draft MAPC FFY 2015 UPWP budget
- A sheet documenting the CTPS Staff Recommendation for New Projects for the FFY 2015 UPWP
- A summary of the results of the UPWP Committee Project Priorities Survey
- A copy of an email detailing federal guidance for UPWPs for FFY 2015

## Meeting Agenda

### 1. Introductions

Sree Allam, Chair, Unified Planning Work Program Committee (Massachusetts Department of Transportation) called the meeting to order at approximately 1:15 PM. UPWP Committee members, other MPO members, MPO staff, and other attendees introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 7.) Michelle Scott (MPO Staff) reviewed the meeting materials.

### 2. FFY 2015 UPWP Development: Current and Upcoming Steps

M. Scott described the current status of the UPWP development process. To date, staff has collected input on project ideas and developed a UPWP Universe of Proposed Projects. The UPWP Committee has met to discuss these projects and make refinements. The purpose of this meeting is for MPO staff to present a tentative FFY 2015 UPWP budget and staff recommendation on new projects to inform a future

UPWP Committee vote on the Committee's recommendation on the FFY 2015 UPWP budget and new projects. Next steps will be for staff to finalize the budget using FFY 2015 metropolitan planning funding allocations. The Committee will then vote on a recommended budget and set of new projects for consideration by the MPO.

### **3. Discussion of the Draft Proposed Budget for the FFY 2015 UPWP**

#### *Draft CTPS Budget*

Karl Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director, introduced the draft CTPS UPWP budget, which reflects the total funds that CTPS expects to receive for FFY 2015, including metropolitan planning funding (from FHWA PL and FTA 5303 allocations, also called "3C" funds) and funds that come from agencies and other entities. The total CTPS UPWP budget is approximately \$5.7 million; federal metropolitan planning funds make up approximately two-thirds of the total budget. This budget is distinct from the CTPS's operating budget, which is set by the Administration and Finance Committee and is effective for the State Fiscal Year. This budget also groups projects in a manner consistent with status reports that the UPWP Committee receives throughout the year. The draft CTPS budget assumes metropolitan planning funding that is level with FFY 2014 because MPO staff has not received information on FFY 2015 funding levels from MassDOT's Office of Transportation Planning. This lack of information creates uncertainty, and if the FFY 2015 funding levels are higher or lower, there will be impacts on the level of and distribution of funds in this budget.

S. Allam said she was optimistic that information on the amount of FHWA PL and FTA 5303 funds would be available at the end of the next week. Members asked whether the funding amounts are likely to compare with what was available in FFY 2014; S. Allam explained that she did not have information on this. K. Quackenbush noted that the FFY 2014 metropolitan planning funds were between \$250,000 and \$300,000 higher than the amount available in FFY 2013; the amount of FFY 2013 funds is comparable to the amount of funds that the MPO has received in years prior to that. K. Quackenbush added that some of the contracts associated with agency/other entity-funded work are not yet in hand.

Tom O'Rourke, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC) asked whether the percentages of the various funding types included in the UPWP are fixed in any way. K. Quackenbush explained that these percentages are not fixed, and the amounts associated with different funds types fluctuate to varying degrees, although the metropolitan planning funds have taken up a relatively stable portion of the UPWP budget over time. He added that this proposed budget reflects MPO staff's best guess on expected funding at this point in time, and that changes, including new agency/other

entity-funded projects, are likely to arise over the course of the coming federal fiscal year.

S. Allam asked whether the project IDs listed in the budget documents are generated by CTPS. K. Quackenbush confirmed that they are, and that they correspond to those listed in the UPWP document. Several programs or projects have the same ID number from one year to the next.

K. Quackenbush highlighted two new activities in the Certification Requirements project group:

- Recertification Review FFY 2015 (ID 90013), to support staff preparations for the upcoming MPO certification review.
- Integrating Land Use in Regional Transportation Models (ID 11704), to support the improvements and integration of the new land use allocation model into the MPO's regional models. The overall funding allocated for regional model enhancement activities has remained stable, but this project allows for independent tracking of staff time and resources spent on the land use allocation model.

M. Scott added that budget tables also list the total budgets for discrete projects that last multiple years. K. Quackenbush reminded the group that MPO staff makes projections on how much of a total project budget will be spent in a given federal fiscal year far in advance of when that work will occur, which can create variations between these projected amounts and the actual amount spent, which MPO staff reports in quarterly updates.

#### *Draft MAPC Budget*

Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, explained that MAPC's budget is structured the same as CTPS's budget. He explained that the new projects that MAPC is proposing for FFY 2015 will be included in the Corridor/Subarea Planning Studies and Alternative-Mode Planning and Coordination project groups. The total MAPC UPWP budget is approximately \$1 million.

#### **4. Discussion of Proposed New Projects for the FFY 2015 UPWP** *Federal Guidance for FFY 2015 UPWPs*

M. Scott distributed federal guidance for FFY 2015 UPWPs, which MPO staff received from FHWA. She explained that much of this guidance remains consistent from year to year, such as the importance of addressing the eight federal planning factors identified

in transportation authorization legislation. MPO staff considers this guidance as part of developing the staff recommendation for new projects, and also makes sure this guidance is being addressed through the MPO's ongoing and continuing projects and programs.

*Results of UPWP Committee Member Project Priorities Survey*

M. Scott described the structure of the UPWP Committee Project Priorities Survey tabulation sheet. New CTPS projects have been grouped by whether they received exclusively top or bottom-priority votes or a mix of each; MAPC projects are listed in one table.

*CTPS Recommended Projects*

M. Scott explained that this recommendation assumes 3C-funding levels consistent with FFY 2014 levels; the amount available for new discrete projects is what is left over after 3C-funded ongoing and continuing work has been funded. MPO staff currently expects that approximately \$700,000 will be available for new discrete projects. MPO staff has developed a recommendation that has programmed \$680,000, given the uncertainty regarding FFY 2015 funding levels.

M. Scott explained that this staff recommendation considers MPO visions and policies, federal guidance, national goals and planning factors, and geographic equity, and that the recommendation is fairly consistent with the MPO staff project priorities that were presented to UPWP Committee at the March 20 meeting. Differences include the inclusion of the Community and Human Services Transportation Support project (UPWP Project Universe number D-4) and the funding for the Core Capacity Constraints project (E-1), which has been further refined and increased to \$110,000.

M. Scott described how the projects in the MPO staff recommendation aligned with the results of the UPWP Committee Member Project Priorities Survey. MPO staff and UPWP Committee members were supportive of a) the corridor and bottleneck programs (A-1, A-2, and A-3); b) the Bicycle Network Gaps: Feasibility Evaluations (B-2) and Community Pedestrian Network Studies (B-3), which closely align with specific topics identified in the federal guidance; c) the Core Capacity Constraints study (E-1); and d) the Household-Survey-Based Travel Profiles and Trends: Selected Policy Topics project (G-1). Generally, UPWP Committee members did not assign top priority votes to the Title VI Service Equity Analyses: Methodology Development (D-2) project, but MPO staff kept this project in the staff recommendation because it addresses Title VI topics in the MPO visions and policies and in federal guidance. Tom Kadzis, City of Boston, asked how the Title VI Service Equity Analyses: Methodology Development (D-2) is

distinct from other Title VI-related work the MPO is engaged in. Liz Moore, MPO staff, explained that existing methodologies for analyzing the impacts of service changes are very basic, and that MPO staff are seeking more sophisticated methods that could be used to understand the impacts on minorities and low income populations.

M. Scott identified one project that received a high level Committee support but was not included in the staff recommendation: Evaluation of Information-Technology-Based Programs for Encouraging Mode Shift (F-1). MPO staff proposes to address this topic through research conducted as part of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy Alternatives: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis, which will enable to staff to explore the topic during FFY 2014. Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC) asked if the types of programs that would be covered in the proposed Evaluation of Information-Technology-Based Programs for Encouraging Mode Shift project would be considered transportation demand management (TDM) measures. L. Moore explained that the programs that would be studied promote TDM strategies; track people's use of these strategies; and sometimes provide incentives. S. Olanoff stated that this topic is important, as TDM measures are underutilized but are cost-effective. K. Quackenbush also noted that if the research done as part of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy Alternatives: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis yielded a lot of information regarding IT-based programs for encouraging mode-shift, an additional study could be pursued in the future. K. Quackenbush also noted the Hudson / Marlborough Suburban Mobility Study (F-4) could be funded with MPO regional transit technical assistance funding that is available in FFY 2014.

Dennis Crowley, Southwest Advisory Planning Committee, asked how many people were eligible to complete UPWP Committee member surveys, and how many actually did. M. Scott explained that nine members were eligible to complete surveys, and eight did. D. Crowley and E. Bourassa noted that the staff recommendation was well aligned with the results the results of the UPWP Committee member survey, with a few exceptions. D. Koses suggested that members wait to take a formal vote, given the uncertainty regarding FFY 2015 metropolitan planning funding, but ask that the group identify and prioritize projects that might be removed from the recommendation if the funding is lower than expected.

D. Crowley asked if any members wanted to speak on behalf of the Non-Fixed-Route Transportation Services: Lessons for Transit Agencies study (F-2). T. Kadzis noted that the City of Boston found this to be an interesting topic. L. Moore said that she herself was supportive of the study, though it was not a priority for staff overall, relative to the other projects. T. Kadzis asked whether there has been much research done on non-

fixed routes. L. Moore indicated that research has been done on demand-response service. K. Quackenbush and L. Moore added that transit feasibility studies conducted by the MPO often address non-fixed route service, particularly for suburban areas.

S. Olanoff asked what possibilities existed for addressing Universal Unlimited Transit Pass/Eco Pass Program Feasibility Study (F-3). K. Quackenbush noted that this might be a project that's better suited for MassDOT or MBTA funding. L. Moore noted that this type of program would be really beneficial for the MBTA to implement, but the timing hasn't been right yet, although MIT already has implemented this kind of project in coordination with the MBTA.

D. Crowley noted his support for MPO Independent Staff Research and Idea Development (G-3), and said that it is important to capture for ideas to come up during the year. He suggested that this project might be one that could be considered for next year. Tom O'Rourke, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC) concurred.

#### *MAPC Recommended Projects*

E. Bourassa noted that while the several UPWP Committee members noted their support for the Right Size Parking Tool (H-3), other proposed projects did not get much support or opposition. MAPC would plan to do all four projects if there is sufficient funding to do them and no members are opposed.

### **5. Member Items**

There were none.

### **6. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the UPWP Committee was scheduled for April 17.

### **7. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by D. Crowley. The motion carried.

## Attendance

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<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Laura Wiener
City of Boston (Boston Redevelopment Authority)	Lara Mérida
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Tom Kadzis
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Sree Allam
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)	Tom O'Rourke

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<b>Other MPO Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	David Montgomery

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### **Other Attendees Affiliation**

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Steve Olanoff	Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)
Leah Sirmin	FHWA

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### **MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director  
Robin Mannion, Deputy Executive Director  
Elizabeth Moore  
Scott Peterson  
Michelle Scott  
Pam Wolfe

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