



BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Monica Tibbits-Nutt, MPO Chair | Secretary and CEO, Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Tegin Leigh Teich, Executive Director, MPO Staff

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 21, 2024
TO: Boston Region MPO Board
FROM: Tegin Teich, Executive Director
**RE: Recommended Revision to the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025
Unified Planning Work Program**

This memo contains Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff recommendations for modifications to the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), forming Amendment One to the FFY 2025 UPWP.

Amendment One reflects the addition of six grant-funded municipal studies or projects and one grant-funded Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) project. Four of the municipal studies are funded by the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) FFY 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program. These include the City of Boston's Greening Chelsea Creek Waterfront, the City of Cambridge's Bicycle Pedestrian Crossing of the Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line, the City of Everett's Uniting Neighborhoods and Transit Opportunities, and the City of Lynn's River Works Reimagined projects. Another study is funded through the USDOT FFY 2023 Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program, and this is called the City of Everett's Planning and Demonstration Activities project. The remaining municipal study is the City of Salem's MBTA South Salem Commuter Rail Stop Conceptual Design, which is funded through the FFY 2024 USDOT Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant. Below are descriptions of each of the six studies. The MBTA's project is funded through the Federal Transit Administration's FFY 2023 Areas of Persistent Poverty Program.

The City of Boston, in partnership with the City of Chelsea, was awarded \$2,500,000 to plan and design a critical walking and biking connection between the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway in East Boston and the Chelsea Greenway in Chelsea. The Greening Chelsea Creek Waterfront Project will evaluate alternatives, choose a preferred alignment, and advance a concept design for a shared walk and bike path that will link together the two communities.

Civil Rights, nondiscrimination, and accessibility information is on the last page.

The City of Cambridge was awarded \$2,400,000 to plan and design an accessible, elevated, pedestrian and bicycle crossing of the Fitchburg Commuter rail line in North Cambridge. This grant will help the city continue planning and advancing conceptual and final design of an overpass connecting the Rindge Avenue neighborhood to Danehy Park. This, in turn, will work to help improve access to stores, jobs, and transit. The project also includes planning and design for a multiuse path parallel to the rail line.

The City of Everett was awarded \$1,200,000 to study the feasibility of installing a transit hub at Sweetser Circle and developing safe and accessible connections between Upper Broadway, Lower Broadway, and Main Street in Everett. This planning study will consider accommodations for future Silver Line (MBTA Bus Rapid Transit) expansion, siting of a Commuter Rail stop, connections to existing bicycle facilities (Northern Strand Trail, Wellington Trail, and more), open green space, and connections between the Lower and Upper Broadway neighborhoods with new and improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The City of Everett was awarded \$113,400 to update the city's safety action plan and conduct a demonstration activity installing sidewalk extensions using flex posts.

The City of Lynn was awarded \$561,000 to reconnect West Lynn by relocating the River Works Station north of its current location and making it publicly accessible. This will reconnect adjacent neighborhoods with jobs, open space, and a planned USDOT Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity-funded bus priority corridor on the Lynnway. It will also provide rail connections to Boston and beyond, as well as communities to the north. Other benefits include an Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant crossing of the railroad, improved flood resiliency, and the facilitation of waterfront access and transit-oriented development at the adjacent Gear Works, among other potential sites.

The City of Salem was awarded \$2,776,000 through the FFY 2024 RAISE grant program to conduct planning and design activities for a new commuter rail station in South Salem. The current preferred alternative to the station is situated between Canal Street and Jefferson Avenue.

Lastly, the MBTA was awarded \$127,367 to complete the design of on-route battery-electric bus chargers at the Ashmont bus station. This station serves as a major transportation hub, facilitating connections between the subway, trolley, and 11 bus routes. The project will support transit reliability for the neighboring disadvantaged communities these stations serve and contribute toward the MBTA's ambitious target of electrifying the entire bus fleet by 2040.

The Federal Transit Administration requires that any grants related to planning work be amended into the appropriate regional UPWP. As such, this proposed UPWP amendment will add the projects cited above to Appendix A of the Boston Region MPO’s FFY 2025 UPWP. Since these studies are grant funded, they will not impact funding for any other studies programmed in the FFY 2025 UPWP.

Thank you for your time in reviewing these recommended modifications. MPO staff will be happy to discuss and answer any questions from the UPWP Committee and board members. After a discussion, we hope that you will agree with these recommended modifications. We request that you then vote to waive the 21-day public comment period and endorse this amendment. MPO staff are requesting a waiver of the comment period as this amendment fulfills a federal requirement to reflect all discretionary grant-funded projects in a regional UPWP and is a necessary step for an awardee to begin incurring costs under the grant. Thus, this request reflects the time-sensitive nature of this amendment.

**Table 1
FFY 2025 UPWP Amendment One**

Project Title	Proponent	Study Type	Award
Greening Chelsea Creek Waterfront	City of Boston	Multimodal or Roadway	\$2,500,000
Bicycle Pedestrian Crossing of the Fitchburg Commuter Rail Line	City of Cambridge	Multimodal or Roadway	\$2,400,000
SS4A Supplemental Demonstration Grant	City of Everett	Multimodal or Roadway	\$113,400
Uniting Neighborhoods and Transit Opportunities	City of Everett	Multimodal or Roadway	\$1,200,000
River Works Reimagined	City of Lynn	Transit	\$561,000
MBTA South Salem Commuter Rail Stop Conceptual Design	City of Salem	Transit	\$2,776,000
Ashmont Station BEB Charger Design (AoPP)	MBTA	Transit	\$127,367

AoPP = Areas of Persistent Poverty. BEB = Battery-electric bus. FFY = Federal Fiscal Year. SS4A = Safe Streets and Roads for All. MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. UPWP = Unified Planning Work Program.

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