



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: August 8, 2024
TO: Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
Unified Planning Work Program Committee
FROM: Tegin Teich, Executive Director
RE: Recommended Budget Revisions to the UPWP

This memo contains Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff recommendations for modifications to the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), forming Amendment Three to the FFY 2024 UPWP. Each year, staff perform a thorough assessment of the spending patterns in the first three quarters of the fiscal year to propose a slate of adjustments to the UPWP for the fourth quarter. The proposed budget adjustments, shown in Table 1, have a net zero impact on the UPWP budget.

Budget adjustments are needed during the fiscal year for two primary reasons. The first is staff turnover and the time it takes to recruit and train new staff. When staff resign from the MPO, there is a gap before a replacement is hired. While we use and reallocate staff capacity as fluidly as possible to meet project needs, staffing gaps can result in lower expenditures than expected on certain UPWP line items.

The second is that project or line item needs may evolve after the UPWP is developed. Initial budget estimates for each program and project within the UPWP are developed in the spring, approximately six months before work commences. This allows the UPWP to be approved in the summer, in advance of the start of the FFY. Once work is in progress, however, additional adjustments may need to be made. This can affect how much staff time or effort is needed for one project or line item versus another.

This amendment additionally programs \$150,000 awarded through the [Mobility, Access, and Transportation Insecurity](#) grant, managed by the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation and funded by the Federal Transit Administration. Through this grant, MPO staff will design a pilot to supplement the [MBTA's low-income fare program](#) with access to low-cost community electric vehicle car-sharing options for affordable housing residents in Revere, Chelsea, and Everett. MPO staff will undertake this work in partnership with [Good2Go](#), a

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nonprofit electric vehicle carshare organization, with support from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Union Capital, and The Neighborhood Developers.

Separate from the budget adjustments, the UPWP Committee members and MPO board members are asked to consider updated descriptions to two line items added in Amendment One, approved in February 2024. That amendment incorporated deobligated PL funds into the FFY 2024 UPWP for five purposes. The notice to proceed (NTP) for the use of those funds was received in June 2024, at which time the proposed use for two of the five purposes was reassessed in order to maximize the ability to spend the available funds by the end of the FFY, which ends on September 30.

Revised descriptions and justifications for those two categories can be found below. To see more detail about Amendment One, including the original descriptions, see the February 1, 2024, memo.¹ The revised descriptions below do not affect the dollar amounts associated with UPWP line items and do not constitute a fiscal amendment.

1. Original title: Extending the availability of \$50,000 to commence the development of an information technology (IT) strategy.
 - Context: Staff prepared a request-for-quote (RFQ) but did not receive consultant responses, making it unlikely that it will be possible to complete any or most of the anticipated work by the end of the FFY. The MPO will seek opportunities to secure consultants for and fund the IT strategy in FFY 2025, and in the meantime, use the available FFY 2024 funds to support related efforts through part-time temporary or consultant help.
 - New description: Extending the availability of \$50,000 to hire temporary part-time/consultant help for the following purposes:
 - work with the staff system administrator to resolve pending and backlog of IT tasks through September 30, 2024. This includes the preparation of 60 employee laptops coming through on a new lease.
 - assist the Manager of IT in developing background materials for the website redesign RFQ planned for issue in Fall 2024.
2. Original title: Extending the availability of \$30,000 to obtain support for the agency's website.

¹ <https://www.bostonmpo.org/data/pdf/plans/UPWP/FFY-2024-UPWP-Amendment-One.pdf>

- Context: Staff had intended to hire a part-time staff person in Spring 2024 to implement actions from a growing queue of functional improvements required on the website. This temporary, part-time hire would fill a gap in web efforts while preparing to hire the full-time staff person accounted for in the FFY 2025 UPWP. Instead, the later-than-anticipated NTP and the ability to move more quickly on hiring a full-time staff web administrator made the hiring of an interim, part-time staff person less advantageous. The full-time staff person is anticipated to start in late August 2024 and is fully accounted for in the FFY 2025 UPWP. Instead, this funding can support the FFY 2024 time that the full-time web administrator is able to spend on these efforts that was previously unanticipated.
- New description: Extend the availability of up to \$30,000 to support the FFY 2024 spending on labor to support the agency's website.

Thank you for your time in reviewing these recommended adjustments. MPO staff would be happy to discuss and answer any questions from 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 Amendment Three to the FFY 2024 UPWP on August 15, 2024.

FFY 2024 UPWP Amendment Three Table

Project Number	Project Name	FFY24 UPWP Budget	Change in Budget	New FFY24 UPWP Budget	Comments
5024	Data Program	\$568,000	\$ (129,850)	\$438,150	Decrease due to staff vacancies.
2124	Congestion Management Process (CMP)	\$113,500	\$ (37,500)	\$76,000	Decrease due to delay in onboarding staff.
8124	Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)	\$106,000	\$ (35,000)	\$71,000	Decrease due to staff vacancy.
4124	Regional Transit Service Planning Technical Support	\$40,500	\$ (30,500)	\$10,000	Decrease due to lack of scoped projects for the last quarter of the year.
8224	Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)	\$321,000	\$ (25,450)	\$295,550	Decrease due to staff vacancy.
8324	Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	\$132,000	\$ (20,400)	\$111,600	Decrease due to improved efficiencies as staff gain experience.
8924	Transit Working Group Support	\$22,500	\$ (15,000)	\$7,500	Decrease due to reassignment of staff to meet the needs of a Community Transportation Technical Assistance project and reassessment of the required tasks and meeting strategy.
14004	Applying Conveyal to TIP Project Scoring	\$60,000	\$ 8,100	\$68,100	Increase due to more effort required for Conveyal setup than anticipated.
2424	Community Transportation Technical Assistance	\$67,000	\$ 15,000	\$82,000	Increase to accommodate completion of multiple technical assistance projects in the last quarter.
2524	Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Program	\$152,000	\$ 20,000	\$172,000	Increase due to launching steering committee and continued work on bike-ped counts.
9724	General Editorial	\$230,000	\$ 26,000	\$256,000	Increased work done to support the MPO's committees, enabled by a delayed start to Vision Zero work.
8824	Performance-Based Planning and Programming	\$179,500	\$ 32,400	\$211,900	Increase due to greater than expected cost to develop the performance dashboard.
9624	Public Engagement Program	\$338,000	\$ 44,000	\$382,000	Increase due to development of the Community Planning Lab, an initiative made possible by the delayed start of the Vision Zero work.
8524	Transportation Equity Program	\$203,000	\$ 48,200	\$251,200	Increase due to greater than anticipated staff time needed to complete planned activities such as the Equity Dashboard.
9124	Support to the MPO and its Committees FFY 2024	\$460,186	\$ 100,000	\$560,186	Increase due to more time spent on policy work to support the MPO and its committees, enabled by a delayed start to the Vision Zero work.
		\$2,993,186	\$ -	\$2,993,186	

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