

# MEMORANDUM of UNDERSTANDING

**CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CMMPO),  
BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (BRMPO),  
MONTACHUSETT METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MMPO), and  
NORTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (NECCOG)**

**Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) and  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)**

**Montachusett Area Regional Transit (MART),  
MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)  
Northeastern Connecticut Transit District (NECTD), and  
Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA)**

*concerning*

THE EFFECT of the URBANIZED AREA DESIGNATIONS of the 2010 CENSUS  
on COORDINATION among  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS, COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT,  
STATES, and PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPERATORS

**WHEREAS**, the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), COGs, States, and public transportation operators, hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”, having responsibility for portions of the Worcester, Massachusetts (MA)-Connecticut (CT) Urbanized Area (UZA), conduct a Continuing, Comprehensive, and Cooperative (3C) multimodal transportation planning process as provided for by the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 and its provisions under Title 23 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and Title 49 U.S. CFR; and

**WHEREAS**, the Worcester, MA-CT UZA, hereinafter referred to as the “UZA”, has been expanded as a result of the 2010 Decennial Census, and now contains or extends into two (2) contiguous existing Metropolitan Planning Areas (MPAs)<sup>1</sup> in Massachusetts and one (1) Council of Governments (COG) in a rural part of Connecticut; and

**WHEREAS**, the UZA has a population of over 200,000 individuals and is designated as a **Transportation Management Area (TMA)**. As such, the transportation planning processes of MPOs within the UZA are subject to review and certification by the Federal

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<sup>1</sup> The term “metropolitan planning area” or “MPA” is used to describe the geographic area determined by agreement between the MPO for the area and the Governor, in which the metropolitan transportation planning process is carried out.

Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) once every four years.

**WHEREAS**, the Parties seek to participate in this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), to the extent that it is not in conflict with any law, existing agreement or procedure, to effectively coordinate the metropolitan planning processes for the transportation system within the UZA.

**WHEREAS**, if more than one MPO has been designated to serve the UZA, there shall be a written agreement among the MPOs, COGs, States, and public transportation operators describing how the metropolitan planning processes will be coordinated to assure the development of consistent Metropolitan Transportation Plans (MTPs) and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) across MPA/COG boundaries, particularly in cases where a proposed transportation investment extends across the boundaries of more than one MPA/COG. The planning processes for affected MPOs should, to the maximum extent possible, reflect coordination of data collection, analysis, and planning assumptions across MPA/COG boundaries; and

**WHEREAS**, more than one MPO serves the UZA, the MPOs, COGs, States, and the providers of public transportation shall jointly agree upon and develop specific written provisions for cooperatively developing and sharing information related to transportation performance data, the selection of performance targets, the reporting of performance targets, the reporting of performance to be used in tracking progress toward attainment of critical outcomes for the region of the MPO(s), and the collection of data for their State asset management plan for the National Highway System (NHS); and

*NOW, THEREFORE, the Parties agree as follows:*

## **Article 1. Transportation Planning and Coordination Responsibilities**

### **General Agreement**

1. Each MPO retains responsibility and authority for the metropolitan planning process carried out in its MPA.
2. The Parties recognize an obligation to cooperate in coordinating planning matters of shared interest across MPA/COG boundaries within the UZA for consistency in the development of Metropolitan Transportation Plans (MTPs), Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs), Performance Measures, and for the coordination of Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) activities.
3. If inconsistencies or conflicts arise, the relevant parties shall meet and employ their best efforts to develop a satisfactory resolution. (See Article 2.)

**Responsibilities of All Parties, in full consideration of all Title VI, LEP and EJ regulations and requirements applicable to each MPO in the contiguous Worcester MA-CT UZA**

4. Share available information, such as GIS layers, shapefiles, databases, and other applicable electronic data along common boundaries for the purpose of travel demand model development, calibration, and other analytical applications as requested, practicable, and subject to agency-level policies, procedures, and agreements.
5. Coordinate the collection and analysis of data regarding travel patterns to, through, and among adjacent MPAs/COGs. Examples include traffic counts, household surveys, and “big data” acquisition (e.g., cell phone origin-destination data or travel speed data).
6. Share and coordinate the latest estimates, projections, and planning assumptions related to population growth, employment, land use, travel, transit, congestion, and economic activity for long-range planning applications, such as congestion management processes.
7. Share and coordinate transit planning data amongst adjacent RTAs and respective MPAs/COGs to aid in transit planning efforts. Data such as ridership, revenue miles, and paratransit data by community for transit service planning and long-range transportation planning efforts.
8. Exchange information and expertise in matters of mutual concern - this includes each agency ensuring the notification of, and participation in, meetings concerned with matters of mutual interest, and collaboration on projects and studies with other parties and stakeholders that share transportation corridors, service routes, and assets spanning MPA/COG boundaries.
9. Demonstrate transportation conformity using existing MOUs and processes in place. The roles and responsibilities concerning transportation conformity for Massachusetts are described in the Massachusetts Air Quality Memorandum of Understanding, dated October 4, 2019 and in the Air Quality Conformity Interagency Consultation Process for Connecticut (Dated June 2010, Revised November 2018).

**State DOT Responsibilities**

10. Coordinate with relevant State DOTs and MPOs concerning the collection of performance data, the selection of performance targets, the reporting of targets and actual achievement of performance related to those targets, for the applicable Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), safety, asset management and transit performance measures. Specific performance management concerns for the UZA include, but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Coordinating with relevant State DOTs and MPOs serving portions of the NHS network within the UZA, as indicated by FHWA’s CMAQ Traffic Congestion Measure Applicability Table  
[\(\[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air\\\_quality/cmaq/measures/cmaq\\\_ap\]\(https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air\_quality/cmaq/measures/cmaq\_ap\)\)](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/measures/cmaq_ap)

- [plicity/october\\_2019/#toc494364637](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/measures/cmaq_applicability/october_2019/#toc494364637)), to ensure consistent use of reporting segments and travel time data sets to calculate travel time-based measures.
- b. Coordinating with relevant State DOTs and MPOs concerning a common data collection method to be used for the Percent of Non-SOV Travel measure in portions of the UZA containing the NHS network when applicable.
  - c. Coordinating with relevant State DOTs and MPOs to establish single UZA targets that represent performance of the NHS network for each of the following measures: 1) Annual Hours of Peak Hour Excessive Delay (PHED); and 2) Percent Non-SOV Travel when applicable.
  - d. Establishing joint procedures for coordinated target setting and reporting in the UZA for congestion mitigation and air quality (CMAQ) Traffic Congestion Measures and other performance measures, as needed.
  - e. Sharing baseline, progress, and full performance period reports pertaining to Traffic Congestion and Air Quality performance measures and targets.
11. Coordinate strategies to maintain transportation investments spanning State boundaries within the UZA.
  12. Forecast and allocate funding for transportation planning and programming in the portion of the UZA within the State.

#### **MPO – COG Responsibilities**

13. Coordinate CMAQ Traffic Congestion Measure performance requirements applicable to the UZA with adjoining MPOs and the State DOT. MPO coordination activities should include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Coordinating with relevant State DOTs and MPOs serving portions of the UZA with NHS segments, as indicated by FHWA's CMAQ Applicability Table ([https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air\\_quality/cmaq/measures/cmaq\\_applicability/october\\_2019/#toc494364637](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/cmaq/measures/cmaq_applicability/october_2019/#toc494364637)), to ensure consistent use of reporting segments and travel time data sets to calculate travel time-based measures.
  - b. Coordinating with relevant State DOTs and MPOs concerning a common data collection method to be used for the Percent of Non-SOV Travel measure in portions of the UZA with NHS segments when applicable.
  - c. Coordinating with relevant State DOTs and MPOs to establish a single UZA target that represents performance of the NHS for both Annual Hours of Peak Hour Excessive Delay (PHED) and Percent Non-SOV Travel performance measures when applicable.
  - d. Reporting progress toward target achievement as required by the relevant State DOT and sharing with MPOs and public transportation operators, as requested.
14. Conduct cross-boundary coordination of matters affecting the Congestion Management Process, including monitoring activities and the sharing of relevant data as agreed upon between NECCOG, MRPC, CTPS, MAPC and CMRPC during annual state coordination efforts.

15. Coordinate strategies to maintain transportation investments spanning MPO boundaries within the UZA.
16. **TMA Requirements:** The transportation planning processes of MPOs within the UZA are subject to TMA requirements at 23 CFR 450.336(b), administered by the FHWA and FTA at least once every four years. Where the UZA overlaps into an adjacent MPA serving another urbanized area that is not a designated TMA, the adjacent urbanized area shall not be treated as a TMA. The MPO parties under this agreement with MPA boundaries that include a portion of the UZA are responsible for meeting the TMA requirements, as they apply to the transportation planning process for that portion of the UZA.

### **Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Responsibilities**

17. Coordinate with relevant MPOs as appropriate to share service information, ridership data, and other data for use in the planning process, including in the congestion management process.
18. Coordinate with relevant MPOs on planning and programing for investments, including services, that cross MPA/COG boundaries.

## **Article 2. Process for Dispute Resolution**

### **Process for Dispute Resolution**

Each Party will ensure appropriate cooperation and consultation on plans, programs, and projects affecting two or more parties. If inconsistencies or conflicts arise, the Parties shall meet and employ their best efforts to develop a satisfactory resolution at the lowest staff level possible and in a timely manner. Disputes not resolved at the staff level will be addressed at the executive level. After exhausting all efforts to address an unresolved matter, the Parties in dispute agree to apprise the respective FHWA and FTA authorities.

## **Article 3. Amendment, Termination, and Supersession of Agreement**

MassDOT, on behalf of the Parties hereto, is the designated custodian of this MOU. As such, MassDOT shall be responsible for coordinating reviews and executing all amendments, including discussion and consultation forums related to its content.

This MOU will be reviewed at least once every four years.

This MOU may be amended, whenever deemed appropriate, by endorsement of all Parties. Any party to this MOU may propose an amendment at any time. The Parties agree to consult to determine the extent and appropriateness of such proposed amendments.

This MOU supersedes the 2013 Cooperative Agreement between the Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments and the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.

**CERTIFICATION OF THE URBANIZED AREA DESIGNATIONS of the 2010 CENSUS on COORDINATION among METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS, COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT, STATE DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION and PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPERATORS**

*This document certifies that the below signatories hereby endorse the 2020 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) concerning the Effect of the Urbanized Area Designations of the 2010 Census on Certification Requirements and Coordination of Metropolitan Planning Organizations.*

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**Stephanie Pollack**, Secretary and CEO  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT);  
Chair, Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (BRMPO); Chair, Central  
Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO); Chair, Montachusett  
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MMPO)

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Date

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**Joseph J. Giulietti**, Commissioner  
Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)

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Date

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**John Filchak**, Executive Director  
Northeastern Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG); Northeastern Connecticut  
Transit District (NECTD)

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Date

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**Edward Carr**, Administrator  
MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA)

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Date

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**Mohammed Khan**, Administrator  
Montachusett Area Regional Transit (MART)

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Date

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**Dennis J. Lipka**, Administrator  
Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA)

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Date