

APPENDIX B

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff followed the procedures set forth in the MPO's adopted Public Participation Plan while developing the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). These procedures are designed to ensure early, active, and continuous public involvement in the transportation-planning process.

The Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2021 UPWP development process began in October 2020. Staff solicited topics for study through outreach at Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) subregional municipal group meetings. Staff also sought suggestions and public input from other sources:

- Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council) meetings
- Outreach to transportation advocacy and community groups
- Comments received during the FFY 2020 UPWP's public review period
- Topics generated from recently completed planning studies and documents

The document development process, described in Chapter 2, culminated in the MPO UPWP Committee's recommendation for the FFY 2021 UPWP, including a set of new discrete studies. On May 28, 2020, the MPO approved a draft document for public circulation.

After receiving the MPO's approval to circulate the public-review draft FFY 2021 UPWP, staff posted the document on the MPO's website (<https://www.bostonmpo.org/upwp>) and used the MPO's contact list (MPOinfo) and Twitter account to notify the public of the document's availability and the opening of the 30-day period for public review and comment.

During the review period, reflecting the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 emergency situation, staff presented the draft UPWP and this set of new studies to the Advisory Council; hosted a pair of digital open houses; and made themselves available to interested parties who wanted to discuss the draft FFY 2021 UPWP.

The following pages contain the comments received about the UPWP during the public comment period. All correspondents have received a response from the UPWP Manager.

MPO Liaison UPWP Review Checklist

Completeness

ID	Review Item	Comments	Reference
A1	✗ * Table of Contents is accurate and internally-linked.	Please ensure all pages of the Tables of Contents are accurately hyperlinked.	
A2	✓ * Document has no broken links.	Please consider more consistently using either ctps.org or bostonmpo.org in hyperlinks and link text.	
A3	✓ * Document has no text or image placeholders.	Please ensure that project IDs are entered into the final document when available.	
A4	✓ * Charts, tables, and maps are legible and properly annotated.		
A5	✗ * Document passes an accessible check.	Please ensure Appendix title hero images and decorate figures are properly annotated with alt text or noted as decorative.	
A6	✓ * Document is available in relevant languages per the MPO's Title VI Plan.		
A7	✓ * List of MPO members is current.		
A8	✗ * Signatory sheet is included and accurate.	Please ensure signature sheets are included in the final document once endorsed by the MPO Board.	
A9	✓ * Acronyms and partner agency lists are up to date.		

Narrative

ID	Review Item	Comments	Reference
B1	✓ * UPWP is comprehensible to the general public.		
B2	✓ * UPWP refers directly to vision, goals, and objectives from RTP.		
B3	✓ * UPWP Amendment/Adjustment procedures are explicit.		
B4	✓ * Governing MOUs between MassDOT, MPO, RTAs, and neighboring MPOs have been reviewed for potential improvements or updates.	Please note under the 3C Planning tasks that staff will work to update governing MOUs between the Boston MPO and partner agencies when necessary.	
B5	✓ * Planning efforts are coordinated with MassDOT modal plans.		https://www.mass.gov/statewide-plans

UPWP Tasks

ID	Review Item	Comments	Reference
C1	✓ * Individual tasks include detailed scopes, budgets, and schedules.		
C2	✓ * Individual tasks outline community beneficiaries.		
C3	✓ * Transit-related tasks are specific.		
C4	✓ * Includes a task on performance-based planning.		
C5	✓ * Includes a task for an update to any congestion mitigation planning efforts.		Required for TMA MPOs if current CMP is out of date.
C6	✓ * UPWP includes a summary of available staff hours.		

C7	✓	Individual tasks anticipate needed staff-hours / consulting resources.		
C8	✓	Tasks from previous UPWPs have been analyzed for past utilization.		

Impacts Analysis

ID		Review Item	Comments	Reference
D1	✓*	UPWP includes a geographic equity distribution table showing 2015–2019 and current UPWP-funded studies by municipality and number of tasks.	Please consider inclusion of percentages by subregion in table D-1.	
D2	✓*	UPWP includes a social equity distribution table of past and current UPWP-funded studies considering language access and EJ populations.		
D3	✓*	Public involvement and comment are explicitly documented and in line with MPO's Public Participation Plan.		

* indicates required by state or federal regulation.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL



June 11, 2020

David Mohler, Chair
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4150
Boston, MA 02116

Re: Draft Federal Fiscal Year 2021 Unified Planning Work Program

Dear Mr. Mohler,

The Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC) is an independent group of citizen and regional advocacy groups, municipal officials, and agencies charged to provide advice to the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on transportation planning and programming.

The RTAC has reviewed and discussed the public review draft FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and offers the following comments:

1. The RTAC appreciates the MPO staff's consideration of the feedback provided by the RTAC on the initial UPWP project list and notes that a number of the RTAC's priority projects are recommended for funding.
2. We are pleased that the MPO is already working to integrate equity considerations into all projects during the scoping process. Especially in light of recent events highlighting disparities in our society, we encourage the MPO to continue to include a strong focus on equity in the studies as they are scoped.
3. We understand the MPO is considering providing the opportunity for public input into UPWP study scopes as they are developed. We would welcome the opportunity to comment on draft versions of the study scopes, if this could be done without overly burdening staff or delaying the implementation of the studies.

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity to express our thoughts to the MPO.

Sincerely,

Lenard Diggins
Chair, Regional Transportation Advisory Council

MBTA Rider Oversight Committee

June 23, 2019

RE: FFY 2021 Draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Dear Members of the Boston MPO,

Below are comments from the MBTA Rider Oversight Committee (ROC):

1. Though we didn't offer any suggestions to include in the universe of proposed studies this cycle, we nonetheless support the MPO's selected studies. Specifically, we are enthusiastic about the following studies:

- Improving Pedestrian Variables in the Travel Demand Model
- Trip Generation Rate Research
- Access to CBDs Phase 2
- The Future of the Curb Phase 2
- Informing the Big Ideas Behind the MPO's Scenario Planning Process Disparate Impact Metrics Analysis
- MPO Staff-Generated Research and Technical Assistance

2. We continue to be impressed with the various ways in which the MPO reaches out to the public – especially during the earliest stages the UPWP development cycle.

3. Finally, given our interest in and support of the MBTA, we appreciate the continuing commitment to the MBTA as evidenced in the following:

- MBTA National Transit Database: Data Collection and Analysis
- MBTA Title VI Program Monitoring
- MBTA Transit Service Data Collection
- MBTA Rider Oversight Committee Support
- Service Equity Analysis Support to the MBTA
- MBTA Mapping Support
- Diversity Posters
- Haymarket Station Redevelopment Analysis
- Prioritization of Dedicated Bus Lanes II
- Silver Line Extension Ridership Projection

As always, we look forward to seeing the results the studies!

Respectfully,
MBTA Rider Oversight Committee
mbtaroc@gmail.com



200 FRIBERG PARKWAY
WESTBOROUGH, MA 01581
774-760-0495
495PARTNERSHIP.ORG

June 30, 2020

Mr. Sandy Johnston
UPWP Manager, Boston Region MPO
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Re: Boston Region Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) FFY2021

Dear Mr. Johnson:

On behalf of the 495/MetroWest Partnership, please accept the following as our comments regarding the draft *Unified Planning Work Program* (UPWP) for FFY 2021 for the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

The 495/MetroWest Partnership is a non-profit advocacy organization serving thirty-five communities, which is home to over 600,000 residents and approximately 1 in 10 jobs in the Commonwealth. Through a unique private-public collaboration with businesses, municipal governments and other stakeholders, the Partnership seeks to address regional needs by working to enhance economic vitality, improve quality of life and foster sustainable growth. The Partnership focuses on helping to alleviate regional constraints, and conducts numerous initiatives on transportation, economic development, workforce housing, and water resources.

The Partnership appreciates the importance of the 3C planning process and understands that the long-term benefits achieved by transportation and transit projects always start with a transparent and interdisciplinary planning approach. We thank the MPO for its diligent work, including recently completed studies from FY19 and FY20 such as New and Emerging Metrics for Roadway Usage, Transit Mitigation for New Development Sites, and Operating a Successful Shuttle Program.

The Boston Region MPO includes twenty-six of the Partnership's thirty-five communities. We greatly appreciate the number of planning projects that have been completed in our region in recent years, including several planning projects in Acton and Foxborough this year. We find Appendix D a helpful resource in determining the distribution of regional UPWP planning tasks since 2010. It is worth noting that out of the four subregions in 495/MetroWest, SWAP has the lowest number of UPWP work products in the entire Boston MPO region. Of the 39 work products completed in the SWAP region since 2010, 37 occurred between 2010 and 2015. The SWAP and MWRC subregions, which comprise a combined 12% of the MPO's population, received zero work products this year. Furthermore, the Framingham NECTA Division, which employs 172,890 workers, only received one work product in Sudbury. We understand that resources are limited but regional equity is essential to ensure the entire Greater Boston region is benefiting from

the planning process. We hope that you will give regional equity consideration when advancing some of the studies we are supporting in FFY 2021.

The Partnership welcomes the addition of the **Access to Commercial Business Districts - Phase 2** project as a follow up to the study programmed in FY19. Commercial Business Districts are leading economic and social drivers for their municipalities. As a hub for dynamic localized clusters and large national employers, CBDs also serve as citizen-oriented locales built for social interactions and broad cultural exchanges. In addition to our advocacy on first/last mile connections, the Partnership has long supported intraregional mobility through the expansion of localized public transit services and network-wide multimodal road configurations. Expanding access to CBDs shares a synergistic relationship with the **Future of the Curb - Phase 2** study. Curbside and streetscape improvements to accommodate enhanced transit service, promote bike/pedestrian usage and demarcate commercial and drop-off zones will undoubtedly enhance pedestrian flow and walkability of CBDs. Improving access and curb management within mixed-use neighborhoods goes hand in hand with many of the downtown revitalization and visioning projects across our region.

The Partnership also welcomes programmed funds for the **MetroWest Regional Transit Authority - Sunday Service Study**. Having played a lead role in founding the MWRTA, we can attest to its effectiveness and innovativeness as a regional transit service provider. In FY19 the MWRTA was awarded discretionary funding by MassDOT to develop and launch the Catch App, which allows riders of the MWRTA's commuter shuttles to alert drivers when Commuter Rail trains are running late, thus improving last mile connections. A Sunday Service Study will allow the MWRTA to analyze travel demand to locations such as places of worship, retail centers, and entertainment complexes.

The Partnership is concerned that the **Project M-8, Downtown Framingham Mobility Study** has been removed entirely from UPWP study universe, after being proposed, but unfunded in FY20. Framingham is the most populous community in the 495/MetroWest region, and its downtown area is a multi-modal crossroads. We know that the Route 126/Route 135 intersection suffers from congestion, especially when a train passes across the roadway and halts vehicles in downtown Framingham. This study's evaluation of grade separation of the MBTA Commuter Rail would provide insight in to one potential solution. We appreciate the Framingham Downtown Parking Management plan conducted as part of the MAPC Corridor/Subarea Planning Studies.

The Partnership greatly appreciates the work of CTPS and values the planning projects proposed in this year's Unified Planning Work Program. We hope you will strongly consider our comments regarding regional and subregional equity in deciding areas to study within individual projects and analyses.

We thank you for your consideration of our comments. If there are any questions regarding our commentary on the UPWP, please contact us at 774-760-0495, or by email at jeremy@495partnership.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jason Palitsch
Executive Director



Jeremy Thompson
Manager of Policy & Planning



June 30, 2020

To: Sandy Johnston
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston MA, 02116

From: The Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP)

Re: Draft Uniform Planning Work Program, 2021-2025

Dear Mr. Johnston,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide public comment on this draft of the Boston Region's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2021 Uniform Planning Work Program (UPWP). ITDP is a non-profit that works in seven countries around the world to design and implement high quality transport systems and policy solutions that make cities more livable, equitable, and sustainable. Since 2013, we have been working in Boston to explore, demonstrate and promote the potential for bus rapid transit (BRT) as a solution to the region's transportation, economic, and environmental challenges while effectively achieving the goals of GoBoston 2030 and the Global Warming Solutions Act.

We are pleased to see that several of the projects in the UPWP will address congestion, transit and the use of our roadways. We would suggest that these steps be even bolder, incorporating not just mentions of transit, but looking at how major changes to our roadways, including upgrades to buses which result in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) can help to create more efficient, safe and resilient transportation networks. This is a strategy used across the country and the world, and which should be part of the UPWP.

In particular, we would like to highlight three projects to make sure that full attention is given to improving facilities and rider experience for bus passengers:

- Addressing Safety, Mobility, and Access on Subregional Priority Roadways
- The Future of the Curb Phase 2
- Addressing Priority Corridors from the Long-Range Transportation Plan Needs Assessment

Regarding Safety, Mobility and Access, we would suggest that if corridors studied include frequent bus service, care is given to how bus improvements, including the potential to convert bus routes to full bus rapid transit can help to enhance the safety of all users in the corridor. Roads with BRT are often designed to be safer not just for buses, but for bicyclists, pedestrians accessing bus stops and motorists, who no longer have to contend with buses pulling in and out of stops.

Regarding the Future of the Curb, buses, which carry more curb-users than any other use on most corridors, should be given top priority. In addition to curb management strategies, we would suggest that the curb space manual output of this project include information about how BRT can improve the use of the curb. This should include both information about how BRT can make use of curb space, as well as how a center-running BRT can allow more access for other vehicles and uses at the curb by taking buses away from the curb entirely.

Regarding Priority Corridors in the LRTP, we suggest that special consideration be given to routes where buses carry a high proportion of the overall number of people using the roadway which for some roadways in the region can approach or surpass 50 percent. Often, these roadways can see throughput as high or higher than wider roads or highways. This will help to inform MassDOT and municipalities where they can make changes to roadways to prioritize bus traffic in order to provide a more efficient transit experience.

We commend the MPO on its efforts to plan for a modern, well-maintained transportation system that supports a sustainable, healthy, livable, and economically vibrant region. As a blueprint defining the goals, vision, and objectives for transportation planning in the region for the next two decades, the UPWP is also an excellent opportunity to study not just bus priority but full scale BRT into the fabric of our projects and investment programs.

Thank you for considering our comments and please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julia Prange Wallerice". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and email address.

Julia Wallerice, Boston Program Manager
Julia.wallerice@itdp.org

Old Colony corridor from South Bay to Braintree

4 messages

Clark Frazier

Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 10:48 AM

To: "sjohnston@ctps.org" <sjohnston@ctps.org>

Hello.

The Old Colony railroad corridor paralleling the Southeast Expressway between South Bay and Braintree is the only commuter rail corridor between Boston and Route 128 that is not double track. Adding trains to mitigate congestion on the Southeast Expressway will not be possible until some way is found to double track the line. Planned rail service to New Bedford and Fall River will also be constrained.

Is there any money available to study the corridor and identify right of way options and insure that other projects like MBTA station reconstruction or new street overpasses do not further complicate efforts to increase capacity in the corridor?

Also, the "Zipper" lane on the Southeast Expressway obstructs access for reverse commuters and individuals accessing public events in Boston, in part because commuter rail schedules are too sparse). Will it be necessary to widen the expressway right of way in the Savin Hill area to balance capacity and smooth traffic flow at poorly designed interchanges at South Bay, Columbia Road and Neponset? Would ramp metering and small-scale interchange modifications reduce congestion?

The amounts of money for projects listed seems inadequate. Is anyone paying attention to the future travel needs of older residents who may prefer transit, but who may be left out of the transportation planning process?

Thank you,

Clark Frazier

PO Box

Hingham, MA

