

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

August 6, 2020 Meeting

9:00 AM–9:20 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Benjamin Muller, Chair, representing Stephanie Pollack, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Decisions

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee agreed to the following:

- Approve the Meeting Summary of the July 16, 2020, meeting
- Approve Amendment Two to the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020 UPWP
- Recommend that the MPO release Amendment Three to the FFY 2020 UPWP for public comment

Materials

Materials for this meeting included the following:

1. Meeting Summary of the July 16, 2020, meeting
2. Amendment Two to the FFY 2020 UPWP
3. Amendment Three to the FFY 2020 UPWP

Meeting Agenda and Summary of Discussion

1. Introductions

B. Muller welcomed meeting participants and called the roll.

2. Public Comments

There were none.

3. Meeting Summary of July 16, 2020—Approval of this summary

A motion to approve the summary was made by Eric Bourassa (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) and seconded by Tom Bent (City of Somerville/Inner Core Committee). The motion carried.

**4. Action Item: Approval of Amendment Two to the FFY 2020 UPWP—
*Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager***

S. Johnston presented Amendment Two, recapping the process to this point. The MPO voted to release this amendment for a 30-day public comment period on June 25. This amendment removes a \$60,000 study, on transit mitigation for new development sites, from the UPWP and inserts two \$30,000 studies on Vision Zero and trip generation rates in its place. The MPO has already approved the scopes for these two studies.

Staff received one comment on this amendment during the public comment period. Marilyn Wellons from Cambridge asked staff to research licensing and regulations of people using bikes as a part of the Vision Zero study. She received a reply from S. Johnston that was developed collaboratively with other staff. In the response, staff committed to tackling these issues in the study. In addition, staff provided background on the issue, proceeding from the understanding that other Vision Zero cities, and the Vision Zero Network in a recent statement, acknowledged the limitations of punitive enforcement and prioritized educational and infrastructural strategies rather than regulatory or license-based strategies to achieve safety most effectively for all roadway users. This is particularly important in the context of the complicated history between enforcement and people of color.

Steve Olanoff (Town of Westwood/Three Rivers Interlocal Council Alternate) remarked that in the past commenters had usually not received detailed responses, and he appreciates the thorough response to this comment. Lenard Diggins (Regional Transportation Advisory Council) supported that sentiment. S. Johnston explained that he is able to write detailed responses to comments on the UPWP and related materials because comment volume is typically low relative to the Transportation Improvement Program.

E. Bourassa made a motion to approve Amendment Two and send it to the MPO for endorsement. S. Olanoff seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**5. Action Item: Release of Amendment Three to the FFY 2020 UPWP—
*Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager***

S. Johnston gave background on Amendment Three. Traditionally, staff have presented a number of reallocations between task lines within the UPWP budget to the MPO at or near the beginning of the fourth quarter of a given fiscal year. Being able to reallocate funding flexibly with the support of the MPO board is a major benefit to completing all of staff's work at this point in the year and to adapt to changing conditions and MPO goals.

At this point in the year staff are working off of UPWP budgets that were developed up to 18 months earlier. Per Federal Highway Administration guidance issued earlier this year, any change of 10 percent or more to a UPWP budget line must now be a formal amendment, rather than an informal adjustment as done in the past.

This amendment moves money around within the FFY 2020 UPWP (as it reflects the changes made in Amendments One and Two), but is overall net neutral. This year, there are some unique complications related to COVID, the emergency pandemic situation, and some unanticipated project challenges. Like any year, Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) must also adjust to staffing changes such as staff leaving or staff shortages when someone takes leave. The total amount of money reprogrammed is \$137,500.

L. Diggins asked if the cost increases associated with the transition to a virtual meeting format are permanent, or if they are a one-time cost due to the rapid transition to an emergency situation. Annette Demchur (CTPS Director of Policy and Planning) responded that it was probably a one-off cost, but some costs might linger into next year. Tegin Teich (CTPS Executive Director) said that it is important for staff and members to discuss budgeting for public participation and outreach in detail going forward, and members should always feel they can bring it up.

T. Bent made a motion to recommend that the MPO release Amendment Three for public comment, and E. Bourassa seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Update on COVID-19 Transit Service Technical Assistance

This agenda item was postponed to a later meeting to allow staff more time to gather information to report on this topic.

7. Members Items

There were none.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for September 17, 2020.

9. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by T. Bent. The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Office of Transportation Planning)	Ben Muller
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Tom Kadzis
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Three Rivers Interlocal Council alternate (Town of Westwood)	Steve Olanoff
City of Framingham (Metrowest Regional Collaborative)	Eric Johnson

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director
Annette Demchur, Director of Policy and Planning
Scott Peterson, Director of Technical Services
Hiral Gandhi, Director of Operations and Finance
Mark Abbott, Traffic Analysis and Design Group Manager
Jonathan Church, Manager of MPO Activities
Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager
Kate White, Public Outreach Coordinator
Matt Archer, Transportation Planner

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