



BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Jamey Tesler, Acting MassDOT Secretary and CEO and MPO Chair
Tegin L. Teich, Executive Director, MPO Staff

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 5, 2021
TO: Boston Region MPO
FROM: Tegin Teich, Executive Director
RE: Recommended Revisions to Certain 3C Budgets (FFY 2021)

This memo contains Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff recommendations for adjustments to the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021 UPWP budget, forming Amendment One to the FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The proposed adjustments account for actual spending in the first three quarters of FFY 2021 as well as fourth-quarter needs. The adjustments, shown in Table 1, have a net zero impact on the UPWP budget; because FHWA now requires an amendment to the UPWP for any adjustment totaling more than 10 percent of an individual budget line, we are submitting an amendment containing these adjustments.

CTPS BUDGET MODIFICATIONS

Most of the changes captured in this amendment apply to work conducted by Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS). The approved UPWP budget for FFY 2021 represented staff's best understanding at the time of how 3C funds should be allocated to best meet the needs of the region. Throughout the federal fiscal year, MPO staff track spending on 3C line items and report quarterly to the UPWP Committee using a "Schedule of Operations." At the end of the third quarter, MPO staff complete a thorough assessment of the spending patterns in the FFY to date and propose a slate of budget adjustments for the final quarter. These adjustments transfer funds from one set of 3C line items to another.

There are two primary reasons why adjustments are needed in the fourth quarter to most effectively use the funding available to the MPO. The first relates to staff attrition and the time it takes to recruit and train new staff. When staff resign from CTPS, there is almost always a gap before a replacement is hired. While CTPS uses and reallocates staff capacity as fluidly as possible to meet project needs, staffing gaps can result in lower expenditures than initially expected on 3C line items.

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

In addition to staffing gaps, project or line-item needs may evolve after the UPWP is developed. Budget estimates for each project line item are developed in the spring, approximately six months before work commences. This allows the UPWP to be approved in the summer. Once work is in progress, needs or expectations may shift, and MPO staff adapt to such changes. This can affect how much staff time or effort is needed for one project or line item versus another. Especially given that this federal fiscal year also included a significant adjustment to working from home due to COVID-19, adjustments were warranted to better meet current needs.

MAPC BUDGET MODIFICATIONS

In addition to the changes proposed to the MPO budget for work conducted by CTPS, this amendment includes a minor change to work conducted by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) using UPWP funds programmed in Chapter 7 of the FFY 2021 UPWP. MAPC wishes to move funds *within* a UPWP budget line, Corridor/Subarea Planning Studies (MAPC1). This budget line contains several subtasks. MAPC requests to move \$33,582 from *Transit Station Area Parking Planning* into *Corridor/Subarea Multimodal Transportation Planning*, for a new total of \$108,582 in this subtask. The *Transit Station Area Parking Planning* subtask will be zeroed out. This modification will support studies in the Three Rivers Interlocal Council and South Shore Coalition subregions that can use these funds, especially the South Shore Last Mile Study that will help the subregion identify opportunities to connect workers and tourists to employment and recreational areas from the Red Line, Regional Rail stations, and ferry terminals. Because this modification does not change the topline number for a UPWP task, it is not captured in Table 1 and does not change any budget tables within the document itself.

CONCLUSION AND REQUESTED ACTION

Thank you for your time in reviewing these recommended adjustments. MPO staff would be happy to discuss and to answer any questions from members. After a discussion, we hope you will agree with these recommended adjustments. We request you then vote to release Amendment One to the FFY 2021 UPWP for public comment. Given the schedule of upcoming MPO meetings, we also request that you vote to shorten the public comment period from its standard 30 days to 21.

**Table 1
FFY 2021 UPWP Proposed Budget Adjustments**

| Project Number | Project | Type | Programmed FFY 2021 Budget | Proposed Change | Proposed Budget | Comments |
|----------------|---|----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---|
| 13421 | Addressing Safety, Mobility, and Access on Subregional Priority Roadways (FFY 2021) | Discrete study | \$127,900 | (\$28,800) | \$99,100 | Study will be completed in FFY 2022 because of COVID-19-related delays to other work. |
| 13521 | Addressing Priority Corridors from the LRTP Needs Assessment (FFY 2021) | Discrete study | \$137,000 | (\$27,000) | \$110,000 | Study will be completed in FFY 2022 because of COVID-19-related delays to other work. |
| 13621 | Low-Cost Improvements to Express-Highway Bottlenecks (FFY 2021) | Discrete study | \$64,500 | (\$22,500) | \$42,000 | Study will be completed in FFY 2022 because of COVID-19-related delays to other work. |
| 13305 | Intersection Improvement Program | Discrete study | \$75,000 | (\$18,500) | \$56,500 | Study will be completed in FFY 2022 because of COVID-19-related delays to other work. |
| 2321 | Roadway Safety Audits | Ongoing | \$13,740 | (\$6,000) | \$7,740 | Fewer road safety audits were conducted this year due to COVID-19. |
| 8821 | Performance-Based Planning | Ongoing | \$153,570 | (\$43,700) | \$109,870 | Reassigned staff responsibilities to accommodate staff leave and to prepare for transition in responsibilities due to staff retirement. |
| 8121 | Long-Range Transportation Plan | Ongoing | \$324,120 | (\$48,000) | \$276,120 | Reassigned staff to cover for staff on leave. |
| 8521 | Transportation Equity Program | Ongoing | \$174,100 | (\$34,000) | \$140,100 | Insufficient opportunity to spend programmed funds. |
| 5021 | Data Resources Management | Ongoing | \$320,100 | (\$52,000) | \$268,100 | Reassigned staff to other projects. |
| 7121 | Regional Model Enhancement | Ongoing | \$875,370 | \$52,000 | \$927,370 | Developing the modeling roadmap following specification of the FFY 2021 budget and new recognition of modeling work. Conducting research into the model response to different trip rates due to changing travel behavior during/post pandemic. Capturing institutional knowledge ahead of staff retirement. Advancing work to support the 2023 LRTP. |
| 8421 | Air Quality Conformity | Ongoing | \$34,690 | \$20,000 | \$54,690 | EPA released the new MOVES AQ model, which required the development of new inputs and the adjustment of processing procedures. Staff ran into issues running the new model and had to work with FHWA and EPA to resolve problems. |
| 9121 | Support to the MPO and its Committees | Ongoing | \$229,920 | \$75,000 | \$304,920 | Staffing changes to accommodate staff on leave. New MPO TIP Ad Hoc committee established, requiring more staff coordination and support under this program. |
| 9221 | MPO General Graphics | Ongoing | \$85,290 | \$10,000 | \$95,290 | Remote meetings because of COVID-19 required additional work. |
| 3121 | Provision of Accessible Formats | Ongoing | \$102,040 | \$8,000 | \$110,040 | Due to additional work on surveying staff, incorporating input, adjusting templates. |
| 2221 | Freight Planning | Ongoing | \$68,340 | \$15,000 | \$83,340 | Project manager has available time to conduct additional freight-related activities in FFY 2021. |
| 13420 | Addressing Safety, Mobility, and Access on Subregional Priority Roadways (FFY 2020) | Discrete study | \$13,400 | \$30,000 | \$43,400 | Traffic counts for study were delayed due to COVID-19, extending study into FFY 2021. |
| 13299 | Exploring Resilience in MPO-funded Corridor and Intersection Studies | Discrete study | \$960 | \$19,000 | \$19,960 | Study was delayed due to COVID-19 and unavailability of key data from outside of CTPS. |
| 13293 | Locations with High Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Rates | Discrete study | \$960 | \$8,700 | \$9,660 | Traffic counts for study were delayed due to COVID-19, extending study into FFY 2021. |
| 13520 | Addressing Priority Corridors from the LRTP Needs Assessment (FFY 2020) | Discrete study | \$13,400 | \$26,600 | \$40,000 | Traffic counts for study were delayed due to COVID-19, extending study into FFY 2021. |
| 13720 | Safety and Operations Analyses at Selected Intersections (FFY 2020) | Discrete study | \$7,420 | \$16,200 | \$23,620 | Traffic counts for study were delayed due to COVID-19, extending study into FFY 2021. |
| Total | | | \$2,821,820 | \$0 | \$2,821,820 | |

EPA = Environmental Protection Agency. FFY = Federal fiscal year. FHWA = Federal Highway Administration. LRTP = Long-Range Transportation Plan. MPO = Metropolitan Planning Organization. TIP = Transportation Improvement Program.

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