

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Unified Planning Work Program Committee Meeting Summary

July 15, 2021, Meeting

9:00 AM–9:30 AM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform. Recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIZk3DQ7wpg&t=1s>

Benjamin Muller, Chair, representing Jamey Tesler, Acting Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Decisions

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

- Recommend that the Boston Region MPO release the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 UPWP for public review

Materials

Materials for this meeting included the following:

1. Draft FFY 2022 UPWP

Meeting Agenda and Summary of Discussion

1. Introductions

B. Muller read the guidelines and accessibility statement and welcomed committee members and guests.

2. Public Comments

There were none.

3. Action Item: Draft FFY 2022 UPWP—*Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager*

S. Johnston introduced the FFY 2022 UPWP, recapped the content and the process of developing the document, and stated the goal of gaining the committee's recommendation that the MPO release the draft document for a 30-day public comment period.

For this year, the UPWP programs about \$5.5 million in federal funding—around \$4.6 million for the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) and another million for the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). In addition, the UPWP includes work that CTPS executes on contract to other state agencies and other entities, a total of about \$1.6 million. The headline number is around \$7.3 million.

Overall, this year's UPWP follows the same organizational pattern as last year. S. Johnston highlighted a couple of items that are different and new.

There is a new task in the Certification Requirements section, called "MPO Resiliency Program." This limited initial budget is intended to become a permanent program, allowing MPO staff to coordinate with partner agencies on resiliency topics, do some research, and eventually build an MPO resiliency practice should the MPO choose that as a priority. There is a text description of this program on page 3-50 of the draft document or page 104 of the PDF.

Appendix A looks a little different this year as well. This appendix documents transportation-related studies that are going on around the Boston region in FFY 2022, but not funded by the MPO. This year's version of the appendix, as discussed previously with the UPWP Committee, covers only the essential elements required in this appendix by our federal partners: federally funded studies and those of "regional significance." Time, resources, and submissions from our municipal partners allowing, staff hopes to at some point build an interactive online interface that will document all transportation-related studies in the Boston Region MPO area.

Having recapped the important elements of the FFY 2022 UPWP, S. Johnston requested the committee's recommendation to the MPO to release the document for public comment. Eric Bourassa (MAPC) made a motion to recommend that the MPO release the document, and Tom O'Rourke (Three Rivers Interlocal Council [TRIC]/Neponset River Regional Chamber) seconded it. Steve Olanoff (Town of Westwood/TRIC alternate) expressed his disappointment that the committee was voting to proceed with the document, despite extensive conversation at the previous meeting, and the elimination of some items from the draft document. He said that he thought committee members should take action, and instead there is no further discussion. Lenard Diggins (Regional Transportation Advisory Council [Advisory Council]) said that staff had made serious commitments to further work, reporting, and discussion, including presenting to the Advisory Council, and that he was satisfied. E. Bourassa asked S. Olanoff if he was particularly objecting to the deletion of the congestion pricing study from the UPWP; S. Olanoff responded that he was concerned about that, but also

that an organization like the MPO should have real conversations instead of rubber-stamping everything.

B. Muller asked questions about when further minor modifications to the document would be made, and S. Johnston responded that further modifications will be added to the final draft for MPO endorsement on August 19. S. Johnston further affirmed that staff would bring back information on scoping and outcomes of work around congestion pricing to the committee, so that the committee could offer feedback and input. L. Diggins and B. Muller discussed the importance of making final adjustments to the UPWP based on feedback received during the public comment period. Brad Rawson (City of Somerville/Inner Core Committee) asked whether the deletion of the congestion pricing study had been a question of policy or resource allocation. B. Muller responded that it was a little bit of each. David Koses (City of Newton/At-Large City) said that he thought doing the congestion pricing study in FFY 2023 could work well.

B. Muller called a vote and the motion to recommend that the MPO release the UPWP for public comment passed unanimously.

4. MAPC Use of UPWP Funds—*Eric Bourassa, Transportation Director, MAPC*

MAPC receives about 20 percent of UPWP funds. E. Bourassa briefly recapped how MAPC uses those funds, as documented in Chapter 7 of the UPWP document. MAPC uses the funds in the following areas, among others:

- Parking management, studies and analysis
- Working with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) on priority bus corridors
- Sub-area and subregional studies, such as looking at first- and last-mile connections
- Bicycle and pedestrian planning, including supporting BlueBikes, the regional bikeshare system
- Trying to help the state plan for zero emission vehicle technology

B. Muller recommended that committee members read Chapter 7 of the UPWP to learn more about MAPC's use of the funds.

5. Members Items

There were none.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting would be August 5, 2021. At that meeting, the committee would be asked to advance an amendment to the FFY 2021 UPWP. S. Johnston also asked anyone who has comments on the FFY 2022 document to get them in by that meeting, if possible.

7. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by L. Diggins and seconded by E. Bourassa. Without objection, the meeting adjourned.

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)	Brad Rawson
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tom O'Rourke
Three Rivers Interlocal Council Alternate (Town of Westwood)	Steve Olanoff
City of Framingham (MetroWest Regional Collaborative)	Erika Oliver Jerram

Other Attendees Affiliation

Michaela Boneva Northeastern University

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director
Gina Perille, Deputy Executive Director
Annette Demchur, Director of Policy and Planning
Hiral Gandhi, Director of Operations and Finance
Rebecca Morgan, Director of Projects and Partnerships
Marty Milkovits, Director of Modeling and Analytics
Mark Abbott, Traffic Analysis and Design Group Manager
Kathy Jacob, Principal Planner
Anne McGahan, Chief Planner
Betsy Harvey, Transportation Equity Program Manager
Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager
Kate White, Public Outreach Coordinator
Matt Archer, Transportation Planner

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Title VI Specialist

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By Telephone:

857.702.3702 (voice)

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