



## ***MEMORANDUM***

**DATE** May 16, 2013  
**TO** UPWP Committee  
**FROM** Karl Quackenbush  
**RE** Proposed Revisions to Certain 3C Budgets Due to Increased PL Funding

This week, MassDOT's Office of Transportation Planning notified the Boston Region MPO of its FHWA PL allocation for the coming federal fiscal year (FFY). Recall that FHWA's PL funds are one of two sources of 3C revenues —the other being FTA's Section 5303 funds —that fund the bulk of the MPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Recall also that, pending this week's notification, we had been conservatively assuming that the PL contract would be funded at the same level as last year's. In fact, we were pleasantly surprised to learn that the next PL contract for CTPS will exceed the current one by \$266,500. The purpose of this memorandum, then, is to propose how to reflect that added \$266,500 in the draft FFY 2014 UPWP.

The start of the public comment period for both the UPWP and the TIP is being delayed by one week in order to provide you sufficient time to interact with this information and to come together as a committee on May 16<sup>th</sup> to vote on the matter.

### **1 PROPOSAL OVERVIEW**

In recent years, the total amount of funding available to the Boston Region MPO has steadily decreased. The CTPS portion of the FFY 2010 UPWP, for example, was funded at \$5,985,600. Funding decreased in each of the following two years, and the CTPS portion of the draft FFY 2014 UPWP, using an assumption of level PL funding, was proposed to have been funded at \$5,434,945, which is essentially the same amount as for the current FFY. The result of declining and, at best, level budgets has been that the MPO's programs and projects have become somewhat financially constrained in recent years. In consequence, the staff has not been able to do all it would like to have done to support the MPO. Now, the increase in PL funds provides an opportunity to modestly restore some of our particularly constrained ongoing programs and other activities.

The underlying goal, therefore, is to spread the \$266,500 across various programs and activities in a way that is balanced and effective. Thus, I propose that the funds be used to accomplish the following:

- Bring in another new discrete project to supplement those already selected.
- Add funding to the budgets of two previously-selected new projects.
- Fund an additional ongoing program that allows staff to participate in MassDOT Roadway Safety Audits.
- Add funding to the *Direct Support* and *Professional Development* line items to help restore our training and computer budgets.
- Add the balance, 56% of the funds, to several ongoing programs such as *Freight Planning Support* and *Data Resources Management*.

## 2 PROPOSAL DETAILS

Table 1 at the end of this memorandum shows the proposed adjustments and additions to the draft FFY 2014 UPWP by line item, and the balance of this memorandum discusses each recommended action in turn.

### 2.1 Add One More New Discrete Project

With the additional PL funds, staff has the ability to program another project in addition to those already identified for inclusion in the new UPWP. There were two projects that staff had recommended for consideration should additional funds suddenly become available: *GHG Reduction Strategy Cost-Effectiveness Analysis* and *Actions to Increase Transit Ridership: Cost-Effectiveness Analysis*. The latter would be a transit-oriented project more appropriate for FTA Section 5303-funding, and since that category of funding has not increased, it is not appropriate to add that project to the UPWP. On the other hand, it is entirely appropriate to use additional PL funds for the GHG-related project. Furthermore, that project aligns well with MPO visions and policies, MassDOT's GreenDOT initiative, and federal guidance related to sustainability. Therefore, I recommend that *GHG Reduction Strategy Cost-Effectiveness Analysis* be added to the draft FFY 2014 UPWP.

### 2.2 Add Funding to Two Previously-Approved New Discrete Projects

You previously approved nine new projects for inclusion in the draft FFY 2014 UPWP. I recommend adding PL funding to two of them.

The *Addressing Safety, Mobility, and Access on Subregional Priority Roadways* project was funded at \$60,000. This is a project that has proven very popular with subregional officials because it addresses problems that they themselves have identified on the two-lane arterial roadways that traverse their subregions. Additional funds for this project would allow staff to more fully analyze and

recommend improvements for selected corridor segments. I therefore recommend adding \$20,000 to this budget.

The *Methodology for Evaluating Potential Limited-Stop Service on Transit Routes* project had \$200 removed from its budget in order to stay within the UPWP's total funding allocation for new projects. This project is funded entirely FTA Section 5303 dollars. Adding \$200 in PL funding to *Transportation Investments for Economic Development* will allow for \$200 in FTA Section 5303 funding to be transferred to the *Methodology for Evaluating Potential Limited-Stop Service on Transit Routes* project to bring that budget back up to its original round number of \$52,000.

### 2.3 Fund an Additional Ongoing Program

Recently, MassDOT has come to rely on CTPS's participation in Roadway Safety Audits (RSAs). An RSA involves assembling a team of engineers, planners, and others that meets and then conducts a field reconnaissance of a particular location on the region's roadway network. This is done to assess an identified safety problem and to use the combined wisdom of the team to generate ideas for resolving the problem.

I would like to formally acknowledge the staff's participation in these and to establish a modest line item to fund staff's time. The MPO benefits by staff's participation in these in two ways. First, the MPO is providing a service that helps to enhance safety on the region's roadways, a goal that the MPO has embraced. Second, the staff are enriched by their participation on these teams and are therefore better prepared to conduct safety assessments in the context of the MPO's programs and projects.

Participation in an RSA costs about \$650. Thus, a budget of \$6,000, which is what I recommend, would fund staff participation in nine or so RSA's during the course of the 12-month period of the UPWP.

### 2.4 Add Funding to *Direct Support* and *Professional Development*

Most of the PL portion of the *Direct Support* line item in the UPWP is devoted to large computer purchases and other items unrelated to professional development. A small portion of it is set aside for travel to participate in out-of-state conferences and workshops. The *Professional Development* line item funds staff participation in courses, workshops, and other training opportunities specifically related to the MPO's 3C planning work. In my bid to improve the overall quality of the staff's expertise and the work it produces, I would like to be able to fund somewhat more conference, workshop, and training participation than has been possible in recent years. Increasing funding for

these line items would allow that to occur. I therefore recommend adding \$20,000 to the *Direct Support* line item and \$8,000 to the *Professional Development* line item.

## 2.5 Add Funding to Certain Ongoing Programs

Many ongoing programs have seen increased demands on their budgets in recent years, and with declining or level budgets, meeting those demands has become increasingly challenging. As an example, the *Regional Model Enhancement* program, a core federally-required 3C activity, saw a \$40,000 reduction in its budget from the current FFY to the next FFY, yet the demand to improve the models with contemporary data and techniques has only intensified. Other programs, such as the *Transportation Improvement Program* (TIP), have seen modest increases in their budgets, but these increases have not been sufficient to keep up with the demands on those programs. I would therefore propose using the majority of the increased PL funds to augment the budgets of several ongoing programs, as shown in Table 1.

## 3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This proposal attempts to take advantage of the newly-identified PL funds in a way that is balanced and effective. The approach is balanced in the sense that funds would be spread across several different line items as opposed to being concentrated in one or a couple of areas. The approach seeks to be effective in the sense that funds would be targeted to those programs and activities that can meaningfully benefit from the increased funding. Committee members are familiar with some of these line items, such as the TIP, and perhaps less familiar with others. All, however, contribute to the MPO's 3C mission in vital ways, and it is hoped that members will concur with the approach taken. The UPWP Committee will discuss this proposal at its May 16 meeting. Staff will, of course, be available at that meeting to answer questions that committee members may have.

**Table 1**  
**Proposed Budget Adjustments and Additions**

<b>Project or Activity</b>	<b>Current Budget</b>	<b>Proposed Change</b>	<b>Proposed Budget</b>
<b>Additional New Projects</b>			
GHG Reduction Strategy Cost Effectiveness Analysis	\$0	\$55,000	\$55,000
<b>Add Funds to New Projects</b>			
Addressing Safety, Mobility, and Access...Subregional Roadways	\$60,000	\$20,000	\$80,000
Transportation Investments for Economic Development*	\$50,000	\$200	\$50,000
<b>Newly-Funded Program</b>			
Roadway Safety Audits.	\$0	\$6,000	\$6,000
<b>Direct Support</b>	\$108,800	\$20,000	\$128,800
<b>Professional Development</b>	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$16,000
<b>Ongoing Programs</b>			
Computer Resource Management	\$340,600	\$18,000	\$358,600
Data Resources Management	\$275,800	\$15,000	\$290,800
Public Participation Process	\$68,500	\$5,300	\$73,800
General Graphics	\$87,400	\$21,000	\$108,400
Air Quality Support Activity	\$38,300	\$5,000	\$43,300
Prov. Of Mat. In Access. Formats	\$50,000	\$20,000	\$70,000
Regional Model Development	\$750,000	\$40,000	\$790,000
Transportation Equity/EJ Support	\$91,000	\$5,000	\$96,000
TIP	\$165,000	\$5,000	\$170,000
UPWP	\$88,800	\$3,000	\$91,800
Bicycle/Pedestrian Support	\$41,200	\$5,000	\$46,200
Freight Planning Support	\$24,600	\$10,000	\$34,600
Livable Community Workshops	\$41,300	\$5,000	\$46,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,289,300</b>	<b>\$266,500</b>	<b>\$2,555,600</b>

\* Adding \$200 in PL funding to this project would allow \$200 in FTA Section 5303 funding to be transferred to the *Methodology for Evaluating Potential Limited-Stop Service on Transit Routes* project, restoring it to \$52,000.