

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

April 17, 2014 Meeting

9:05 AM to 10:00 AM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

Sreelatha Allam, Chair, representing the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Materials

Materials for this meeting included:

- A copy of the meeting agenda
- Draft meeting minutes for the February 20, 2014 UPWP Committee Meeting
- Draft meeting minutes for the March 20, 2014 UPWP Committee Meeting
- A updated draft CTPS FFY 2015 UPWP budget
- A draft MAPC FFY 2015 UPWP budget
- A sheet documenting the updated CTPS Staff Recommendation for New Projects for the FFY 2015 UPWP
- A packet containing draft UPWP descriptions of ongoing and continuing CTPS and MAPC programs and projects

Decisions

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee agreed to the following:

- Approve the meeting minutes of February 20, 2014
- Approve the meeting minutes of March 20, 2014
- Adopt the updated MPO staff FFY 2015 budget and recommendation for new projects for the FFY 2015 UPWP as the UPWP Committee Recommendation to the MPO for the FFY 2015 UPWP.

Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions

Sree Allam, Chair, Unified Planning Work Program Committee (Massachusetts Department of Transportation) called the meeting to order at approximately 9:05 AM. UPWP Committee members, other MPO members, MPO staff, and other attendees introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 7.) Michelle Scott (MPO Staff) reviewed the meeting materials.

2. FFY 2015 UPWP Development: Current and Upcoming Steps

M. Scott reminded Committee members that they previously had reviewed the MPO staff's recommendation for new projects for FFY 2015, along with draft CTPS and MAPC FFY 2015 UPWP budgets, which assume that federal metropolitan planning funding (also called "3C funding") will be level with what the MPO received in FFY 2014. She explained that FFY 2015 metropolitan planning funding information is still not available, but that MPO staff asks UPWP Committee members to vote on their budget and new project recommendations to the MPO today to stay on schedule. Next steps include presenting the UPWP Committee's recommendation on the budget and new projects to the MPO; and obtaining MPO approval to release a draft FFY 2015 UPWP for public review (the vote for which will take place on May 15). She added that if the FFY 2015 metropolitan planning funding information becomes available prior to the MPO vote, MPO staff and MAPC will make changes to their respective budgets and seek the Committee's approval.

Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council, asked if it is known when the FFY 2015 funding allocation information will be available. S. Allam said that MassDOT has received sufficient information from FHWA and FTA and is working with it. E. Bourassa asked whether funding levels were likely to be lower than those for FFY 2014; S. Allam responded that it makes sense to assume level funding.

3. Action Items: Approval of Draft UPWP Committee Meeting Minutes *Minutes of February 20, 2014 UPWP Committee Meeting*

A motion to approve the February 20, 2014 UPWP Committee meeting minutes was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville). The motion carried.

Minutes of March 20, 2014 UPWP Committee Meeting

A motion to approve the March 20, 2014 UPWP Committee meeting minutes was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by T. Bent. The motion carried.

4. Update on Budget and Proposed New Projects for the FFY 2015 UPWP

M. Scott explained that, in the absence of FFY 2015 UPWP metropolitan planning funding information, the 3C-funded elements of the CTPS and MAPC budgets have remained the same. Some information for non-3C-funded components of the CTPS budget has been updated, such as status information for agency-funded projects.

M. Scott explained that the specific projects included in the updated FFY 2015 UPWP staff recommendation for new projects are the same as those in the recommendation presented on April 3. In this update, MPO staff have allocated the \$20,630 in 3C-funds that staff had previously reserved (pending finalized FFY 2015 funding information), onto three of the projects. These include the Safety at Intersections near MAGIC Schools (C-1; \$5,630 has been added), Core Capacity Constraints (E-1; \$10,000 has been added), and Household-Survey-Based Travel Profiles and Trends: Selected Policy Topics (G-1; \$5,000 has been added).

Dennis Crowley, Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway) asked whether the Committee could decide to pull the \$20,630 off these projects and combine it with other 3C-dollars to fund an additional project, should more money be available in FFY 2015 than expected. K. Quackenbush said that this would continue to be an option; if the FFY 2015 funding levels are higher or lower, the Committee will have an opportunity to interact with the proposed new projects, and their associated funding levels, again.

D. Crowley asked about the status and total budget for the South Station Expansion Project: Support project (funded by MassDOT). K. Quackenbush explained that the total budget for this multi-year project is \$350,000. Last year, MPO staff projected that \$111,500 of this total budget would be spent in FFY 2014. MPO staff expects this project to be 95 percent complete, and to have \$20,000 remaining in the budget, as of October 1, 2014. He added that because of when the spending projections for each fiscal year are made, the expected spending for all years might not add up to \$350,000. D. Crowley asked whether any revenue would be left over from this project. K. Quackenbush explained that it is possible some funding might be left over, and that project budgets cannot be exceeded. Depending on the nature of agency/other entity contracts, dollars cannot be readily transferred between projects, though an agency such as MassDOT or the MBTA might elect to move funds between a pool of its projects. The UPWP Committee is primarily charged with programming 3C-funds, and UPWP Committee approval would be needed to transfer funding between 3C-funded projects and programs. He reminded Committee members that the MPO also grants

approval for MPO staff to work on agency/other entity-funded projects, and is kept up to date on the status of those projects.

5. Report on Ongoing and Continuing UPWP Programs and Projects

M. Scott provided members with copies of draft descriptions for ongoing and continuing projects and programs—including those funded with 3C funds and other agency/entity-funds—that will be included in the draft FFY 2015 UPWP. UPWP Committee members were invited to ask questions or provide feedback on these descriptions prior to the release of a draft UPWP for public review.

6. Action Item: Decision on UPWP Committee Recommendation for FFY 2015 UPWP Budget and New Projects

David Koses, At-Large Cities (City of Newton) asked for confirmation that the Committee members would be able to make modifications to the budget and new projects at a future meeting, should FFY 2015 metropolitan planning funding be lower than what was available in FFY 2014. S. Allam confirmed this is the case.

A motion to adopt the MPO staff recommendation for the FFY 2015 UPWP budget and new projects as the UPWP Committee recommendation to the MPO was made by T. Bent and seconded by Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC). The motion carried.

7. Member Items

K. Quackenbush reminded UPWP Committee members that at a MPO meeting several weeks prior, the MPO Chair and MPO Vice Chair raised the issue of the amount and level of technical content that is discussed at MPO meetings. The discussion focused on whether all work scopes should continue to come before the MPO; it was his understanding that the MPO was interested in maintaining the current level of technical presentations on study and project outcomes. K. Quackenbush explained that his position, which has been informed by discussions with several MPO members, includes the following elements.

- It may be beneficial not to do full presentations on 3C-funded work scopes at MPO meetings, with some exceptions. This would be a change from current practice.
- MPO staff could continue to include all work scopes in packets for MPO members, and at MPO meetings, the MPO Chair or MPO Executive Director could continue to reference their availability and address questions as part of their respective

reports (as opposed to designating another portion of the agenda for the discussion of work scopes).

- The MPO Executive Director could continue to present work scopes for agency-funded projects that are not in the UPWP at all, or work scopes for projects that are funded by larger SPR or MassDOT 5303 contracts, at MPO meetings.

K. Quackenbush said that the MPO should continue to be involved in reviewing work scopes; the question would be whether the UPWP Committee would have a larger role in reviewing 3C-funded work scopes if the amount of review conducted by the full MPO would decrease.

D. Koses expressed his interest in continuing to review work scopes, either at the Committee or MPO level. He was interested in knowing how often work scopes are modified after being presented to the members of the MPO, as it seems that it may happen from time to time. He indicated that he would be supportive of an expanded UPWP Committee role.

E. Bourassa expressed support for including the work scopes in MPO packets and having minimal presentations of the work scopes at the MPO level, using the format that K. Quackenbush suggested. He noted that work scopes are changed only in rare cases, and that 3C-funded projects are discussed during UPWP development. He said that he sensed a desire from MPO members to spend more time on study findings and outcomes and how these may relate to MPO planning and potential projects. He noted that work scopes are being generated continually, so a body responsible for reviewing them would need to meet regularly. If review were to take place at the UPWP Committee level, there would likely be more work for the Committee, and coordinating the timing of work scopes might be challenging for MPO staff. K. Quackenbush responded that the bulk of the work scopes are 3C-funded, and if the UPWP Committee would be more involved in reviewing them, MPO staff would work with the Committee on finding a way to schedule the production of work scopes so that they could be reviewed in bunches, toward the beginning of the federal fiscal year if possible.

D. Crowley was supportive of an approach where the work scopes could come to the UPWP Committee first, and then be made available in MPO member packets, with the MPO Chair or the MPO Executive Director referencing the availability of these scopes during his report. He said that this approach would place the onus on MPO members to review the work scopes in advance of the MPO meetings and raise any questions they have.

Dennis Giombetti, MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham) said that he understood that the current proposal being discussed involves the 3C-funded work scopes coming to the committee and agency/other entity-funded work scopes coming directly to the MPO. E. Bourassa said that it may not even be necessary to have the UPWP Committee review the 3C-funded work scopes separately. K. Quackenbush said that the reality would likely be that the UPWP Committee would need to do more work and meet more frequently. S. Allam noted that she felt that a presentation of work scopes is important either at the Committee or MPO level, and requested that discussion of this topic continue at the next UPWP Committee meeting.

S. Olanoff said that he felt that it was not necessary to change the MPO's current procedures for reviewing work scopes; instead, the MPO could follow current procedures more efficiently.

D. Koses said he wanted to avoid a situation where the MPO would approve a study as part of the UPWP and then not hear about it again until MPO staff presented study outcomes. He said that having presentations on the work scopes helps members to think of questions, and that he appreciates opportunities to respond interactively on the scopes. He said that he did not have a preference as to whether these discussions happen at the MPO or UPWP Committee level, but noted that if reviews were to happen at the UPWP Committee level, more MPO members might start attending UPWP Committee meetings.

Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) indicated that he would want to hear the thoughts of the full MPO before making a decision on this issue. K. Quackenbush indicated that as part of his Executive Director's report at the April 17 MPO meeting, he would mention that the UPWP Committee was discussing this issue.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the UPWP Committee was scheduled for 9 AM on May 1.

9. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by D. Giombetti. The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Laura Wiener
City of Boston (Boston Redevelopment Authority)	Lara Mérida
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Sree Allam
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)	Steve Olanoff

Other Attendees Affiliation

Rafael Mares Conservation Law Foundation

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director
Robin Mannion, Deputy Executive Director
Elizabeth Moore
Scott Peterson
Michelle Scott
Pam Wolfe
