

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

August 7, 2014 Meeting

9:05 AM to 9:55 AM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

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

Decisions

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

- Approve the minutes of the April 3, April 17, May 1, and May 15, 2014, UPWP Committee meetings
- To concur with a proposed CTPS budget adjustment for the FFY 2014 UPWP

Materials

Materials for this meeting included:

- A copy of the meeting agenda
- Draft minutes for the April 3, April 17, May 1, and May 15, 2014, UPWP Committee meetings
- The FFY 2014 UPWP Third Quarter Spending Report
- The FFY 2014 UPWP Fourth Quarter Schedule and Staff Assignment Table
- A memorandum documenting a proposed CTPS budget adjustment for the FFY 2014 UPWP
- A memorandum documenting a change in MAPC's Alternative-Mode Planning and Coordination project in the FFY 2014 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 PM.

UPWP Committee members, MPO staff, and other attendees introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 8.)

2. Action Item: Approval of Minutes from UPWP Committee Meetings

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 3, 2014 UPWP Committee meeting was made by Eric Bourassa, Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and seconded by Steve Olanoff, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC). The motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2014 UPWP Committee meeting was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by Tom Kadzis, City of Boston. The motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2014 UPWP Committee meeting was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by S. Olanoff. The motion carried.

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2014 UPWP Committee meeting was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by T. Kadzis. The motion carried.

3. FFY 2014 UPWP Third Quarter Spending Report

Michelle Scott, MPO staff, reviewed the structure of the report. It provides information on FFY 2014 UPWP project budgets, total project budgets, and information on projects that may have been carried over from FFY 2013 or otherwise added during the federal fiscal year. As of the end of the third quarter, 70 percent of 3C funding for MPO projects had been spent, and close to 100 percent of non-3C funding for agency projects had been spent. M. Scott noted that because project budgets are developed several months before the federal fiscal year begins, there are often discrepancies between spending expectations and realities. Karl Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director, added that task development and schedules for agency-funded projects are out of MPO staff's control, and changes in tasks and schedules can also affect spending patterns.

Dennis Crowley, Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway) asked for clarification on the difference between MPO-funded and non-MPO funded work, asking whether the non-MPO funded work could be considered consultant services to other agencies. K. Quackenbush affirmed this. D. Crowley asked whether the level of outside consulting services that MPO staff provides is increasing or remaining flat. K. Quackenbush explained that over time, levels of MPO-funded and non MPO-funded work has remained relatively flat. It may be the case that the level of consulting services provided to specific agencies (such as MassDOT or the MBTA) may change from year to year. D. Crowley said he was pleased to see that the level of consultant services to

agencies is relatively flat, because an upward trend might signal that the MPO was deviating from its core functions.

E. Bourassa noted that the vast majority of this outside work is performed for the MBTA or MassDOT. D. Crowley said that these consulting services work could go to private companies other than the MPO, but reiterated that his main concern was that by taking on this outside work, MPO staff could potentially hamper its ability to serve the MPO.

K. Quackenbush noted that historically, MPOs have been charged performing certain tasks—such as travel demand modeling—which has, over time, enabled MPO staff to be better suited to performing those tasks than other entities. Because of this, the MPO staff provides these specialized services as consultants or sub-consultants. He added that by performing non-MPO work, MPO staff can develop capabilities and expertise that enables the staff to better serve the MPO. He added that by not making a profit, and keeping overhead rates and salaries lower than those that are prevalent in the private-sector consulting world, CTPS makes efficient use of taxpayer dollars when working on federal or state-funded projects.

D. Crowley reaffirmed that he supports the level of work performed for outside entities, but is concerned by the possibility of an imbalance in the future. K. Quackenbush emphasized that MPO work always takes precedence.

David Koses, At-Large Cities (City of Newton) asked whether MPO staff proactively responds to requests for qualifications or proposals. K. Quackenbush explained that this typically doesn't occur; in general, MPO staff gets requests from consulting firms to team on a project.

4. FFY 2014 UPWP Fourth Quarter Schedule and Staff Assignment Table

M. Scott reviewed the structure of this schedule, which shows projects that are being conducted in the fourth quarter of FFY 2014. It provides information on project scheduling and staff time, and it highlights projects for which workscopes have recently been approved. Recently completed projects include the Bicycle Network Evaluation.

T. Kadzis noted that schedule information had not been provided for the DMU Feasibility Study (ID 42513). K. Quackenbush explained that MassDOT has not yet provided CTPS with a defined scope for this project. The project is noted on the schedule because it has been listed on previous schedules and because it is part of a larger CTPS contract with MassDOT that covers projects funded with MassDOT 5303

dollars. T. Kadzis said that he thought there might be a connection between this project and the South Boston Waterfront Transportation Plan (ID 23325, funded with MassDOT dollars).

S. Olanoff asked what work is being done on the “SIP Mitigation for Green Line Extension Delay” project (ID 11377). Scott Peterson, MPO staff, explained that MPO staff has been working with MassDOT and the MBTA on putting together a package of interim air quality improvement measures to address the delay in implementing service on the Green Line Extension by 2014, which was a State Implementation Plan (SIP) commitment. This package was presented to the MBTA general manager in July and has been released for public review, and there will be some public hearings in the fall.

K. Quackenbush said that MPO staff has considered condensing and perhaps consolidating the quarterly spending reports and schedule and staff assignment tables, and asked UPWP Committee members for their reactions and feedback. For example, much of the Schedule and Staff assignment table focuses on listing the time each individual MPO staff member will spend on various projects. While this information is useful for MPO staff and managers, K. Quackenbush asked whether committee members would prefer that these types of details be summarized.

E. Bourassa asked whether the Schedule and Staff Assignment table was produced solely for UPWP Committee meetings. K. Quackenbush explained that while the report was first produced for the UPWP Committee, MPO staff also uses the table as an internal management tool, and would continue to gather the information even if the level of detail on the table were to change.

D. Crowley, asked whether MPO staff would create the table differently if the Committee no longer wanted to see specific types of information, and if MPO staff would be able to save time by producing a simplified report. K. Quackenbush said he was not yet sure, and that this would depend on changes to reports that are given to the Committee. If staff would continue to collect the same amount and types of information, then the report production time would likely remain the same.

S. Olanoff said that he found information about certain people or activities useful, so he was satisfied with the structure of the table as it was. D. Koses said that he has become accustomed to this table structure, and, if it's not extra work for staff to create, that he finds it interesting to follow staff changes over the life of a project. Tom O'Rourke, Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC) said that he finds the current structure of the report to be useful, but that he would also be fine with more condensed

information about staff time. K. Quackenbush said that MPO staff would consider this feedback and revisit this topic with the Committee at a future meeting.

5. Action Item: Concurrence on Proposed CTPS Budget Adjustment

K. Quackenbush explained that MPO staff has identified several ongoing 3C-funded projects and programs that have spending trends that are different from what was projected when the FFY 2014 UPWP was developed. MPO staff requests the Committee's concurrence with a proposal that would redistribute funds across these projects and programs; there would be no addition to or subtraction from the level of 3C funds in the FFY 2014 UPWP. He reminded the Committee that budget adjustments were made during FFY 2013. MPO staff's proposal has been documented in the provided memorandum, including explanations for each suggested budgetary change. K. Quackenbush noted that one 3C-funded discrete project, Barriers and Opportunities Influencing Mode Shift, is included in the proposal because it began late in the year and a portion of its funding will not be able to be expended in FFY 2014. The amount of overall staff time that will be spent on the project will be the same, but time will need to be made up in FFY 2015.

S. Allam asked why an additional \$53,700 is being added to the Data Resources Management (ID 600xx) budget if there has been less work for Information Technology and Services (IT&S) staff on out-of-group projects. K. Quackenbush explained that the IT&S Group is responsible for managing databases and GIS, and that the group both manages its own projects (some of which fall under Data Resources Management) and works on projects for other groups. When planning the FFY 2014 UPWP, it was necessary to estimate the amount of time IT&S staff would spend working on its own projects as well as the amount of time they would spend on out-of-group projects. Actual spending has not aligned with these projections, and because of a lack of out-of-group project work to date, IT&S staff has worked more on Data Resource Management projects, leading to a need to increase that budget.

T. Kadzis asked if other groups provide overhead for IT&S when they work on out-of-group projects. K. Quackenbush explained that if an IT&S-related task is laid out in the work scope of a project, the managing group will incorporate time for IT&S into the project budget. Because there has been less of this type of work than expected, IT&S staff is more reliant on its general budgets. Robin Mannion, MPO Deputy Executive Director, explained that it was the case this year that work that had been planned for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) could not be completed, and so MPO staff's budget proposal shows reduced funding for the TIP, while the Data Resources

Management budget has been increased. Adjustments such as these help the budget reflect the level of work that actually has or will be done on each project in FFY 2014.

D. Koses said that it would be surprising if adjustments to UPWP budgets were not necessary throughout the year, given the difficulty involved in forecasting spending. K. Quackenbush said that the task is difficult, and that in past years, less attention may have been paid to reconciling the budget. Today, MPO staff is trying to put more of a focus on it.

T. O'Rourke noted the large proposed increase in the Public Participation Program (90026) and asked what activities are involved and why the funds are needed. Pam Wolfe, MPO staff, explained that the program relies heavily on Graphics support for its materials, is increasing its capability for translating documents into other languages, and is ramping up its approach to outreach. K. Quackenbush added that CTPS is recruiting a new public participation staff person; while funding is needed for the aforementioned activities, this funding also could support that person if they are hired before September 30.

A motion to concur with the proposed CTPS budget adjustment was made by T. Kadzis and seconded by E. Bourassa. The motion carried.

6. MAPC Alternative Mode Planning and Coordination Projects Update

E. Bourassa explained that he has provided a memo explaining a change in its FFY 2014 UPWP Alternative-Mode Planning and Coordination work. When the FFY 2014 UPWP was being developed, MAPC anticipated coordinating with the City of Boston on planning for bicycle improvements within or along the Rose Kennedy Greenway. Since that time, the City of Boston has received a federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant for its Connect Historic Boston project, part of which would fund a bike facility along Atlantic Avenue. As a result, MAPC is proposing to spend dollars that would have been spent on Greenway work to support bike planning work in the Town of Danvers.

Laura Wiener, At-Large Towns (Town of Arlington) said she agreed with not funding work that was being done another way. She noted that the Danvers project seemed to be very different, as it would be focused on a small town more instead of a location with a lot of public access, such as the Greenway. E. Bourassa explained that MAPC has been completing comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plans for cities and towns on a continuing basis. L. Wiener asked if MAPC intended to do bike planning in Danvers anyway, and if these additional dollars would just enable them to do more work. E.

Bourassa explained that these dollars would make it possible to do work specifically in Danvers. She asked if the bike planning would support connectivity to other bike trails. E. Bourassa said that this work will be done in conjunction with Beverly and would look at connections to the East Coast Greenway. He added that Danvers has advanced a good trail that would be part of the Border to Boston trail, and that this bike planning would look at opportunities for both on and off-road facilities.

7. Member Items

There were none.

8. Next Meeting

The UPWP Committee will reconvene in late October or early November to discuss the FFY 2014 Fourth Quarter Spending Report, the FFY 2015 First Quarter Schedule and Staff assignment table, and the start of the FFY 2016 UPWP development cycle.

9. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by Tom Bent, Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville). 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)	Tom Kadzis
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Massachusetts Department of Transportation	Sreelatha Allam
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)	Dennis Crowley
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)	Tom O'Rourke

Other Attendees Affiliation

Steve Olanoff Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/NVCC)

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

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