

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

February 1, 2018 Meeting

9:00 AM–9:50 AM, State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2 and 3,
10 Park Plaza, Boston

Bryan Pounds, Chair, representing Stephanie Pollack, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Decisions

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

- Approve the meeting summary for the July 20, 2017, UPWP Committee meeting
- Approve the meeting summary for the October 19, 2017, UPWP Committee meeting

Materials

Materials for this meeting included the following:

1. Meeting summary for the July 20, 2017, UPWP Committee meeting
2. Meeting summary for the October 19, 2017, UPWP Committee meeting

Meeting Agenda and Summary of Discussion

1. Introductions

Bryan Pounds (MassDOT/UPWP Committee Chair) conducted introductions and circulated the sign-in sheet. Since a quorum of committee members was not present, the chair decided to defer action on agenda items 2a and 2b—meeting summary approvals—until a sixth member arrived.

2. Discussion of UPWP Budget Modifications for FFY 2018 (Agenda Items 3a and 3c)—*Karl Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director*

Budget for certification review tasks and proposed change to scope and budget of the FFY 2018 study, Potential Impacts of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles

Karl Quackenbush (MPO Executive Director) spoke about agenda items 3a and 3c. He explained that the FFY 2018 UPWP was put together before the MPO was aware that

the federal recertification process would be happening during FFY 2018. Based on past experience, staff believes that the recertification process will require approximately \$80,000 across two fiscal years, about \$50,000 of which would be needed during FFY 2018. Half of these costs are expected to fall on the Certification Activities group, and half on other groups.

He also discussed ongoing challenges with the last work scope contained in the FFY 2018 UPWP, the study relating to Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (C/AV), which has not yet been advanced to the MPO. Staff believes that some elements of the work scope, as presented in the UPWP, hold little value to the MPO at this time or are not achievable given new constraints on staff resources. One staff member who had been assigned to take on much of that work is needed in the Travel Model Development group because that group is short one staffer. As a result, K. Quackenbush proposed reducing the work scope budget for this FFY to \$20,000 (to be managed by Sandy Johnston) and reallocating \$30,000 to the certification review work. Other elements of the scope, including those involving modeling, could be rolled into ongoing programs.

Other funds for the certification review will come from the cessation of MPO support for the Access Advisory Committee to the MBTA (AACT), expected in summer 2018. AACT's committee and management structures are changing, and the staff person managing the program, Janie Guion, is retiring. The remainder of the AACT funding line item for FFY 2018 could shift to help cover the certification review costs.

K. Quackenbush expressed that he cannot inform the committee at this point about the opportunity costs for time spent on the certification review.

K. Quackenbush mentioned that while staff believes the reduced \$20,000 C/AV study is still worthwhile, he would need the support of the MPO chair and the UPWP Committee members to advance it. Eric Bourassa (Metropolitan Area Planning Council/MPO Vice Chair) noted that there is a need to stay on top of the extensive research in the C/AV field and that the \$20,000 seems sufficient to provide value in that arena. B. Pounds noted that he had been a champion for the FFY 2018 C/AV study work scope and he asked if staff would still be asking to modify the scope if the certification review was not happening. K. Quackenbush replied that likely they would, given the staff constraints that have been introduced. Tegin Teich (Regional Transportation Advisory Council/City of Cambridge) expressed her conditional support for the change and asked staff to make sure that, with the workshop aspect of the work scope being cancelled, communications with the public and stakeholders are still part of the scope. E. Bourassa noted that there is a need to reconcile the popular perceptions of the new technologies and what agencies are paying attention to. K. Quackenbush replied that there is a tendency to conflate C/AVs and transportation network companies (TNCs), since the

end goal of the companies involved appears to be to link them. E. Bourassa agreed with that assertion.

B. Pounds asked for a revised scope of work, noting that the committee would not take any action today. He noted that it is important to the chair of the MPO to have clear plans to continue the work and build upon it. He also expressed that it is important to try to get a handle on the scope of work for the certification review.

B. Pounds asked for a clarification of the AACT budget, which K. Quackenbush provided.

Various members requested clarification about the final product of the reduced C/AV work scope. Scott Peterson (CTPS Director of Technical Services) replied that a staff member would be devoted to this research area, and a summary of each meeting or report would be produced to disseminate knowledge among staff. E. Bourassa again expressed his belief that it is important for staff to stay on top of research in this field. B. Pounds asked whether staff should instead charge a budget line in the ongoing program budget for this kind of task; staff clarified that an appropriate budget line does not exist, and this work would remain as a more concentrated effort. Steve Olanoff (Town of Westwood/Three Rivers Interlocal Council) clarified that the MPO had not yet seen a scope for this item.

3. Action Items: Approval of Meeting Summaries (Agenda Item 2)— *Bryan Pounds, UPWP Committee Chair*

Noting that the committee now had a quorum, B. Pounds asked the committee to address agenda item 2, Approval of Meeting Summaries.

A motion to approve the July 20, 2017, meeting summary was made by E. Bourassa and seconded by another member. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion to approve the October 19, 2017, meeting summary was made by T. Teich and seconded by another member. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Discussion of UPWP Budget Modifications for FFY 2018 (Agenda Item 3c)—*Karl Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director*

Timing of project/study location selection (for recurring roadway studies)

B. Pounds asked if all three sub-items from agenda item 3 had been discussed, and K. Quackenbush replied that item 3b had not. K. Quackenbush explained that this item had been discussed previously with the committee. Corridor study selection must occur in the previous fiscal year, since doing it at the beginning of the same fiscal year in

which the study is conducted can delay data collection. B. Pounds noted that the MPO's federal partners discussed that the Federal Highway Administration will start approving UPWP amendments. The exact process is still unclear. Robin Mannion (MPO Deputy Executive Director) asked the chair if federal partners or MassDOT would provide guidance regarding the level of change that would require an approved amendment. B. Pounds replied that this topic had been discussed internally at MassDOT and would be clarified in the future.

5. Introduction to Public Feedback and Review Process for FFY 2019 Universe of Potential Studies (Agenda Item 4)—*Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager, MPO Staff*

Sandy Johnston (UPWP Manager) briefed the committee about the public outreach process that staff had conducted during the fall, collecting over 1,000 discrete comments. Various committee members expressed surprise at the significant number of comments. S. Johnston proceeded to detail the overall themes of public comment heard during the process, including the following:

- First- and last-mile access to transit
- Job access and reverse commute
- Bicycle and pedestrian transportation, and Complete Streets
- Siloes/boundaries (especially with regard to transit service areas)
- Autonomous vehicles
- Water transportation
- TIP process: towns take a financial risk to develop (design/permit) a project that might not be funded for construction
- Help for towns with limited or no staff
- Technical assistance (corridors and intersections)
- Millennials and their preferences for living arrangements
- Seniors and demographic transition, and an aging population
- Suburbanization of poverty and geographically isolated affordable housing
- Transit-oriented development
- Disability accessibility (transit, sidewalks, shuttles, etc.)

For the February 15 meeting, there will be a draft Universe of Studies, reflecting this outreach material. A budget will not be attached, since budget numbers will not yet be

available. After the February 15 meeting, S. Johnston will send out a survey, using ranked-choice voting, but otherwise parallel to last year's, to ask committee members to rank their preferred studies. T. Teich clarified—and B. Pounds affirmed—that it would be acceptable to show the draft Universe to the Advisory Council on February 14, a day before the committee meeting on February 15. E. Bourassa asked for an updated schedule and S. Johnston said staff would provide one very similar to last year's schedule. R. Mannion asked if, when asking about repeating programs, B. Pounds meant "recurring" studies or the MPO's ongoing programs. B. Pounds replied that he meant primarily the first, but that the second might be useful for informational purposes. Lourenço Dantas (Certification Activities Group Manager) noted that staff usually presents the ongoing programs with the full draft document later in the process. B. Pounds said it is not crucial but would be good to see.

T. Teich asked for an update on the database that tracks project outcomes. S. Johnston replied that all of the relevant historical data information, including study names and dates, has been input, but gathering information on the status of the recommendations has been difficult due to the lack of response from municipalities. Staff will refresh that effort in coming weeks, possibly with the help of MPO members.

6. Presentation of Progress Reports for the First Quarter of FFY 2018 (Agenda Item 5)—*Karl Quackenbush, MPO Executive Director*

B. Pounds asked members to ask K. Quackenbush if they had any questions about the quarterly progress reports.

7. Members Items

Before adjourning, B. Pounds noted that a meeting of the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) was held on January 31, at which the allocation of planning funds to MPOs was presented. Four municipalities have left the Boston MPO, and their funding, previously split with the Old Colony MPO, has shifted entirely to Old Colony—but the funding for the Boston region is still slightly greater, overall, for FFY 2019 as compared to FFY 2018 amounts.

8. Public Comments

There were none.

9. Next Meeting

S. Johnston noted that the February 15 committee meeting would occur after the MPO meeting that day due to the anticipated length of the committee meeting.

10. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made and carried unanimously.

Attendance

Members

Representatives and Alternates

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|--|----------------|
| Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville) | Tom Bent |
| Massachusetts Department of Transportation | Bryan Pounds |
| Metropolitan Area Planning Council | Eric Bourassa |
| Regional Transportation Advisory Council | Tegin Teich |
| South West Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway) | Dennis Crowley |
| Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce) | Steve Olanoff |

Other Attendees Affiliation

| Name | Affiliation |
|------|-------------|
|------|-------------|

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director
Robin Mannion
Lourenço Dantas
Sandy Johnston
Mark Abbott
Annette Demchur
Scott Peterson
Jen Rowe
