



BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary and CEO and MPO Chair
Tegin L. Teich, Executive Director, MPO Staff

WORK PROGRAM

FUTURE OF THE CURB PHASE 2

OCTOBER 15, 2020

Proposed Motion

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) votes to approve this work program.

Project Identification

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Classification

Boston Region MPO Planning Studies and Technical Analyses

Project Number 14371

Client

Boston Region MPO

Project Supervisors

Principal: Annette Demchur

Manager: Paul Christner

Funding Source

MPO Planning and §5303 Contract #112310

Schedule and Budget

Schedule: Eleven months after work commences

Budget: \$60,000

Schedule and budget details are shown in Exhibits 1 and 2, respectively.

Relationship to MPO Goals

The Boston Region MPO elected to fund this study with its federally allocated metropolitan planning funds during federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021. The work completed through this study will address the following goal area(s) established in the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan: capacity management and mobility, clean air and clean communities, transportation equity, and economic vitality.

Background

This study will build on FFY 2019's Future of the Curb study, which compiled nationwide examples of cities reconfiguring curb lanes in response to changing demands on the space. Curb space in urban areas has traditionally been used for parking, but cities throughout the region and across the country have been making changes to the use of this valuable, but often overlooked, public space. In addition to parking, cities have been reconfiguring curbs to be used for a number of other purposes, including short-term passenger pick-up and drop-off zones; commercial vehicle loading zones; improved infrastructure for people walking and biking; and enhanced transit service, including space for dedicated transit lanes, stations, and stops.

In some cases, these reconfigurations are made on an ad hoc basis, responding to changing demands and economic, environmental, and political constraints at a particular location. In other cases, cities have crafted specific policies to inform how curb space can and should be used. These curb management strategies guide how improvements are developed, prioritized, and implemented.

Additionally, in recent months, municipalities have seized the opportunity presented by the COVID-19 pandemic to shift curb space away from parking to other uses, such as outdoor eating, takeout food and package pick-up zones, parklets, and bus and bicycle lanes. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has provided funding for some of these municipalities through MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces quick-launch/quick-build grant program, which was developed to respond to the increased need for expanded outdoor spaces for people walking, bicycling, and using bus transit to have safe and sufficient space to physically distance themselves from one another. This funding was also used to provide additional space for dining outdoors to improve safety and confidence for customers wary of COVID-19. MassDOT provides grants of \$5,000 to \$300,000 for cities and towns to quickly launch or expand improvements to sidewalks, curbs, streets, on-street parking spaces and off-street parking lots in support of public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce in communities. These improvements can be intentionally temporary, in the style of tactical urbanism, or can be pilots of potentially permanent changes to streets and sidewalks. This study will examine the process and implications for the implementation and duration of these uses post-COVID-19.

By actively managing curb space, cities can work to ensure sufficient access to users of all transportation modes, including people walking, biking, taking transit, using transportation network company services (such as Uber, Lyft, etc.), and driving. When space is limited and the accommodation of all modes is not possible or practical, a curbside management strategy can help planners and city officials determine a course of action that is rooted in the shared goals and vision of the community. This ensures that a valuable but limited public asset is used effectively and efficiently.

Objective(s)

The objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To examine existing curb management strategies in use around the Boston region and the processes used to implement them
2. To develop a guidebook for municipalities interested in planning and implementing curb management strategies

Work Description

This study will be completed according to the following tasks:

Task 1 Review Curb Management Strategies in the Boston Region

Building off the 2019 technical memorandum, MPO staff will research and investigate specific examples of best practices and innovative solutions for managing curb lane space in large urban areas and smaller business districts in municipalities around the Boston region. The study will include outreach to municipal staff and other relevant officials in the Boston region. Staff will interview municipal officials to understand the process of implementing curb management strategies, including changes and considerations, successes, challenges, lessons learned, and metrics for assessing success. Staff will also review recent curb use changes implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including projects funded by MassDOT's Shared Streets and Spaces program, the processes used to implement these changes, and municipalities' plans to keep these changes post-COVID-19. The results of the research and interviews will be used in Task 2 to develop a guidebook.

Products of Task 1

Results of research and interviews

Task 2 Develop a Guidebook

Based on the research and outreach in Task 1, staff will develop a guidebook for municipalities interested in planning and implementing curb management strategies.

The guidebook will discuss several topic areas, including

- developing curb management strategies that are consistent with the municipality's larger transportation goals;
- identifying stakeholders and engaging the public, including transportation equity populations, in developing curb management strategies;
- establishing metrics to evaluate the success of curb management changes; for example, considering effects on access and accessibility, parking turnover, transit reliability, safety, businesses and economic vitality, travel times, congestion, emissions, and other factors;

- evaluating how the positive and negative effects of changes to curb management can affect equity populations;
- developing a plan for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the curb management strategy;
- considering the broader context of curb space changes, including land-use, density and existing activities at the curb;
- making changes to curb use quickly and in emergency situations (based on changes made during the COVID-19 pandemic); and
- determining whether and how to keep emergency changes in the long term.

Products of Task 2

Guidebook for municipalities interested in planning and implementing curb management strategies

Task 3 Present Findings to the Boston Region MPO

Staff will present the Guidebook to the Boston Region MPO board.

Product of Task 3

Presentation of the Guidebook to the MPO board

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) operates its programs, services, and activities in compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations. Title VI prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs and requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency), be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that receives federal assistance. Related federal nondiscrimination laws administered by the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, or both, prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, sex, and disability. The Boston Region MPO considers these protected populations in its Title VI Programs, consistent with federal interpretation and administration. In addition, the Boston Region MPO provides meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to individuals with limited English proficiency, in compliance with U.S. Department of Transportation policy and guidance on federal Executive Order 13166.

The Boston Region MPO also complies with the Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law, M.G.L. c 272 sections 92a, 98, 98a, which prohibits making any distinction, discrimination, or restriction in admission to, or treatment in a place of public accommodation based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or ancestry. Likewise, the Boston Region MPO complies with the Governor's Executive Order 526, section 4, which requires that all programs, activities, and services provided, performed, licensed, chartered, funded, regulated, or contracted for by the state shall be conducted without unlawful discrimination based on race, color, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, disability, veteran's status (including Vietnam-era veterans), or background.

A complaint form and additional information can be obtained by contacting the MPO or at http://www.bostonmpo.org/mpo_non_discrimination. To request this information in a different language or in an accessible format, please contact

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Boston Region MPO
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116
civilrights@ctps.org
857.702.3700 (voice)
617.570.9193 (TTY)

Exhibit 1
ESTIMATED SCHEDULE
Future of the Curb Phase 2

Task	Month										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Review Curb Management Strategies in the Boston Region											
2. Develop a Guidebook					A						
3. Present Findings to the Boston Region MPO											B

Products/Milestones

A: Guidebook

B: Presentation to MPO Board

Exhibit 2
ESTIMATED COST
Future of the Curb Phase 2

Direct Salary and Overhead							\$60,000
Task	Person-Weeks				Direct Salary	Overhead (106%)	Total Cost
	M-1	P-5	P-2	Total			
1. Review Curb Management Strategies in the Boston Region	1.2	0.0	6.0	7.2	\$9,242	\$9,797	\$19,039
2. Develop a Guidebook	2.2	0.8	10.0	13.0	\$17,176	\$18,207	\$35,383
3. Present Findings to the Boston Region MPO	0.6	0.2	1.0	1.8	\$2,708	\$2,870	\$5,578
Total	4.0	1.0	17.0	22.0	\$29,127	\$30,874	\$60,000
Other Direct Costs							\$0
TOTAL COST							\$60,000

Funding

MPO §5303 Planning Contract #112310