

# Draft Memorandum for the Record

## Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Unified Planning Work Program Committee Meeting Summary

### March 5, 2020 Meeting

9:00 AM–10:00 AM, State Transportation Building, Transportation Board Room,  
10 Park Plaza, Boston

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

### Materials

Materials for this meeting included the following:

1. Federal Fiscal Year 2021 UPWP Universe of Proposed Studies

### Meeting Agenda and Summary of Discussion

#### 1. Introductions

B. Muller read the accessibility statement and asked members to introduce themselves.

#### 2. Public Comments

There were none.

#### 3. Further Discussion of the Federal Fiscal Year 2021 UPWP Universe— *Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager*

S. Johnston introduced the conversation, explaining that the Committee initially reviewed the Universe the previous week, but had requested that the staff present an in-depth brief at this meeting. After this meeting, S. Johnston will send out a survey as discussed at the prior meeting.

Staff discussed each study concept in turn. Discussions are summarized below.

- *A-1, Improving Pedestrian Variables in the Travel Demand Model*, was introduced by Scott Peterson, Director of Technical Services, Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS). He emphasized the need to improve the model's ability to gauge pedestrian activity, stemming from work and analysis staff had carried out over the last several years. The new variables would better reflect land-use and decision-making infrastructure. Eric Bourassa (Metropolitan Area Planning Council [MAPC]) asked if this study concept is related to the

observations about the potential for future growing pedestrian activity based on changes in land use observed through the Lower Mystic Regional Working Group process.

- A-2, *Cost/Benefit Analysis for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Measures*, was explained by Mark Abbott (Traffic Analysis and Design Group Manager) and Casey-Marie Claude (Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager). They discussed the need for better understanding of whether MPO-funded projects achieved the safety results that had been projected before construction.
- L-1, *Regional Travel Demand Management Strategies*, was presented by S. Johnston. He explained that in conducting outreach for the new UPWP, he had heard significant interest from municipalities and other stakeholders in the concept of Travel Demand Management (TDM) and that this study could go in many different directions but could ultimately produce a useful toolkit for interested parties. E. Bourassa said that MAPC had conducted a significant amount of work on this topic, although it was several years old at this point. In all of MAPC's research, the most important element in TDM was parking policy and management. There was some discussion about how important the TDM-related need is for a legal or legislative analysis to enable easier adoption of TDM ordinances and policies, since the best practices in the field are well known. Daniel Amstutz (At-Large Town/Town of Arlington) mentioned that Arlington also has a TDM ordinance, and wondered whether this study concept might be connected to M-4, *Trip Generation Rate Research*. Steve Olanoff (Town of Westwood/Three Rivers Interlocal Council [TRIC] subregion alternate) mentioned that Westwood has also had experience with TDM principles, in particular as regards the University Station development, and that implementation can be challenging. Tom Bent (City of Somerville/Inner Core Committee) said that Somerville had also implemented many TDM concepts, and that a legislative approach would be productive. E. Bourassa suggested holding a public forum on TDM best practices, especially showcasing local successes. Several members showed enthusiasm for that approach. D. Amstutz suggested examining trip generation and traffic impact analyses and figuring out how to include nonautomotive modes in them better. B. Muller said he was very interested in this topic and that it might tie into the MPO's Community Connections Program and MassDOT's Workforce Transportation Program. S. Johnston said that he was hearing that a before-and-after type study might be useful. Tegin Teich, Executive Director, CTPS, asked staff to give input on the concept of holding a forum using UPWP funding; S. Johnston responded that while it was not something that had been previously done, he personally liked the idea and he

could see no reason it would not be possible. There was general agreement that the forum concept is promising.

- The committee agreed to skip discussion of study concepts M-1 through M-3, as they are “recurring” studies that the committee has already agreed to fund.
- Discussion of concepts M-4 and M-5, *Intersection Improvement Program*, was brief, as the committee had discussed them at the February 27, 2020, meeting. S. Peterson said that staff had been in contact with the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE), and that ITE was eager to work with the MPO on a study such as M-4.
- Len Diggins (Regional Transportation Advisory Council) asked what the sample size would be for study T-2, *Access to Commercial Business Districts Phase 2*. Andrew Clark (MPO staff) responded that it would likely be in the range of six to eight municipalities, based on the budget for the previous iteration of the study. Katie Stetner (Transit Analysis and Planning Group Manager) added that part of the additional scope of work for this study would be not just to collect data but to produce a toolkit that would allow municipalities and other MPO partners to do so themselves. A. Clark explained that the goal of concept T-3, *The Future of the Curb Phase 2*, would be to create a guidebook for municipalities going forward. T. Teich added that as of the day before, she had learned that there was an opportunity to collaborate with MassDOT’s Office of Transportation Planning on such a study. B. Muller explained that some of his colleagues are working on a guidebook for bringing these principles statewide, especially for smaller towns and rural areas. L. Diggins asked if it is possible to do T-2 and T-3 separately, and A. Clark responded that while they are related they can be done separately. There was some minor further discussion.
- There were no further questions on concept T-4, *TOD Resident Survey*.
- Ben Krepp (MPO staff) talked about the technical elements of concept R-1, *Multimodal Resilience and Emergency Planning*. Staff had created the All-Hazards Mapping Tool about seven years ago to help with understanding the impacts of various emergency situations on the transportation network, and it would be valuable to update both the data and the interface. There are two versions of the tool, one that only includes public data and one that includes secure data from various agencies’ emergency plans; obtaining the latter was a complex process that would take some considerable time and resources to replicate. D. Amstutz asked about the secure data layers, and whether resilience

information would be incorporated into the revised Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) criteria that the MPO is developing. B. Krepp enumerated the various types of secure data, and there was some further discussion on that topic. B. Muller noted that the Cape Cod Commission has a mapping tool focusing on sea level rise and flooding, and that they are considering UPWP tasks to use that tool to examine what impacts future events and developments may have on the roadway network and therefore on properties that might become isolated if roads are submerged.

- L. Diggins asked about the relationship between concept T-4 and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) station access study that is ongoing. S. Peterson responded that, if funded, this study scope would be fleshed out in October to follow up on the MBTA study. David Koses (City of Newton) asked about the possibility of a study incorporating flexible parking pricing. Staff responded that this would likely be covered under T-3 and possibly under T-1 as well. There was some discussion.
- Concept O-1 is a recurring study. S. Peterson explained that there is a lot of interest in understanding the historical impact of various transportation investments from staff and stakeholders, and creating a mapping interface that would identify these investments across time could be very valuable. T. Bent asked how far back the mapping would go. S. Peterson responded that a map CTPS has already put together goes back to 1899. A lot of the data exists and just needs to be put into the web tool. Tom O'Rourke (Town of Norwood/TRIC Subregion) asked if this project would produce a series of layers. S. Peterson responded affirmatively.
- T. Teich talked about study concept O-3, *Informing the Big Ideas Behind the MPO's Scenario Planning Process*. The idea is to introduce more sensitivities into the scenario planning process for the Long-Range Transportation Plan, something that has been a challenge in the past. The task would allow staff to stay abreast of developments in these important topics, and also develop a larger scope for the scenario planning process. B. Muller said he saw the value of exploring these topics. Brian Kane (MBTA Advisory Board) asked if there are ways the MPO can mandate minimum actions by municipalities, or leverage its funding to create action, and whether such policies can be part of the UPWP process. B. Muller responded that many of those conversations are unfolding as part of the TIP criteria revision process. T. Teich suggested bringing the topic up with the full MPO board, so that a diversity of voices could be heard.

S. Johnston recapped the next steps in the process, reminding members they could expect to see a survey in the coming days.

#### **4. Members Items**

There were none.

#### **5. Next Meeting**

The next committee meeting is likely to be March 26, 2020, and if not then, April 2, 2020. Staff expect to present their recommended list of studies at that meeting as well.

#### **6. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by a member and seconded by another member. The motion carried unanimously.

DRAFT

## Attendance

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<b>Members</b>	<b>Representatives and Alternates</b>
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Office of Transportation Planning)	Ben Muller
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Eric Bourassa
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	Daniel Amstutz
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Tom Kadzis
Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)	Tom Bent
Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood/Neponset Valley Chamber of Commerce)	Tom O'Rourke
Three Rivers Interlocal Council alternate (Town of Westwood)	Steve Olanoff
South West Advisory Planning Council (Town of Medway)	Glenn Trindade

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### **Other Attendees Affiliation**

Brian Kane	MBTA Advisory Board
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### **MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff**

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Tegin Teich, Executive Director  
Scott Peterson, Director of Technical Services  
Hiral Gandhi, Director of Operations and Finance  
Mark Abbott, Traffic Analysis and Design Group Manager  
Casey-Marie Claude, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager  
Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager  
Katie Stetner, Transit Analysis and Planning Group Manager  
Andrew Clark, Transit Analysis and Design Group  
Betsy Harvey, Transportation Equity Program Manager

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