

Draft Memorandum for the Record

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

Unified Planning Work Program Committee Meeting Summary

January 11, 2024, Meeting

1:00 PM–2:00 PM, Zoom Video Conferencing Platform

Derek Krevat, Chair, representing Monica Tibbits-Nutt, Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)

Decisions

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

- Approval of the October 26, 2023, meeting minutes
- Approval of the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025 UPWP Development Timeline

Materials

Materials for this meeting included the following:

1. Meeting summary of the October 26, 2023, meeting (pdf) (html)
2. FFY 2025 UPWP Development Timeline

Meeting Agenda and Summary of Discussion

1. Introductions

See page 5 for attendance.

2. Public Comments

There were none.

3. Meeting Summary of October 26, 2023—*Approval of this summary*

A motion to approve the summary was made by the Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood Neponset River Regional Chamber/Tom O'Rourke) and seconded by the At-Large City of Newton (David Koses). The motion carried.

4. Action Item: Approval of FFY 2025 UPWP Development Timeline— *Srilekha Murthy, MPO Staff*

S. Murthy began her presentation with a review of the outreach work done to date, namely staff presentations to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) subregional committees, releasing a public-facing survey soliciting study ideas, and beginning internal program work planning activities.

S. Murthy then presented the proposed development timeline for the FFY 2025 UPWP, culminating in a request for the FFY 2025 UPWP's endorsement by the end of June 2024.

Discussion

Julia Wallerice (MAPC) asked whether the online survey was the only way a study idea can be submitted. S. Murthy responded by stating that study ideas can be submitted through the survey or by emailing her directly. J. Wallerice asked approximately how many ideas staff typically receive. S. Murthy stated that in FFY 2024, staff received 76 study ideas.

Vote

A motion to accept the timeline for developing the FFY 2025 UPWP was made by the South West Advisory and Planning Committee (Town of Wrentham/Rachel Benson) and seconded by the Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville/Tom Bent). The motion carried.

5. Performance-Based Planning and Programming—*Sam Taylor, MPO Staff*

S. Taylor provided an overview of the Performance-Based Planning Program, noting that performance-based planning and programming (PBPP) is a federally required activity for all state departments of transportation and MPOs to monitor and report target metrics. Target setting is done in collaboration with MassDOT and the regional transit authorities. An additional priority of PBPP is reporting on progress made towards these targets, with the ultimate goal of informing MPO investment decisions based on performance measures. The MPO establishes performance targets in six areas: roadway safety, transit safety, transit asset management, travel time reliability, bridge and pavement condition, and congestion management and air quality. In FFY 2024, Performance-Based Planning and Programming will update targets in three of the six performance areas, including the establishment of new greenhouse gas targets, commence a redesign of the performance dashboard, and explore opportunities for

more frequent performance reporting between releases of the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan.

S. Taylor then asked the committee to provide feedback on the planned activities and to share any areas of particular interest.

Discussion

Eric Bourassa (MAPC) asked whether the newly adopted greenhouse gas measures will affect the MPO's current measures. S. Taylor replied that he is unsure how the measures will affect MAPC, but MPO staff will work with MassDOT to set targets and present them to the Board over the summer. D. Krevat stated that MassDOT's goals will be in line with the state goals as stated in the Massachusetts Clean Energy and Climate Plan, and MassDOT Office of Transportation staff are working on developing the state's targets.

Rachel Benson (Town of Wrentham) asked whether goals of the program also inform expanding transit access and connectivity, and whether municipalities subject to the MBTA Communities Law will receive support in requesting expanded services. S. Taylor replied that the transit safety and transit asset management targets fall under the purview of performance-based planning. The Transportation Equity program focuses more on access, and the Transportation Improvement Program funds projects that may result in expanded transit service.

J. Wallerce noted that MAPC recently released an updated website with information on the MBTA Communities Law, and highlighted the importance of linking land use and transportation elements in relation to new zoning requirements that could result in performance measures related to greenhouse gas reductions.

6. Climate Resilience and Air Quality Programs—*Judy Taylor, MPO Staff*

J. Taylor opened her presentation by providing definitions of the Climate Resilience and Air Quality programs. The Climate Resilience program was established in 2021 as a way for the MPO to address climate resilience concerns more directly within the projects it funds and across the work it conducts, while the Air Quality program must demonstrate compliance with federal emissions regulations, and explores how the region can work towards emissions reductions across its projects and work programs. Some of the major activities planned for the Climate Resilience program include support for the Environmental Engagement discrete study, development of resilience and adaptation guidance, and development of a multi-year program vision. Activities within the Air Quality program include support for air quality components of the equity

dashboard, and support for adoption of new federal greenhouse gas performance measures.

J. Taylor then asked members for feedback and areas of interest.

Discussion

D. Krevat asked what kinds of air quality-related data sources staff will be including in the equity dashboard. J. Taylor stated that the purpose of the dashboard is to show the differences in exposure to air quality concerns between equity and non-equity populations. Staff used EJScreen's census tract level data on some air quality metrics, and Google Earth Satellite data for nitrous dioxide levels. Staff plan to present the latter as a comparison of relative health rather than making direct connections between air quality and public health.

R. Benson asked whether the Air Quality Program works on issues related to freight and electrification. J. Taylor responded that staff are working on finishing a study on the air quality impacts of freight and avenues for decarbonization focused on the North Suffolk area. Generally speaking, reporting on emissions estimates is on a project-by-project basis.

7. Members Items

There were none.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will likely be in mid-February to discuss the Universe of Proposed Studies.

9. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Julia Wallerice) and seconded by the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Len Diggins). The motion carried.

Attendance

Members	Representatives and Alternates
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Office of Transportation Planning)	Derek Krevat Eric Bourassa
Metropolitan Area Planning Council	Julia Wallerice
Regional Transportation Advisory Council	Lenard Diggins
At-Large City (City of Newton)	David Koses
At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)	
City of Boston (Boston Transportation Department)	Jim Fitzgerald
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
Metrowest Regional Collaborative (City of Framingham)	Dennis Giombetti
South West Advisory and Planning Committee (Town of Wrentham)	Rachel Benson

Other Attendees	Affiliation
Sandy Johnston	MBTA
Allison Patton	HEI
Tyler Terrasi	MetroWest Regional Transit Authority
AnaCristina Fragoso	Boston Society of Civil Engineers

MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

Tegin Teich, Executive Director

Annette Demchur

David Hong

Logan Casey

Casey Cooper

Silva Ayvazyan

Ethan Lapointe

Erin Maguire

Srilekha Murthy

Judy Taylor

Sam Taylor

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