



[Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Feedback] Comments on Boston MPO Unified Planning Work Program FFY25

Boston Region MPO <drupaluser@ctps.org>
Reply-To: jason@495partnership.org
To: upwp@ctps.org

Wed, May 29, 2024 at 1:07 PM

Jason Palitsch (not verified) (jason@495partnership.org) sent a message using the contact form at <https://www.bostonmpo.org/contact/upwp>.

The sender's name
Jason Palitsch

The sender's email
jason@495partnership.org

Your ZIP code
01581

Subject
Comments on Boston MPO Unified Planning Work Program FFY25

Message

On behalf of the 495/MetroWest Partnership, please accept the following comments regarding the draft FFY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (Boston MPO). The 495/MetroWest Partnership is a unique public-private collaboration among businesses, municipalities, and other stakeholders focused on creating an environment that prepares for and cultivates sustainable growth across our thirty-six-community region. The Partnership accomplishes this by providing coordination, education, and advocacy for solutions to regional constraints. The key priorities that the Partnership addresses within the 495/MetroWest region are separate and unique but operate as part of an interrelated network of regional needs. These areas of focus include economic development, transportation, housing, energy and sustainable development, and water resources, among others. Transportation challenges such as congestion, interchange capacity issues, and gaps in public transit coverage pose a major threat to the economic vitality of our region. Several indicators suggest our region would benefit from enhanced transportation infrastructure and transit investment, including our region's population growth rate, the sharp rise in housing costs, the low rate of housing churn, and an increased emphasis on transit-oriented development alongside fixed transit routes in downtown settings reflected

municipalities. We support the inclusion of "Roadway Pricing: Balancing the Need for a Transition to Sustainable Mobility with Equity Considerations," which will examine driving patterns and the effects of potential roadway-pricing scenarios on revenue, reduced vehicle travel, and equity. As a member of the Mobility Pricing Commission, the Partnership is interested in the exploration of mitigating despair impacts of such policies on different communities and advocating for targeted strategies for environmental justice populations.

In addition to the specific planning projects mentioned above, the Partnership supports ongoing tasks such as LRTP and TIP development, congestion management, safety and operations analysis, freight planning, air quality conformity and support, and multimodal mobility infrastructure improvement.

The Partnership would like to encourage study of project areas that are currently in the UPWP universe, but which were left unfunded in FFY25. The Partnership encourages the study of bike infrastructure and electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. Further exploration of multimodal transportation and EV charging investments will aid planning of local economic development while supporting state climate goals. The Partnership additionally encourages study of how MBTA Communities Zoning impacts transportation demand for all types of transportation services. This understanding ensures that infrastructure investments best align with future growth patterns and adequately support emerging needs in various subregions. Lastly, the Partnership encourages study of the relationship between sidewalk infrastructure expenditure and pedestrian and driver safety; ensuring our region's roadways are safe for all forms of transportation requires identifying and prioritizing areas for investment based on current conditions.

We thank you for your consideration of our comment letter. Should there be questions regarding our commentary, please feel free to contact me at any time, (774)-760-0495 or by email at jason@495partnership.org.

Sincerely,

Jason Palitsch

Executive Director

The 495/MetroWest Partnership

[Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Feedback] UPWP draft

Boston Region MPO <drupaluser@ctps.org>
Reply-To: am103477556@cs.com
To: upwp@ctps.org

Tue, Jun 4, 2024 at 11:15 AM

Anne McKinnon (not verified) (am103477556@cs.com) sent a message using the contact form at <https://www.bostonmpo.org/contact/upwp>.

The sender's name
Anne McKinnon

The sender's email
am103477556@cs.com

Your ZIP code
02130

Subject
UPWP draft

Message

This document is very confusing with too much old/completed projects taking up pages and pages. I am not even sure where the FY 2025 projects begin. I can't comment on a document that will take hours to review.

I think CTPS needs to do a lot more evaluation of projects (bus lanes, road diets, bike lanes and intersection changes, why bike cages are not used at a lot of MBTA stations, etc.) and policies (money lost opening all Green Line doors, true cost of BlueBikes to the public, etc.).

[Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Feedback] UPWP format

Boston Region MPO <drupaluser@ctps.org>
Reply-To: am103477556@cs.com
To: upwp@ctps.org

Tue, Jun 4, 2024 at 11:05 AM

Anne McKinnon (not verified) (am103477556@cs.com) sent a message using the contact form at <https://www.bostonmpo.org/contact/upwp>.

The sender's name
Anne McKinnon

The sender's email
am103477556@cs.com

Your ZIP code
02130

Subject
UPWP format

Message
This document needs a table of contents



[Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Feedback] Making the Boylston T stations accessible for elderly, young families and handicapped.

Boston Region MPO <drupaluser@ctps.org>

Thu, Jun 6, 2024 at 11:53 PM

Reply-To: harveyl242@gmail.com

To: upwp@ctps.org

Harvey Leong (not verified) (harveyl242@gmail.com) sent a message using the contact form at <https://www.bostonmpo.org/contact/upwp>.

The sender's name
Harvey Leong

The sender's email
harveyl242@gmail.com

Your ZIP code
02111

Subject
Making the Boylston T stations accessible for elderly, young families and handicapped.

Message
These two stations, the Inbound and Outbound are extremely difficult to access by all classes of users - especially the elderly and handicapped and parents with young children. I have the feeling, you're not interested or will do anything. But I can hope.

June 7, 2024

David Mohler, Chair
Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4150
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Comments on the Draft Unified Planning Work Program for FFY 2025

Dear Mr. Mohler,

As residents of the Boston Region who are informed by our participation in the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC) for the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), also known as the "Advisory Council," we offer our comments on the FFY2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) below. We start with a broad view of the entire UPWP before commenting relatively briefly on the 3 selected discrete studies and then commenting on some elements of the programs that support the 3C process.

The Broad View

Partly because there were only 3 discrete studies chosen from the universe of proposed studies, we decided to take the opportunity to comment more broadly on the UPWP, and the word that first comes to mind is "ambitious." To read the document closely is to come away very impressed with the goals set forth by a staff of approximately 50-55 people on a relatively small budget. It would be easy to conclude that the FFY UPWP 2025 is too ambitious, but the listing of accomplishments in FFY 2024 shows that the staff is up to the task; and to the extent they are stretching themselves, such aspirations are to be commended.

Under the "Core MPO Functions," we draw attention to the following: the "Public Engagement Program" and "Performance-Based Planning and Programming." We think it is appropriate that the Public Engagement Program should have a \$397K budget, because effective public outreach is a primary mission of the MPO. We are especially pleased to see the development of the Community Leadership Institute (CLI) that will "engage with the MPO, primarily via the Advisory Council, by equipping [stakeholders] with the knowledge and tools to effectively engage with the MPO planning process and developing a pipeline for soliciting and onboarding new Advisory Council members." Of course, the key to the success of the CLI will be the MPO's long-term commitment to it.

Regarding Performance-Based Planning and Programming, we realize the enormity of the challenge and understand that funding for follow-up analysis isn't as readily available as the funding for designing projects. We also know it can be difficult to get the necessary info from staff in various municipalities. Nonetheless, we are pleased to see every bullet listed in the "Continue to Integrate PBPP Elements into MPO Planning," "Monitor and Report on Performance," and "Enhance the MPO's PBPP Practice" sections, and we look forward to the "FFY 2025 Anticipated Outcomes."

The Selected Studies

As with last year, we note that only \$150K was available for discrete studies and that resulted in the selection of only 3 studies from a universe of many worthy ideas. We understand the reasons for the limited financial resources, but it's hard not to feel that the leading edge of research we associate with the CTPS is dulled a bit. That said, the CTPS is still pretty sharp, and we look forward to the results of the selected studies!

In particular, we support the "Roadway Pricing: Balancing the Need for a Transition to Sustainable Mobility

with Equity Considerations” study. As a follow-up to the initial roadway pricing study, we see the potential to explore pricing mechanisms that will unlock additional funding opportunities and simultaneously stimulate the regional economy by making the transportation network function better and access to it more equitable.

Programs that Support the 3C Process

Below we comment on the programs that support the 3C process by highlighting a few of the goals and/or anticipated outcomes of the programs which appeal to us the most:

1. *Climate Resilience Program*

- Work towards adopting a framework for assessing climate vulnerabilities in the region, engaging with stakeholders, and programing resilience solutions. Early deliverables will include scoping resource needs to develop the framework, identifying regional needs and gaps to legitimize the development of the framework, and exploring examples of similar frameworks adopted by peer agencies. Review usability, data needs, outputs, and credibility of vulnerability assessment tools and develop a plan for assessment of Boston region transportation assets of interest to the MPO
- Coordinate with municipalities on resilience needs and identify potential projects for TIP funding

2. *Freight Planning Support*

- An interactive and user-friendly webpage redesigned for the freight program, along with a freight data dashboard
- Coordination with model development to determine a roadmap to incorporate freight as an additional component to the Travel Demand Model (TDM) 2023 to eventually understand and analyze travel behavior, freight demand, and community impacts.

3. *Regional Model Enhancement*

- Research: dynamic traffic assignment models that can provide a more detailed representation of the roadway and transit networks
- Research: activity-based models that can provide a more detailed representation of travel behavior
- Research: cloud computing pipeline capable of transforming massive model outputs into a set of accessible, explorable deliverables, facilitating engagement with a wider range of stakeholders and model users

4. *Data Program*

- Finalize and adopt a data publication platform and data publication standards
- Identify data infrastructure needs to streamline data access and use

5. *Bicycle and Pedestrian Program*

- Conducting research and engagement to develop a strategy for the Boston Region MPO’s bicycle and pedestrian plan development Evaluate regional intersections and roadways using the Pedestrian Report Card Assessment and Bicycle Report Card tools
- Coordinating with municipalities to identify bicycle and pedestrian project candidates that could be eligible for TIP funding

6. *Multimodal Mobility Infrastructure Program*

- Learning from mode shift efforts by peer agencies
- Exploring how people walking and biking are affected by extreme heat
- Creating the blueprint for a guidebook that can provide a roadmap for stakeholders interested in the planning and design of multimodal infrastructure

Again, as was the case last year, we find all items in each program worthy of being listed as a work product and/or a goal to which the MPO should progress. Our highlights primarily reflect our enthusiasm and our sense of priority and importance.

As we begin to conclude, we list a couple miscellaneous items for your consideration:

1. We strongly support the “Parking Planning and Research in Selected Communities” subtask undertaken by MAPC. As they work to develop parking plans, we suggest they also include shared vehicles.
2. To the extent possible, we request that the conclusions of studies conducted for other public entities be made available or at least presented in summary form to the UPWP committee. We realize this may fall under the purview of the MPOs MOU.

Finally, we close by expressing our gratitude for the extensive amount of information presented in the appendices. The openness and transparency of the CTPS contributes to making the BRMPO a highly-regarded organization.

Respectfully,
Lenard Diggins and Fred Mosely
(Ldiggins@gmail.com and frederick.moseley@stantec.com)

June 7, 2024

Boston Region MPO Board
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Re: Draft Federal Fiscal Years 2025-2029 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Dear Members of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board, The MBTA Rider Oversight Committee (ROC) is pleased to offer our very brief comments on the Draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for FFY2025-29.

As always, we appreciate the MPO's support of the ROC by providing the means to allow staff to attend our meetings. Their contributions, and especially those of Jonathan Belcher, are immensely valuable. The knowledge we gain through the support of CTPS helps us better understand the real transportation/transit issues and challenges that we face in the Boston region. With that better understanding comes the ability to comment on MBTA policies and practices more effectively.

Instead of discussing our thoughts regarding various programs and specific discrete studies, we express our strong support for the initiative to create a Community Leadership Institute (CLI). We understand that this initiative is still in formation. The name and some details of the initiative may change before and after the pilot, but we feel the goal of forming and fostering long-term, transportation-oriented educational opportunities to the public, and especially those in less-represented communities, has the potential to make a major impact on the region by increasing meaningful engagement in the MPO's project selection and policymaking processes. If there is any way we can assist with this endeavor, we are eager to do so.

Sincerely,
The MBTA Rider Oversight Committee
roc@mbtaroc.org / <https://mbtaroc.org/>