

# **Draft Memorandum for the Record Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Unified Planning Work Program Committee Meeting July 25, 2013 Meeting**

State Transportation Building, Conference Rooms 2&3, 10 Park Plaza, Boston

Materials for this meeting included:

- a copy of the meeting agenda
- a draft summary of the June 20, 2013 UPWP Committee meeting
- the FFY 2013 UPWP Third Quarter Spending Report
- a memorandum discussing a proposed FFY 2013 UPWP budget adjustment
- the FFY 2013 UPWP Fourth Quarter CTPS Schedule and Staff Assignment Table (titled “Proposed Revisions to Certain 3C Budgets”)

## **Meeting Agenda**

### **1. Introductions**

Sheri Warrington (MPO Chair, Unified Planning Work Program Committee, Massachusetts Department of Transportation) called the meeting to order at approximately 9:15 AM. UPWP Committee and other MPO members and MPO staff attending the meeting introduced themselves. (For attendance list, see page 5.)

### **2. FFY 2013 Third Quarter Spending Report**

Michelle Scott (MPO Staff) reviewed the FFY 2013 UPWP Third Quarter Spending Report. She explained that spending on MPO and non-MPO projects is tracking approximately with the point in time of the federal fiscal year (which is three-quarters past).

A clarification was requested on the difference between ongoing and discrete projects, as it was noted that some projects were over budget but were labeled as “discrete” instead of “complete,” and could still incur charges. M. Scott noted that discrete projects have limited-term timeframes and are typically not expected to carry over from year to year. Karl Quackenbush (MPO Executive Director) explained that some of the projects that have exceeded their budgets are the subject of the budget adjustment item on the agenda. Other projects may appear to be over budget by a small amount due to computational estimates for operating expenditures, which will be corrected during project auditing. Still others may be awaiting contract extensions. Robin Mannion (MPO

Deputy Executive Director) noted that the “% Project Budget Expended” column is the key one to look at for identifying projects that are over budget. This column is not affected by differences in how project funds may be programmed in a given UPWP, which happens months in advance of when project activities and spending actually take place.

Concerns were expressed about the budget level for the Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program and MPO staff was asked whether the proposed budget adjustment would add funding to this project. K. Quackenbush explained that the proposed budget adjustment would not add additional funds to this project. The work that is being conducted, and its associated cost, is being carefully monitored by the project manager.

### **3. Proposed FFY 2013 UPWP Budget Adjustment**

K. Quackenbush explained that, similar to last quarter, MPO staff is requesting the Committee’s concurrence on a round of adjustments to budgets for ongoing 3C planning activities. Details are provided in the memorandum titled “Proposed Revisions to Certain 3C Budgets.” He explained that MPO staff is making a concerted effort to track the budgets of these projects to better understand costs and improve project scoping. This year’s tracking is revealing the need to make adjustments as well as the impacts of new developments on cost experiences (such as a new manager for the UPWP and activities continuing the work making MPO affairs totally accessible to people with disabilities). This set of adjustments is meant to better tailor remaining 3C funding for this federal fiscal year to the categories of expenses. There is no net increase or decrease in 3C activities or 3C funding.

In response to a question about previous adjustments, K. Quackenbush explained that many of the projects listed have been adjusted as part of the April 18 budget adjustment, though some are being adjusted for the first time. The “Current Budget” column in the memo reflects budgets as they were adjusted in April; changes proposed now are from that point forward.

Concern was expressed about the proposed reduction in funding for Bicycle Pedestrian Support Activities. K. Quackenbush explained that the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator position is been sporadically vacant during the federal fiscal year, which resulted in less spending for this account. CTPS now has a full time Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator; however it will still not be possible to spend down the Bicycle Pedestrian Support Activities account before the end of the federal fiscal year. The Bicycle Pedestrian

Support Activities budget for next year has already been approved and is not affected by this adjustment.

In response to a question about the General Graphics budget, K. Quackenbush explained that this project budget funds general graphics services for the MPO, excluding those built into discrete project budgets. In recent months, staff has not been called upon to do as much project-related work as had been anticipated; therefore more work is underway through the General Graphics budget.

Eric Bourassa (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) made a motion to approve the budget adjustment. It was seconded by Tom Bent (City of Somerville). The motion was approved, unanimously.

#### **4. FFY 2013 Fourth Quarter CTPS Schedule and Staff Assignment**

M. Scott explained that this document focuses on MPO staff activities from July 2013 through September 2013. She identified locations in the schedule where readers could find information on completed projects, approved work scopes, project status and spending, adjustments to project schedules, individual staff participation, and expected new projects. Of 3C funded projects, the Bicycle Network Evaluation project has been extended. The “Boston-Lowell-Nashua-Manchester-Concord (BLNMC) Data Request” is an expected new project. K. Quackenbush explained that it will provide data in support of a commuter rail extension discussion, and it is more involved than typical responses to data requests. A work scope will be developed for it.

In response to a question about the ongoing availability of information about project expenditures, R. Mannion explained that project spending information is generated on a weekly basis.

In response to a question on staff time needed for the BLNMC Data request (non-3C funded), K. Quackenbush explained that 22 days have been assigned for this project. He added that staff does not take on work that would compromise work being done for the MPO.

In response to a question on where the budget for the current Route 30 study is accounted for, K. Quackenbush explained that it is covered in Priority Corridors II. The schedule for this project accounts for all corridors currently under study.

#### **5. New Committee Business**

There was none.

## **6. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held early in FFY 2014 to discuss quarterly reports.

## **7. Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by E. Bourassa and was seconded by T. Bent. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:55 AM.

## Attendance

---

### UPWP Committee Members

### Representatives and Alternates

---

At-Large City (City of Newton)

David Koses

At-Large Town (Town of Arlington)

Laura Wiener

Inner Core Committee (City of Somerville)

Tom Bent

Massachusetts Department of Transportation

Sheri Warrington

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Eric Bourassa

MetroWest Regional Collaborative (Town of Framingham)

Dennis Giombetti

Southwest Advisory Planning Committee (Town of Medway)

Dennis Crowley

Three Rivers Interlocal Council (Town of Norwood)

Tom O'Rourke

---

### Other MPO Members

### Representatives and Alternates

---

Regional Transportation Advisory Council

Steve Olanoff

---

---

### MPO Staff/Central Transportation Planning Staff

---

Karl Quackenbush, Executive Director

Robin Mannion

Elizabeth Moore

Michelle Scott

Pam Wolfe

---