



BOSTON REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary and CEO and MPO Chair
Karl H. Quackenbush, Executive Director, MPO Staff

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 3, 2018
TO: Boston Region MPO
FROM: Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager
RE: Proposed Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2018 UPWP Amendment 1

This memorandum discusses proposed Amendment 1 to the FFY 2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which suggests removing one Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) discrete study and reallocating its budget to other program items per details below.

1 CHANGES TO CTPS WORK PROGRAMS

When developing the FFY 2018 UPWP, staff expected the quadrennial federal certification review to occur in late-fall 2019; thus funding for this review was not included as a program element in the current UPWP. However, we received notice from our federal partners that the review process would begin in July 2018.

As a result, we recommend removing funds from the discrete study, *Potential Impacts of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles*, and reassigning those funds to *Federal Certification Review and Support to the MPO and its Committees*.

1.1 Removal of Discrete Study, *Potential Impacts of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles*, Project ID 13284

This study, a follow-up to the FFY 2017 CTPS study, *Planning for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles*, project ID 13277, was intended to further the Boston Region Metropolitan Organization's (MPO) research into and familiarity with the emerging connected and autonomous vehicles (C/AV) field. A couple of factors contributed to the decision to recommend removal of this study from the FFY 2018 UPWP. First, the staff members who were supposed work on this study at the time the UPWP was being developed are no longer available, as their time was reassigned to cover other needs. Second, amidst staff discussions, it became clear that some elements of the C/AV study as proposed in the UPWP were unnecessary or redundant, while others—notably, the need for MPO staff to maintain familiarity with developments in the C/AV field—could be covered through other program elements and budgets.

2 REALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO TWO PROGRAMS

Hence, we recommend removing the discrete study, *Potential Impacts of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles*, from the FFY 2018 UPWP and reallocating its \$50,000 in funds to the *Federal Certification Review* and the *Support to the MPO and its Committees* studies, as follows.

2.1 New Budget Line, *Federal Certification Review*, Project ID 90025, \$40,000

Federal regulation requires that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process conducted in each transportation management area, defined as an urbanized area with a population of more than 200,000. This certification review must be conducted at least once every four years.

Subjects of focus for a certification review include compliance with the federal requirements of 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and other associated federal laws; the challenges and successes of the planning process; and the cooperative relationship between the MPO, the public, and other transportation planning stakeholders.

Certification reviews generally consist of four components: 1) a “desk review” of MPO planning products and documents, 2) a site visit and meeting(s) with the MPO (including a public meeting), 3) a final report by the Federal Review Team that summarizes the review and offers findings, and 4) a letter transmitting the report and announcing the findings of the review.

MPO staff anticipates that the desk review phase of the work, as well as planning for the site visits and meetings, will occur in the summer and early fall of 2018, supported by these funds. Staff support for the desk review will include responding to federal agency requests for information and documentation, and creating printed and graphical materials for the reviewers. It is unclear how much work will be entailed in this phase, but past experience indicates that it could involve several different people across the agency providing extensive written responses to myriad questions from our federal partners.

For perspective, \$70,000 was spent on the last recertification. Staff believes that it is prudent to budget the same amount for this next round of recertification (ignoring inflation), which will span two federal fiscal years. Thirty thousand dollars has already been budgeted in the draft FFY 2019 UPWP for this activity; hence, the estimated need for \$40,000 in the current federal fiscal year.

2.2 **New Budget Line, *Support to the MPO and its Committees*, Project ID 9118, \$10,000**

Staff proposes reallocating the remaining \$10,000 from the *Potential Impacts of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles* budget to Professional Development and other subaccounts within *Support to the MPO and its Committees*, further proposing a split of \$4,000 to the former and \$6,000 to other subaccounts. Staff anticipates needing supplementary funding for Professional Development because the annual Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) conference is unexpectedly scheduled in the current FFY in late September (in many past years, it has occurred in October). In addition, *Support to the MPO and its Committees* could benefit generally from receiving an extra \$6,000. Expenditures within this line item tend to vary as staff responds to the needs of the MPO, and current expenditures are ahead of budget expectations for the current fiscal year.

3 **ATTACHMENTS**

The attached documents listed below reflect components of the UPWP that are affected by the proposed FFY 2018 UPWP Amendment 1:

- Program description for *Potential Impacts of Connected and Autonomous Vehicles*, Project ID 13284, which is recommended for removal
- Program description for *Federal Certification Review*, Project ID 90025
- Program description for *Support to the MPO and its Committees*, Project ID 9118

4 **REQUESTED MOTION**

MPO staff requests that the MPO release Draft Amendment 1, as proposed by staff, for a 30-day public review period.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF CONNECTED AND AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES

Project ID Number	13284
Category	Multimodal Mobility
FHWA 3C PL Funds	\$35,500
FTA Section 5303 Funds	\$14,500
FFY 2018 Total Budget	\$50,000

Note: FTA and FHWA funds include the MassDOT local match.

Purpose

This project will build on the FY 2017 Planning for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CAV) project, which was an important first step to understanding the transportation planning consequences of CAV technologies, as well as the preparation needed by the MPO for their impacts. The rapid pace of changes associated with CAV technology and its accompanying regulatory issues necessitate continual study and attention; hence research is an ongoing effort. Many of the questions posed in the 2017 study remain to be answered, and many new ones will be raised as the Boston Region MPO begins to understand and plan for CAV technologies.

Approach

Based on recommendations and research from the 2017 study, MPO staff proposes to further examine CAV planning tools, such as travel demand modeling, as well as CAV issues related to MPO processes, such as LRTP planning and overall decision-making and evaluation. Staff will continue the ongoing coordination with key stakeholders identified in the previous study. Staff will also organize a workshop in which findings from CAV research will be shared with MPO member communities.

FFY 2018 Anticipated Outcomes

This project would further investigate the research and recommendations from the FY 2017 study. A workshop will be conducted for MPO member communities at which CAV research will be presented. This workshop will also serve as an opportunity for staff to collect feedback from these stakeholders and understand their concerns regarding CAV issues.

4.3.11 Federal Certification Review

Project ID Number	90025
FHWA 3C PL Funds	\$20,580
FTA Section 5303 Funds	\$9,110
FFY 2019 Total Budget	\$29,690

Note: FTA and FHWA funds include the MassDOT local match.

Purpose

Federal regulation requires that the FHWA and FTA jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process conducted in each Transportation Management Area, defined as an urbanized area with a population over 200,000. This certification review must be conducted at least once every four years.

Subjects of focus for a certification review include compliance with the federal requirements of 23 United States Code (U.S.C.) 134, 49 U.S.C. 5303, and other associated Federal laws; the challenges and successes of the planning process; and the cooperative relationship between the MPO, the public, and other transportation planning stakeholders. The certification review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of the metropolitan planning process and compliance with applicable statutes and regulations. Other opportunities for review include routine oversight activities such as attendance at meetings, day-to-day interactions, review and approval of work products, and coordination with the MPO on prior certification review recommendations.

Approach

Certification reviews generally consist of four components: 1) a “desk review” of MPO planning products and documents, 2) a site visit and meeting(s) with the MPO (including a public meeting), 3) a final report by the Federal Review Team that summarizes the review and offers findings, and 4) a letter transmitting the report and announcing the findings of the review.

MPO staff will prepare for and support the MPO in the upcoming federal recertification review. This will include preparing for the review sessions, responding to federal agency requests for information and documentation, creating printed and graphical materials for the reviewers, and developing and participating in presentations, meetings, and discussions. MPO staff anticipates that the desk review phase of the work will occur in FFY 2018, while the site visit and related meetings (including the public meeting) will occur in early FFY 2019.

FFY 2019 Anticipated Outcomes

Concluding the following activities related to the recertification review process:

- develop and participate in presentations
- host meetings and discussions
- provide reports and responses to information and inquiries, as requested

5.2 CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT ACTIVITIES

This section describes the certification requirement activities and plans that MPO staff conducts during the FFY.

3C PLANNING AND MPO SUPPORT

Project ID Number	See Individual Tasks Below
FHWA 3C PL Funds	\$440,773
FTA Section 5303 Funds	\$170,837
FFY 2018 Total Budget	\$611,610

Note: FTA and FHWA funds include the MassDOT local match.

Purpose

The work described below consists of the 3C activities that support the federally mandated transportation-planning process that is continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative. This process creates numerous products and materials and furthers MPO operations and decision-making.

Approach

The activities included in this category of certification requirements are separated into the specific work areas detailed below.

SUPPORT TO THE MPO

Project ID 9118: Support to the MPO and Its Committees \$229,360

The work task *Support to the MPO and Its Committees* includes implementing MPO policies on planning and programming, planning and coordinating delivery of information for MPO decision-making, and supporting the work and operation of the MPO and its committees. It involves providing support for MPO meeting management and planning, delivering MPO communications, and implementing various aspects of the MPO's public participation program.

Some tasks related to MPO meetings, MPO committee meetings, Regional Transportation Advisory Council (Advisory Council) meetings, and other MPO-sponsored meetings include:

- Developing meeting agendas
- Preparing and distributing informational materials, including documents posted on the MPO's website and via email
- Conducting meeting site selection and logistics planning
- Setting up audio/visual equipment for meetings
- Attending and recording meetings
- Completing meeting follow up activities, such as maintaining the information flow for members of the MPO and the public, processing approved work scopes, preparing audio-recording files, and documenting meeting minutes

Technical and process support is provided to the MPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Committee, Administration and Finance (A&F) Committee, Congestion Management Process (CMP) Committee, and other ad hoc committees that are formed as needed.

- The UPWP Committee meets as needed throughout the year to develop a UPWP for the upcoming federal fiscal year (FFY) and to monitor expenditures and the progress of studies and programs in the current fiscal year.
- The CMP Committee meets as needed throughout the year to discuss the federally required CMP. Activities include developing and reviewing its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Intersection Improvement Program and making recommendations to the MPO.
- The A&F Committee meets periodically to make recommendations to the MPO on the staff's operating budget, legal matters, and other administrative functions.

This work program also includes consultation with other entities and agencies involved with or interested in 3C planning activities, collaboration with other Massachusetts MPOs (with more detailed coordination with those in the Boston Region urbanized area), and communication with Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) subregional groups.

MPO support also includes conducting metropolitan transportation planning and implementing planning activities for the MPO. The goal of this work is to ensure compliance with federal regulations and requirements and to provide excellence in transportation planning processes, techniques, and outcomes. The work involves researching, analyzing, and reporting information on 3C planning topics, including those identified in federal reauthorization legislation, and issues related

to other federal policies, regulations, and guidance. It also involves responding to federal recommendations or requirements for certification documents or MPO certification, and incorporating new requirements into the MPO's 3C program. MPO staff will continue to implement Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act requirements (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 3) as guidance from this federal legislation is communicated to the MPO, and staff will also be prepared to implement future legislation.

Other activities include day-to-day oversight of 3C program-related activities, reports on the progress of projects listed in the UPWP, collecting and fielding daytoday comments and inquiries, and responding to requests for information and support.

Project ID 9318: Regional Transportation Advisory Council Support \$109,110

The Advisory Council is the MPO's citizens' advisory committee. MPO staff provides operations support to this body and its subcommittees. This includes planning programs and meetings, scheduling speakers, and preparing and distributing agendas, meeting notices, informational packets, and meeting minutes. It also includes helping to conduct meetings; attending and making presentations at meetings; organizing and conducting field trips; soliciting new members; implementing and updating the bylaws; coordinating other activities, such as Advisory Council elections; and maintaining contact lists.

MPO staff regularly provides information, updates, and briefings on MPO activities, studies, and reports; requests and coordinates comments on MPO documents; and works with the Advisory Council and its committees as they conduct their programs, planning, and reviews.

Project ID 9618.04: TRANSREPORT

The MPO's electronic newsletter (blog), TRANSREPORT, is an important part of the MPO's public involvement program. MPO staff is responsible for soliciting, researching, and writing articles about MPO studies and activities. This work includes managing all aspects of the blog's production: writing and editing, creating graphics, proofreading, and distributing the newsletter via email (and US mail, upon request).

Project ID 9618: Public Participation Process \$187,970

MPO staff implements the MPO's Public Participation Program according to the MPO's Public Participation Plan. The program includes coordinating and implementing the MPO's public outreach activities, which are opportunities to involve all members of the public, including:

- Local, regional, state, and federal officials and agencies
- Transportation, environmental, and social service advocacy groups
- The elderly, minorities, people with low incomes, people with disabilities, people with limited English-language proficiency, youth, veterans, and people living in zerovehicle households