



Appendix B

Public Participation and Response to Public Comments

The Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff followed the procedures set forth in the MPO's adopted Public Participation Plan while developing the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). These procedures are designed to ensure early, active, and continuous public involvement in the transportation-planning process.

The Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 UPWP development process began in October 2020. Staff solicited topics for study through outreach at Metropolitan Area Planning Council subregional municipal group meetings. Staff also sought suggestions and public input from other sources:

- Regional Transportation Advisory Council meetings
- Outreach to transportation advocacy and community groups
- Comments received during the FFY 2021 UPWP's public review period
- Topics generated from recently completed planning studies and documents

The document development process, described in Chapter 2, culminated in the MPO UPWP Committee's recommendation for the FFY 2022 UPWP, including a set of new discrete studies. On July 15, 2021, the MPO approved a draft document for public circulation.

After receiving the MPO's approval to circulate the public-review draft FFY 2022 UPWP, staff posted the document on the MPO's website (<https://www.bostonmpo.org/upwp>) and used the MPO's contact list (MPOinfo) and social media accounts to notify the public of the document's availability and the opening of the 30-day period for public review and comment.

During the review period, staff presented the draft UPWP and this set of new studies at digital open houses and made themselves available to interested parties who wanted to discuss the draft FFY 2022 UPWP.

The following pages contain the comments received about the UPWP during the public comment period. All correspondents have received a response from the UPWP Manager.

MPO Liaison UPWP Review Checklist

Completeness

| ID | Review Item | Comments | Reference |
|----|--|--|-----------|
| A1 | x * Table of Contents is accurate and internally-linked. | Please ensure Table of Contents is internally linked. | |
| A2 | x * Document has no broken links. | Please correct hyperlink on A-6 | |
| A3 | ✓ * Document has no text or image placeholders. | | |
| A4 | ✓ * Charts, tables, and maps are legible and properly annotated. | | |
| A5 | ✓ * Document passes an accessible check. | Please ensure the cover image has appropriate alternate text or is marked as decorative. | |
| A6 | ✓ * Document is available in relevant languages per the MPO's Title VI Plan. | Boston Region MPO's translated Executive Summaries are a best practice approach for A6. | |
| A7 | ✓ * List of MPO members is current. | | |
| A8 | - * Signatory sheet is included and accurate. | Please include final signatory sheet in document. | |
| A9 | ✓ * Acronyms and partner agency lists are up to date. | | |

Narrative

| ID | Review Item | Comments | Reference |
|----|---|---|---|
| B1 | ✓ * UPWP is comprehensible to the general public. | | |
| B2 | ✓ * UPWP refers directly to vision, goals, and objectives from RTP. | | |
| B3 | ✓ * UPWP Amendment/Adjustment procedures are explicit. | | |
| B4 | - Governing MOUs between MassDOT, MPO, RTAs, and neighboring MPOs have been reviewed for potential improvements or updates. | In FFY 2023 please account for staff hours that may be required for updating governing MPOs given the potential for Census-related changes. | |
| B5 | ✓ Planning efforts are coordinated with MassDOT modal plans. | | https://www.mass.gov/statewide-plans |

UPWP Tasks

| ID | Review Item | Comments | Reference |
|----|--|---|--|
| C1 | ✓ * Individual tasks include detailed scopes, budgets, and | | |
| C2 | ✓ * Individual tasks outline community beneficiaries. | | |
| C3 | ✓ Transit-related tasks are specific. | | |
| C4 | ✓ * Includes a task on performance-based planning. | | |
| C5 | ✓ * Includes a task for an update to any congestion mitigation planning efforts. | | Required for TMA MPOs if current CMP is out of date. |
| C6 | x * UPWP includes a summary of available staff hours. | In future years consider inclusion of a summary of available staff hours. | |
| C7 | ✓ Individual tasks anticipate needed staff-hours / consulting resources. | | |
| C8 | ✓ Tasks from previous UPWPs have been analyzed for past utilization. | In future years consider a discussion of utilization at the beginning of each Chapter with recurring tasks. | |

Impacts Analysis

| ID | Review Item | Comments | Reference |
|----|---|---|-----------|
| D1 | * UPWP includes a geographic equity distribution table showing 2016–2020 and current UPWP-funded studies by municipality and number of tasks. | Tables in Appendix D are a best practice for items D1 and D2. | |
| D2 | * UPWP includes a social equity distribution table of past and current UPWP-funded studies considering language access and EJ populations. | | |
| D3 | * Public involvement and comment are explicitly documented and in line with MPO's Public Participation Plan. | | |

* indicates required by state or federal regulation.



495/METROWEST

PARTNERSHIP

Leaders for Regional Prosperity

200 FRIBERG PARKWAY
WESTBOROUGH, MA 01581
774-760-0495
495PARTNERSHIP.ORG

July 27, 2021

Sandy Johnston
UPWP Manager, Boston Region MPO
10 Park Plaza, Suite 2150
Boston, MA 02116

Re: Boston MPO Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) FFY22

Dear Mr. Johnston:

On behalf of the 495/MetroWest Partnership, please accept the following as our official comments regarding the draft FFY 2022 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 36-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.

Now more than ever, as the Commonwealth reopens following a protracted period of reduced activity due to the pandemic, the Partnership recognizes the importance of a robust, transparent, and interdisciplinary planning process. As statewide traffic volumes continue to increase during peak travel hours, as large employers continue to roll out plans to return staff to on-site work locations, and as municipalities continue to reimagine public spaces, we anticipate the reemergence of transportation challenges that threatened the region's quality of life prior to the onset of the pandemic, such as traffic congestion and highway capacity issues, as well as new challenges.

The Boston Region MPO includes twenty-six of the Partnership's thirty-six communities. We greatly appreciate the number of planning projects that have been completed in our region in recent years across our shared municipalities. We support the inclusion of **13522 - Addressing Priority Corridors from the Long-Range Transportation Plan Needs Assessment**, which supports ongoing work to address the mobility, efficiency, and safety needs of corridors and intersections identified in *Destination 2040*. We appreciate that FFY21 funds were expended to investigate concerns and issues at segments of Route 9 in Framingham and Natick, one of the most significant retail corridors in the Commonwealth that cuts through the heart of the Partnership's service area. The Partnership would also like to recognize ongoing

work to assess the needs of regionally significant projects identified in *Destination 2040*, such as the reconstruction of Route 126 in Ashland, the grade separation of Route 135/126 in Framingham, and improvements to the Route 27/9 intersection in Natick.

The Partnership also supports studies that explore the relationship between trip generation and parking, and transportation demand management through a post-pandemic lens. These findings could be a critical asset to municipalities undertaking new housing production and downtown revitalization plans.

The Partnership would like to express our support for projects that are currently in the UPWP universe, but which were left unfunded in FFY22:

Healthy Streets Lookback - Many of our communities received Shared Streets grant funding for traffic calming measures, pedestrian crossing enhancements, wayfinding, and for repurposing paved surfaces for recreational usage. These projects enhance the public realm and breathe life into downtowns and Central Business Districts, which have experienced a resurgence in foot traffic during the pandemic. These projects also have implications for vehicular traffic flow and trip routing. A qualitative analysis of Shared Street projects would be a helpful tool for planners and municipal officials.

Freight, Mode Shift, and Land Use – Intermodal and transload services are more cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and typically optimize supply chain cycle times. Growth in intermodal rail could have positive land-use and roadway congestion mitigation implications, and as such, should be further examined. Given the degree of mutuality between *Freight, Mode Shift, and Land Use* and *SWAP Warehousing, Logistics, and Mitigation Study*, these studies should be completed in tandem to maximize their impact on zoning, land-use strategies, and asset management.

SWAP Warehousing, Logistics, and Mitigation Study – A surge in e-commerce activity statewide has made Greater Boston a desirable place for third-party logistics and last-mile fulfillment centers. E-commerce companies employ regional locational intelligence strategies to gain a competitive edge in the marketplace, while municipal economic development officials attempt to lure jobs and development to their respective communities. Planners must fill the role of gauging the cumulative impact of proximate distribution facilities in separate municipalities. While the proposed study examines the SWAP sub-region specifically, this study presents a great opportunity for cross-MPO collaboration; a number of SWAP communities border neighboring MPOs that have begun their own discussions about the proliferation of new distribution facilities.

Fare Policy Post-COVID to Address Flexible Telecommuting - While commuter rail ridership is down nearly 90% from January 2020 to January 2021, a sizeable portion of that ridership core, professional services workers commuting during peak travel hours, may not be fully recouped depending on the nature of remote work adoption over the next several years. The Partnership supports a study of multi-trip fare policies for commuter rail, analysis of alternate fare structures for commuter rail, and fare integration across all public transportation modes.

Advanced Parking Management Systems Study for MBTA Parking Lots – Prior to COVID-19, capacity constraints plagued numerous stations on the Framingham/Worcester, Fitchburg, and Franklin lines.

Even without those constraints at present day, varying lot ownership and differing third-party parking payment apps from station to station, even on the same line, make sporadic or spontaneous travel nearly impossible. Pre-pandemic parking constraints at certain stations were so severe that even a modest resurgence in ridership will create significant barriers to access. The present situation, with temporarily low ridership, represents an ideal time to examine and address these concerns, rather than once the issue has re-asserted itself in full force.

We thank you for your consideration of our comments. If there are any questions regarding our commentary on the UPWP, please contact our Manager of Policy & Planning, Jeremy Thompson at 774-760-0495, or by email at jeremy@495partnership.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jason Palitsch
Executive Director
The 495/MetroWest Partnership

[Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)] UPWP Projects (Sent by Julia Wallerce, julia.wallerce@itdp.org)

1 message

Contact form at Boston Region MPO <drupaluser@ctps.org>

Thu, Aug 12, 2021 at 4:20 PM

Reply-To: julia.wallerce@itdp.org

To: upwp@ctps.org

Julia Wallerce (julia.wallerce@itdp.org) sent a message using the contact form at <https://www.bostonmpo.org/contact>.

Dear MPO Colleagues,

The ITDP Boston team is pleased to provide comments on the MPO's federal fiscal year 2022 Unified Planning Work Program proposed studies to conduct. Namely, there are a few studies for which we'd like to express particular enthusiasm and support:

1- Access to CBDs

Please be sure to engage stakeholders in cities where rapid response bus lanes were implemented, as well as other street interventions intended to decrease crowding, instill public safety, and make non-SOV trips more convenient. In particular, we recommend staff reach out to City of Everett with regards to the Reimagine Broadway project.

Asking Everett, bus lane projects

The Future of the Curb Phase 3

Interest in the space on the curb has never been higher since the pandemic, especially amongst previously uninterested parties such as fitness groups, restaurants, and gardeners. We suggest you focus on communities that received Shared Streets grant funding for parklets, bus and bike lanes as pandemic response.

Identifying Transportation Inequities in the Boston Region

The pandemic showed us loudly and clearly how our transit system is skewed to instill spatial injustice and make mobility more difficult and inconvenient for marginalized communities of color, where the largest portion of essential workers continued to rely on mostly buses during the shutdown. We recommend that this study hone in on the lessons from the pandemic with regards to transportation inequities and how investments in better bus service can alleviate these inequities.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment, and please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Julia Wallerce, ITDP Boston

julia.wallerce@itdp.org

ZIP code: 02152

UPWP comment

3 messages

Susan Barrett <sbarrett@lexingtonma.gov>
To: Sandy Johnston <sjohnston@ctps.org>

Thu, Aug 5, 2021 at 8:41 AM

Hi, Sandy,

I have not yet really dug into the UPWP and plan to, but on first glance, I do have an important comment on the following, found on page 1-9:

- Improve reliability of transit
- Increase percentage of population and employment within one-quarter mile of transit stations and stops
- Support community-based and private-initiative services and programs to meet first- and last-mile, reverse commute, and other nontraditional transit and transportation needs, including those of people 75 years old or older and people with disabilities

I think these are great, BUT on the last bullet of supporting community based and private-initiative services, **I really think there must be a condition that these services must be coordinated with other services...and I think we need a better system for making sure this happens.** As this reads, it sounds like we are willing to keep the same type of system we have now which is uncoordinated and full of service gaps and also filled with competition for scarce resources (how many of us struggle to find drivers!).

My apologies if somewhere past page 1-9 there is talk of creating a more coordinated system.

In my perfect transportation services world, any transportation service would need to be approved by the regional transportation authority and MPO/area planning agency to ensure coordination, ensure we are not creating duplicative services, and that we are getting the highest and best use of resources and that critical populations are well served. I think such a process would also help us create better job opportunities for people. Right now (or at least pre-pandemic), there were lots of split-shift jobs with school transportation and peak time shuttle services, then midday jobs for seniors services, NEMT. If we could better coordinate all this, we could give people better working conditions, enhancing equity among a population (drivers) that are often minority and not higher income.

Thanks for listening!

Susan Barrett

Transportation Manager

Pronouns: she, her ([Why is this here?](#))

Town of Lexington

[39 Marrett Road](#)

[Lexington, MA 02421](#)

John McQueen (JMACMQ@AOL.COM) sent a message using the contact form at <https://www.bostonmpo.org/contact>.

Suggest 'Blue Hills' study is someday appropriate and worthy, BUT not now/this year...too special interest-driven and small scope. Drop from UPWP. Recommend perhaps folding some of 'Blue Hills' sample and question areas into the larger "Transportation Inequities" study...if at all.

Suggest that all the 'Blue Hills' funding as well as shaving \$10+K from each of the car-centric on-going studies (ie., #13422 & #13522) to then be allocated to beef up the 'COVID Recovery' research to make it more complete, robust and projective...as is appropriate to learn and plan for impacts due to perhaps the most significant event of 21st Century (i.e., COVID 19); clearly, massive learning needs to be obtained on behavioral changes and effects of the pandemic on planning infrastructure, mobility, and equipment investments that will be coming due and will be intended to last for half a century.

If decision made to not increase scope and funding of 'COVID Recovery', suggest that 'Congestion Pricing' (i.e., #M-5) be added to UPWP in place of 'Blue Hills' and that it take all its funding as well as \$10+K funding from each #13422 and #13522.

ZIP code: 01776

Tuesday, August 10, 2021 - 12:50pm

[\[Unified Planning Work Program \(UPWP\)\] 2021 UPWP \(Sent by John McQueen, JMACMQ@AOL.COM\)](#)
upwp@ctps.org