

## **Summary Narrative of Amendment 1 to the FFY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program for the Northern Middlesex Region**

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This memo describes staff recommendations for Amendment 1 to the FFY 2025 UPWP. The amendments shown in Table 1 have a net zero impact on the overall UPWP budget.

Each year, NMMPO staff perform tasks and complete activities according to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), a federal certification document approved in the prior federal fiscal year (FFY) by the NMMPO. The UPWP is a one-year budget and planning document that lists the tasks, activities, research, and technical assistance related to and adjacent transportation and mobility that NMMPO staff will undertake during the next year. Under the UPWP, staff track work hours and deliverables to ensure the best use of Metropolitan Planning (PL) federal aid, which is granted to the region on an annual basis.

The UPWP is developed in February through June in the preceding FFY. As such, staff base the UPWP on projections of regional and local needs, as well as anticipated contracts and work funded through other projects. In some instances, these needs and anticipated contracts change; these changes necessitate a request to amend the UPWP to reallocate staff time and incorporate additional projects.

The principal reasons for Amendment 1 are as follows:

- In August, after the June MPO approval of the FFY 2025 UPWP, the Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA) notified NMCOG of its decision not to renew their annual contract; as a result, staff time that had been projected to be spent on the LRTA contract must now be moved into the UPWP;
- Staff have proposed additional transit projects to be completed under the UPWP in lieu of the previously anticipated work to be completed as part of a match to the LRTA contract;
- NMCOG staff indirect rates were reduced as a result of an annual audit; this results in a budget reduction for multiple subtasks and frees up additional staff hours to be allocated to existing and new projects; and
- Some additional funding has been allocated to direct expenses due to evolved understanding of software and hardware expenses.

For the above reasons, staff propose to amend the UPWP as outlined in the following pages. Amendments to the UPWP require formal NMMPO action and a 21-day public comment period. Should the MPO vote to release the amendment for public comment, virtual public meetings will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, November 6 at 12:00 and 7:00pm.

We appreciate your time in reviewing these recommended adjustments; staff will present the proposed adjustments and respond to questions during the October 22, 2024 MPO meeting. You are welcome to contact Kelly Lynema, Deputy Director, at [klynema@nmcog.org](mailto:klynema@nmcog.org) or 978-454-8021x116 in advance of the meeting with questions.

## **Proposed Changes**

### **Task 1: Maintaining the 3C Process**

**Total proposed change: \$16,061.56 (10% increase over original task budget)**

Changes to this task involved the following:

- Subtask 1.1, Program Management, Support, and Growth: increase of \$12,952 (28% increase over original budget) to allow managers across all teams to charge time spent on management duties, reporting, scoping, and budgeting.
- Subtask 1.2, MPO Coordination: decrease of \$1,905 (6% reduction from original budget) due to reduction in indirect rate.
- Subtask 1.3, Regional Coordination: increase of \$3,370 (10% increase over originally budget) to facilitate additional responsibilities with neighboring MPOs, updated MOUs, and participation in the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA).
- Subtask 1.4, Internal Staff Collaboration and Professional Development: increase of \$1,644 (3% increase over original budget) to accommodate internal team meetings and interdisciplinary collaboration.

### **Task 2: Communications and Engagement**

**Total proposed change: -\$25,836 (14% decrease under original task budget)**

Changes to this task involve the following:

- Subtask 2.1, Public Participation Plan: increase of \$5,929 (48% increase over original budget) to accommodate compressed schedule to complete the PPP.
- Subtask 2.2, Transportation Equity Program: increase of \$2,501 (7% increase over original budget) to accommodate additional anticipated staff time spent on transition to new website platform.
- Subtask 2.3, Open Access to our Data: decrease of \$10,493 (16% reduction from original budget) primarily due to reduction in indirect rate, as well as shifting Transit Planner staff time to Task 7.
- Subtask 2.4, Other Engagement Activities: decrease of \$23,772 (36% reduction from original budget) due to reduction in indirect rate and reallocation of staff time to Public Participation Plan and engagement planned specifically for projects programmed under Task 6.

### **Task 3: Plan and Federal Certification Document Updates and Implementation**

**Total proposed change: -\$32,919 (26% decrease under original task budget)**

Changes to this task involve the following:

- Subtask 3.1, Envision 2050: decrease of \$15,501 (41% reduction from original budget) as the project to update Transportation Evaluation Criteria scoring will take place under a

compressed schedule to coincide with the FFY2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) timeline.

- Subtask 3.2, UPWP: decrease of \$8,557 (33% reduction from original budget) due to reduction in indirect rate and consolidation of activities under fewer staff.
- Subtask 3.3, Transportation Improvement Program: increase in \$4,353 (10% increase over original budget) to accommodate additional outreach to municipalities to support advancement of projects on the FFY2026-2030 TIP (and beyond).
- Subtask 3.4, Certification Action Plan: decrease in \$13,214 (67% reduction from original budget) as the most significant compliance requirements have been completed prior to FFY2025 or are programmed under other subtasks in the FFY2025 UPWP.

#### **Task 4: Monitoring the Transportation Network**

**Total proposed change: -\$8,846 (8% decrease under original task budget)**

Changes to this task involve the following:

- Subtask 4.1, Traffic Counting: increase of \$3,482 (10% increase over original budget) due to evolved understanding of time necessary to complete the annual Traffic Volume Report, contract with a consultant, and manage permitting requirements with MassDOT.
- Subtask 4.2, TIP Review Studies: decrease of \$3,792 (20% reduction from original budget) due to reduction in indirect rate.
- Subtask 4.3, Performance Measures: decrease of \$5,053 (34% reduction from original budget) due to reduction in indirect rate and clarity around upcoming performance measures to be presented to the NMMPO.
- Subtask 4.4, Mapping and GIS: decrease of \$3,482 (7% reduction from original budget) due to reduction in indirect rate.

#### **Task 5: Advancing Infrastructure Improvement Projects**

**Total proposed change: \$3,585 (4% decrease under original task budget)**

Changes to this task involve the following:

- Subtask 5.1, Dracut – Bridge Street Corridor Study: decrease of \$5,676 (25% reduction from original budget) due to reduction in indirect rate, clarity around project requirements, and consolidation of tasks to fewer staff.
- Subtask 5.2, Billerica/Chelmsford – Route 129 and Brick Kiln Road Study: decrease of \$9,106 (35% reduction from original budget) due to reduction in indirect rate, clarity around project timelines, and reassignment of tasks to fewer staff.
- Subtask 5.3, Vision Zero Implementation and Engagement: Decrease of \$6,181 (19% reduction from original budget) due to reduction in indirect rate, postponed funding for Road Safety Audits, and reassignment of tasks to fewer staff.
- Subtask 5.4, Miscellaneous Local Transportation Assistance: Increase of \$17,393 (140% increase over original budget) due to clarity around frequency of ad hoc requests by communities for transportation and mobility support, research, and tasks.

**Task 6: Long Range Interdisciplinary Planning**

**Total proposed change: \$24,972 (7% increase over original task budget)'**

Changes to this task involve the following:

- Subtask 6.1, Active Transportation and Complete Streets: increase of \$3,753 (4% increase over original budget) due to clarity around need for additional outreach and engagement and participation by a larger staff team.
- Subtask 6.2, Transportation Oriented Development: increase of \$11,429 (12% increase over original budget) due reallocation of staff hours from other tasks.
- Subtask 6.3, Climate Resiliency: decrease of \$17,051 (25% reduction from original budget) as a result of outside contracts with duplicative scopes.
- Subtask 6.4, Economic Development: increase of \$4,162 (9% increase over original budget) due to reallocation of staff hours from other tasks.
- Subtask 6.5, Regional Interdisciplinary Planning: increase of \$22,680 (52% increase over original budget) due to clarity around additional regional projects and reallocation of staff hours from other tasks.

**Task 7: Strengthening our Regional Transit System**

**Total proposed change: \$25,262 (39% increase over original task budget)**

Changes to this task involve the following:

- Subtask 7.1, Transit System Performance Surveillance: increase of \$12,631 (39% increase over original budget) to account for additional Transit Planner time dedicated to the MassDOT contract, specifically for completion of the LRTA bus stop inventory, creation of public-facing transit system map, and assessment of municipal goals with regard to regional transit provision.
- Subtask 7.2, Regional Transit Planning: increase of \$12,631 (39% increase over original budget) to account for additional Transit Planner time dedicated to the MassDOT contract, specifically for development of a jobs-accessibility analysis across the region, conducting an origin-destination analysis to understand gaps in transit service and opportunities for increased ridership, and strengthening the agency's transit modelling services.

**Direct Expense Amendment**

An additional \$4,889, the remaining balance between the current UPWP staff time budget and the proposed amended staff time budget, is to be moved into the direct cost budget under subtask 1.1, Program Management, Support, and Growth. This funding is to cover an additional laptop for staff, recent cost increases to Adobe software, and expenses related to plotter and printer materials and maintenance.

See the following pages for a summary adjustment table outlining reallocation of budget between subtasks.

Task	Subtask	Original Task Subtotals	Amended Task Subtotals	\$ change	% change
<b>1</b>	<b>Maintaining the 3C Process</b>				
1.1	Program management, support, and growth	\$ 46,778	\$ 59,730	\$ 12,952	28%
1.2	MPO coordination	\$ 33,358	\$ 31,454	\$ (1,905)	-6%
1.3	Regional coordination	\$ 32,536	\$ 35,906	\$ 3,370	10%
1.4	Internal staff collaboration and professional development	\$ 47,330	\$ 48,974	\$ 1,644	3%
		\$ 60,001	\$ 176,063	\$ 16,062	10%
<b>2</b>	<b>Communications and Engagement</b>				
2.1	Public Participation Plan	\$ 12,480	\$ 18,409	\$ 5,929	48%
2.2	Transportation Equity Program	\$ 36,493	\$ 38,993	\$ 2,501	7%
2.3	Open access to our data	\$ 65,818	\$ 55,324	\$ (10,493)	-16%
2.4	Other engagement activities	\$ 65,547	\$ 41,775	\$ (23,772)	-36%
		\$ 180,337	\$ 154,501	\$ (25,836)	-14%
<b>3</b>	<b>Plan and Federal Certification Document Updates and Implementation</b>				
3.1	Envision 2050	\$ 37,980	\$ 22,479	\$ (15,501)	-41%
3.2	UPWP	\$ 26,279	\$ 17,722	\$ (8,557)	-33%
3.3	Transportation Improvement Program	\$ 42,283	\$ 46,636	\$ 4,353	10%
3.4	Certification Action Plan	\$ 19,693	\$ 6,479	\$ (13,214)	-67%
		\$ 126,235	\$ 93,317	\$ (32,919)	-26%
<b>4</b>	<b>Monitoring the Transportation Network</b>				
4.1	Traffic Counting	\$ 34,465	\$ 37,947	\$ 3,482	10%
4.2	TIP Review Studies	\$ 18,517	\$ 14,724	\$ (3,792)	-20%
4.3	Performance Measures	\$ 14,651	\$ 9,598	\$ (5,053)	-34%
4.4	Mapping and GIS	\$ 47,863	\$ 44,381	\$ (3,482)	-7%
		\$ 115,496	\$ 106,650	\$ (8,846)	-8%
<b>5</b>	<b>Advancing Infrastructure Improvement Projects</b>				
5.1	Dracut - Bridge Street Corridor Study	\$ 22,431	\$ 16,755	\$ (5,676)	-25%
5.2	Billerica/Chelmsford - Route 129 and Brick Kiln Road Study	\$ 26,252	\$ 17,145	\$ (9,106)	-35%
5.3	Vision Zero Implementation and Engagement	\$ 33,408	\$ 27,227	\$ (6,181)	-19%
5.4	Misc local TA	\$ 12,390	\$ 29,769	\$ 17,379	140%
		\$ 94,482	\$ 90,897	\$ (3,585)	-4%

Task	Subtask	Original Task Subtotals	Amended Task Subtotals	\$ change	% change
<b>6</b>	<b>Long Range Interdisciplinary Planning</b>				
6.1	Active Transportation and Complete Streets	\$ 90,504	\$ 94,257	\$ 3,753	4%
6.2	Transportation Oriented Development	\$ 91,735	\$ 103,163	\$ 11,429	12%
6.3	Climate Resiliency	\$ 67,714	\$ 50,662	\$ (17,051)	-25%
6.4	Economic Development	\$ 45,500	\$ 49,662	\$ 4,162	9%
6.5	Regional interdisciplinary planning	\$ 43,912	\$ 66,592	\$ 22,680	52%
		\$ 339,365	\$ 364,336	\$ 24,972	7%
<b>7</b>	<b>Strengthening our Regional Transit System</b>				
7.1	Transit System Performance Surveillance	\$ 32,585	\$ 45,216	\$ 12,631	39%
7.2	Regional Transit Planning	\$ 32,585	\$ 45,216	\$ 12,631	39%
		\$ 65,169	\$ 90,431	\$ 25,262	39%
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 1,081,084</b>	<b>\$ 1,076,195</b>	<b>\$ (4,889)</b>	<b>0.45%</b>

**Direct Expense Amendments**

Task	Subtask	Original Direct Costs	Amended Direct Costs
<b>1</b>	<b>Maintaining the 3C Process</b>		
1.1	Program Management, Support, and Growth	\$ 9,538	\$ 14,427
1.2	MPO Coordination		
1.3	Regional Coordination		
1.4	Internal Staff Collaboration and Professional Development	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
		\$ 17,538	\$ 22,427
<b>2</b>	<b>Communications and Engagement</b>		
2.1	Public Participation Plan	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500
2.2	Transportation Equity Program		
2.3	Open Access to Our Data		
2.4	Other Engagement Activities		
		\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500
<b>3</b>	<b>Plan and Federal Certification Document Updates and Implementation</b>		
3.1	Envision 2050		

<b>Task</b>	<b>Subtask</b>	<b>Original Direct Costs</b>	<b>Amended Direct Costs</b>
3.2	UPWP		
3.3	Transportation Improvement Program		
3.4	Certification Action Plan		
		\$ -	\$ -
<b>4</b>	<b>Monitoring the Transportation Network</b>		
4.1	Traffic Counting		
4.2	TIP Review Studies		
4.3	Performance Measures		
4.4	Mapping and GIS	\$ 11,315	\$ 11,315
		\$ 11,315	\$ 11,315
<b>5</b>	<b>Advancing Infrastructure Improvement Projects</b>		
5.1	Dracut - Bridge Street Corridor Study		
5.2	Billerica/Chelmsford - Route 129 and Brick Kiln Road Study		
5.3	Vision Zero Implementation and Engagement		
5.4	Misc local TA		
		\$ -	\$ -
<b>6</b>	<b>Long Range Interdisciplinary Planning</b>		
6.1	Active Transportation and Complete Streets		
6.2	Transportation Oriented Development		
6.3	Climate Resiliency		
6.4	Economic Development		
6.5	Regional Interdisciplinary Planning		
		\$ -	\$ -
<b>7</b>	<b>Strengthening our Regional Transit System</b>		
7.1	Transit System Performance Surveillance		
7.2	Regional Transit Planning		
		\$ -	\$ -
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 41,353</b>	<b>\$ 46,242</b>