

FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment

The Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) respectfully requests the following amendments to the Federal Fiscal Year 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) endorsed by the Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO) on June 16, 2020.

This amendment reflects a change in the scope of work for Task 3.2 - Management Systems, but do not change the overall contract budget with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) PL/Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5303 Consolidating Planning Grant (CPG) facilitated through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT).

Therefore, below are the proposed changes to the FFY 2021 UPWP for consideration by the SMMPO to release for a 21-day comment period.

Route 6 Corridor Study - Scope of Work For Inclusion with the FFY2021 UPWP, Task 3.2 – Management Systems

Objective:

The towns of Dartmouth and Westport requested that SRPEDD perform a study of the state owned Route 6 corridor. Specifically, the corridor study would evaluate the corridor from the intersection of Cross Road (Dartmouth) to the Fall River city line (Westport). Each municipality provided separate letters of request in 2020 citing safety concerns at various locations and vehicle speeds along the corridor.

The study request was the result of motor vehicle crashes that resulted in fatalities from each community. The town of Westport held a meeting in August 2020 with town officials, state representatives and MassDOT District 5 Office to discuss their concerns. At this meeting, the idea of having SRPEDD study the corridor to evaluate the safety issues and consider various alternatives for improvement was proposed by MassDOT District 5.

Route 6, once a major travel corridor to Cape Cod, experienced a significant reduction in traffic congestion due to the completion of Interstate 195 in the 1980s. In addition, the role of Route 6 has expanded to a more diverse corridor of residential centers and retail business. As a result, Route 6 with its four lane layout and free flow traffic conditions, encourages higher travel speeds that jeopardizes the safety of motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists to these areas. The corridor also lacks adequate pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. MassDOT has questioned the need for a four lane road under existing and any potential future development scenarios through these communities.

An effort to examine the corridor will be split between the FFY2021 and FFY2022 Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWP). The first phase will include the collection of transportation and land use data for an assessment of the existing conditions. Phase two will focus on current and future operation analyses as well as potential mitigation strategies based on existing and projected transportation conditions. The information collected in Phase one will be used to develop forecasts of future transportation impacts resulting from anticipated development surrounding the corridor. Mitigation strategies shall focus on, but not be limited to improvements to intersections and segments along the corridor, public and alternative modes of transportation, and changes to existing land use and transportation policies to minimize impacts to the transportation network and to ensure for multi-modal accommodations.

SRPEDD staff will work with key stakeholders throughout the study process to ensure that all aspects are considered and thoroughly vetted. Key stakeholders will include, but will not be limited to MassDOT District 5, state legislators, regional officials, town administration (including departments of police, fire, planning, and public works), local business owners, and residents.

Procedures:

Phase 1 – Information Collection under existing Conditions (April 2021 – September 2021)

- I. **Transportation Data Collection.** As part of the public outreach process, staff will meet with town officials, regional agencies, and state agencies to establish a study area that will include, but not be limited to an area surrounding Route 6 from the intersection of Cross Road Dartmouth to High Street in Westport. Staff will collect information throughout the duration of the study to assist in the analysis of the study area and address any transportation issues specifically identified as part of the public outreach process. Information collected through this process will be essential with mitigation projects developed for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Information collected will include, but not limited to the following:
 - A. Staff shall meet with local and state officials to discuss the parameters of the Route 6 study and garner input for the data collection process. The study shall consider and utilize previous work completed for the corridor including any Master Plans, developments that provided study as part of the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA) process and various transportation related technical assistance evaluations completed by SRPEDD;
 - B. Establish a base year for data collection and for the assessment of the existing transportation operations of the corridor (typically the year of the study). However, with the COVID-19 pandemic, review of historic data will be necessary to determine the accuracy of current conditions and will assist in the projections of future traffic

conditions. Information from public outreach (Procedure IV) will determine any additional data collection efforts necessary to complete the analysis.

- C. Existing roadway and intersection geometric dimensions, signal phasing and timings, and photograph various characteristics of the corridor for analysis and presentation;
 - D. In conjunction with MassDOT, collect 48-hour mainline roadway traffic count data using Automatic Traffic Recorders (ATR) at various locations along the corridor as well as peak period Turning Movement Counts (TMCs) at key intersections identified by SRPEDD staff, consultation with town officials and through the public outreach process. Pedestrian and bicycle counts will be included as part of the TMC data collection efforts. However, these data sets will require further scrutiny due to the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - E. Identify the movement of freight and trucks within and through the corridor and identifying businesses that generate this type of traffic;
 - F. Using the most current MassDOT crash data, staff will identify significant crash locations and trends throughout the study area. Once identified, staff will collect and analyze crash reports from each communities' police departments for the most current past three years;
 - G. Staff will perform bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure assessments. The assessments will include, but will not be limited to: measuring and surveying existing shoulder and existing sidewalk widths and conditions, identifying street lighting, surveying pavement conditions, identifying and evaluating the locations and conditions of bicycle parking and transit facilities, and documenting signage.
 - H. Identify and collect information on public transportation services provided to the study area as well as facilities that accommodate pedestrian and bicycle activities. Bicycle and pedestrian counts will be collected in addition to the TMC effort described in I.B. if warranted.
- II. **Transportation Analysis.** SRPEDD will analyze the base year operational transportation characteristics of the corridor. This analysis will assist in the identification of potential improvement alternatives under existing as well as for future operation conditions. This will include, but not be limited to the following:
- A. Analyze existing (base year) traffic operations of the corridor and intersections. Identify bottlenecks and congested locations for the corridor through a Level of Service analysis and establish a base line analysis of emission calculations through accepted MassDOT software programs. Identify and provide detailed information on the cause of any congestion issues including the movement of freight;

- B. Examine and prioritize locations within the corridor with significant safety problems based on crash data analysis. This procedure will include, but not be limited to the following:
 - 1. Staff will examine and analyze crash data to rank intersections/locations based on crash severity and exceeding the state threshold crash rate for consideration as a safety problem;
 - 2. Through data collection field observation and public outreach, staff will identify pedestrian movements, traffic controls, physical obstructions, and other issues that contribute to safety problems;
 - 3. Conduct Road Safety Team Reviews (RSTR) for high crash location to identify specific issues based on crash analysis and public outreach to identify contributing factors to the safety problems. RSTR teams will be assembled to include officials from each community.
 - C. Provide analysis of the existing bicycle and pedestrian movements throughout the corridor using accepted MassDOT analysis programs. Identify limitations to existing movements including excessive cross slopes, physical barriers, layout and design deficiencies, infrastructure conditions and safety concerns;
- III. **Land Use Information.** Staff will utilize available state, regional and community GIS resources to establish base maps of the current land use. This will include previous SRPEDD work such as any Master Plan development as well as the update of the Community Priority Areas established as part of the South Coast Rail planning efforts. Staff will obtain and utilize information collected from each community as part of the assessment of the existing conditions as well as for projecting future development. This process will include, but not be limited to the following:
- A. Collect assessor's information from MassGIS or the participating communities to determine property boundaries, land ownership and development type, and proximity of structures to the right-of-way of the corridor;
 - B. Staff will work with each community to refine the accuracy of the existing base maps and gather additional information on development potential for Phase 2 of this study;
 - C. Utilize this information to assist in analysis and public presentation of the issues.
- IV. **Documentation and presentation of the existing conditions.**

1. Staff will document the existing conditions of the corridor, highlighting the specific congestion and safety problems that are identified during this phase of the study;
2. Staff will present the results of the existing conditions and analysis in a public meeting forum addressing the issues identified during the initial public meeting;
3. In conjunction with MassDOT District 5, staff will recommend short term – low cost improvement recommendations designed to provide temporary relief to problems along the corridor

V. **The Public Participation Process.** SRPEDD will conduct an active public participation process as defined by SRPEDD’s Public Participation Program (PPP) for the duration of the study. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all public outreach efforts shall be completed remotely following the guidance established by the Baker Administration on social distancing. The public process will identify issues, collect additional information to substantiate these issues, consider measures to address them, and seek support for recommendations leading to implementation. This process will include, but not be limited to the following:

- A. Prepare and distribute a press release on the study in conformance with SRPEDD's PPP. The press release will include a request for information and opinions on the issues from residents, business owners, town officials and the general public. Engage populations within in the community that are difficult to reach to receive as much input as possible from a diverse set of individuals and business owners;
- B. Establish a task force of state, regional and local officials that will meet periodically as the study progresses. The task force will establish a goal for the study based on what the communities and the state envision for the future of the Route 6 corridor. Task Force meetings will be held periodically to report on status, existing conditions, future conditions, improvement alternatives and final recommendations over the duration of the study.
- C. Host an initial or series of meetings to present existing conditions based on information collected in Procedures I, II, and III as well as garner input from all interested parties on all potential problems in existence along the corridor;

Phase 2 will be implemented as part of the FFY 2022 UPWP (October 2021 to March 2022)

VI. **Future Traffic Analysis.** Working with community officials, staff will examine future development/redevelopment scenarios surrounding the study area that impact the future transportation operations through the corridor.

- A. Through information provided by the communities and as part Phase 1 of the study, staff will work with the communities to determine land use build-out potential and establish future threshold years for build-out analysis. Staff will develop a no build and various build scenarios based on community input anticipated for those future years;
- B. Based on the size and type of developments, staff will calculate the potential trips generated by those developments for each build scenario. As part of these scenarios, staff will consider and recommend changes to current land use policies that promotes development while reducing the reliance on automobiles as a principal mode of transport. This effort will establish a focus on current land use policies and how changes to these policies can be one of many potential mitigation factors to resolve transportation issues while promoting the use of public transportation, bicycling and walking.
- C. Using SRPEDD's Regional Travel Demand Model, staff will use existing and future regional travel patterns for the distribution of potential trips generated by the build and no build scenarios that will impact the existing and future transportation operations through the corridor;
- D. Analyze the future transportation impacts to the corridor from the projected trips for the no build scenario. Provide assessments and identify locations of potential bottlenecks,

VII. Develop Alternative Improvements and Evaluation

- A. As part of the public process and with consultation town officials and MassDOT District 5 office, staff will identify, develop and test improvement alternatives under the build scenarios for the study area. The alternatives will examine potential infrastructure improvements to the corridor and evaluate possible improvement alternatives such as:
 - reduction of the number of travel lanes (road diet)
 - revised signal timing and phasing at signalized intersections;
 - improved pavement markings and signage;
 - enhancement or implementation of pedestrian and bicycle accommodations;
 - the use of alternative or public transportation;
- B. Staff will develop and recommend improvement alternatives to address safety problems identified during the RSTR process. These recommendations shall coincide with traffic operation improvement alternatives.

- C. Staff will host a public meeting or a series of meetings during this phase of the study that will include MassDOT, town officials, and other interested parties to present the anticipated problems and present solutions for mitigation and improvement. The public effort will assist with identification and review of improvement alternatives and assist with the review of written materials.
 - D. Develop final recommendations for improvements based on the analysis and input from public meetings. Prioritized the improvements for consideration through a capital improvement plan and rank these projects through the Evaluation Criteria used in conjunction with the SMMPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- VIII. **Draft Report.** Prepare a draft report on the results of the study with conclusions and recommendations for review by the Task Force, Federal and MassDOT officials. Prepare maps and graphics as needed. Present results at Task Force meetings, the SRPEDD Joint Transportation Planning Group, and the SMMPO.
- IX. **Public Meeting.** Hold a public meeting to present the study and recommendations for improvement. This effort will be in conformance with SRPEDD’s Public Participation Process (PPP).
- X. **Final Report.** Prepare a final report and distribute to local officials, MassDOT and the SMMPO.

This effort will be funded through the MassDOT Contract through the FFY2021 and FFY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program. It is anticipated that Phase 1 will be completed under the tasks of Data Management & GIS, Regional Modeling, Traffic Counting, Community Technical Assistance and Management Systems while phase 2 in the FFY2022 UPWP will be completed under the Management Systems Task. Estimates for total salary, overhead and direct costs are displayed in the table below.

Estimated Costs for Route 6 Study		
	Phase 1	Phase 2
Total Salaries	\$22,437.59	\$16,322.81
Overhead (115%)	\$25,803.23	\$18,771.23
<u>Direct Costs</u>	<u>\$459.18</u>	<u>\$305.96</u>
Total Estimate	\$48,700.00	\$35,400.00

TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Task	APR '21	MAY '21	JUNE '21	JULY '21	AUG '21	SEPT '21	OCT '21	NOV '21	DEC '21	JAN '22	FEB '22	MAR '22	APR '22
Phase 1 - FY2021 UPWP													
I.A. & B. Trans. Data Collection - Meet with Municipalities, Previous Work													
I.C. Trans. Data Collection - Geometrics, Layout, & Photography													
I.D. Trans. Data Collection - Traffic Counts and TMCs													
I.E. Trans. Data Collection - Freight Movement													
I.F. Trans. Data Collection - Crash Data Collection & Analysis													
I.G. Trans. Data Collection - Bike & Ped Accommodations													
I.H. Trans. Data Collection - Existing Public Transit													
II.A. Traffic Analysis - Existing Operations													
II.B. Traffic Analysis - Safety Operations													
II.C. Traffic Analysis - Bike & Ped Analysis													
III.A. Land Use Information - Collect Assessors Data													
III.B. Land Use Information - Develop Base Maps													
III.C. Land Use Information - Analysis and Presentation													
IV. Document Existing Conditions													
V.A. Public Participation - Public Engagement													
V.B. Public Participation - Task Force / Meetings													
V.C. Public Participation - Public Meeting(s) on Existing Conditions													
Phase 2 - FY2022 UPWP													
V.A. Future Traffic Analysis - Build-Out Scenarios													
V.B. Future Traffic Analysis - Future Traffic Forecast													
V.C. Future Traffic Analysis - Distribution of Projected Trips													
V.D. Future Traffic Analysis - Corridor Analysis from Build-Out Analysis													
VI.A. Improvements - Alternatives for Traffic Improvements													
VI.B. Improvements - Alternatives for Safety Improvements													
VI.C. Improvements - Public Meetings to Present Alternatives													
VI.D. Improvements - Recommendations for Improvements													
VII. Draft Report Preparation													
VIII. Public Meeting to present study results													
IX. Final Report													