



495/METROWEST

PARTNERSHIP

Leaders for Regional Prosperity

July 28, 2016

Mr. Steve Woelfel
MassDOT Representative to CMMPO
Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
Union Station, Washington Square
Worcester, MA 01604

Re: Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) FY2017

Dear Mr. Woelfel:

On behalf of the 495/MetroWest Partnership, please accept the following as our official comments regarding the draft *Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)* for FFY 2017 for the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO).

The 495/MetroWest Partnership is a non-profit advocacy organization serving thirty-five communities, over half a million residents, and an employment base of over \$22.5 billion per year. The Partnership seeks to address regional needs through public-private collaboration by working to enhance economic vitality, improve quality of life and sustain natural resources. The Partnership focuses on helping to alleviate regional constraints and limitations, and conducts numerous initiatives on transportation, workforce housing, brownfields, and water resources.

The Partnership appreciates the importance of proper planning and understands that the long-term benefits achieved by transportation and transit projects always start with a planning project. With our latest economic analysis, we know that the 495/MetroWest region has continued to grow thanks to a diverse economic base and a high quality of life. While this growth has resulted in opportunities and benefits, challenges remain. If ignored, these challenges threaten the quality of life and economic wellbeing of a region that has become an economic engine for the Commonwealth. Our regional transportation challenges affect the state's ability to remain economically competitive. These challenges include: increasing traffic congestion, an increase in vehicle miles traveled, highway capacity issues, gaps in public transit coverage, and aging transportation infrastructure.

While the CMMPO region includes only seven of the Partnership's thirty-five communities, we greatly appreciate the number of planning projects that have been completed in our region as the CMMPO continues to prepare for the future. In the current Draft UPWP, the Partnership strongly supports the inclusion of the following:

- Parking Utilization Survey at Berlin Park-and-Ride Lot;
- Ongoing *Corridor Profile* on Route 140 in Shrewsbury (also extends outside 495MW region to West Boylston and Boylston);

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- Assistance in the overall review and monitoring of shuttle service in the Westborough and Grafton areas (also includes areas outside of the 495MW region in Paxton and Northbridge);
- Continued assistance and coordination with the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA);

In addition to these specific planning projects, the Partnership also supports ongoing tasks and products such as data collection, pavement management, TIP development, sustainability and climate change efforts, as well as all the municipal assistance that occurs throughout the year.

We thank you for your consideration of our comments. If there are any questions regarding these projects or our commentary on the TIP, please contact Jessica Strunkin at 774.760.0495 x.101, or by email at Jessica@495partnership.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Paul F. Matthews
Executive Director



Jessica Strunkin
Deputy Director