



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Michigan Division
September 11, 2013

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In Reply Refer To:
HDA-MI

Mr. David Wresinski
Director, Bureau of Transportation Planning (B340)
Michigan Department of Transportation
Lansing, Michigan

Dear Mr. Wresinski:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have completed our review of the proposed planning activities and associated administrative requirements for the following FY 2014 Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWPs). These MPO work programs were submitted by your office in August and September 2013.

As a result of our review, the following FY2014 UPWPs are approved effective October 1, 2013. The 2014 fiscal year for these MPOs is from October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. Subject to the availability of funds, MDOT may request funding for the planning programs in accordance with established procedures. Note that Kalamazoo and Midland FY14 Work Programs were not received in time to include in this review and approval.

Region	FHWA Planning (PL) funds	FTA Planning (5303) funds
Bay City	\$182,416	\$50,800
Battle Creek	\$161,930	\$43,097
Benton Harbor	\$143,718	\$41,296
Flint	\$951,654	\$1,234,282
Grand Rapids	\$728,541	\$162,731
Holland	\$189,842	\$47,320
Jackson	\$183,961	\$46,428
Lansing	\$597,409	\$169,803
Muskegon	\$288,590	\$58,295
Niles	\$77,122	\$27,546
Saginaw	\$214,744	\$69,702

Although the FY 2014 UPWP is being approved, we did find areas which could be improved. Comments from both FHWA and FTA are included in the remainder of this letter. Below are recommendations to be considered by all MPOs. Attached to this letter are comments directed to specific MPO's.

FY14 UPWP Recommendations: Applicable to most MPOs

Among the Federal regulations for work programs (23 CFR 450.308 (c)) are the inclusion of a schedule. In general, the MPO work programs currently do not include a schedule; it is only implied that tasks will be completed during the given fiscal year. The inclusion of a more detailed schedule for tasks is recommended. One option is to state which quarter of the fiscal year a task is expected to be completed. It is recommended that work programs for FY15 include more specific schedules.

The Governor's "Regional Prosperity Initiative" is a new initiative. MPO activities related to filling out an application to this program are eligible to use PL funding, as are activities related to any redesignation of an MPO's planning area boundary. Activities related to fulfilling an awarded "Regional Prosperity Initiative" grant would not be eligible, as the grant would be the source of funding for the work. We will work with your staff in the first quarter of FY14 to develop standard language for MPOs to work from and amend into their FY14 Work Programs by January 1, 2014, if they expect to be spending time on this activity.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (517) 702-1827 or Mr. Stewart McKenzie, FTA, at (312) 353-2866.

Sincerely,



Andy Pickard PE, AICP
Transportation Planning Team Leader

For: Russell L. Jorgenson
Division Administrator

Attachment:

MPO-specific Recommendations for FY14 UPWP's

Please share the following with your program managers for each MPO. They, along with FHWA and FTA staff, can work with the MPO staff to review the comments and discuss expectations and schedules.

Battle Creek

No comments.

Bay City

As previously discussed, we will have further discussions with staff regarding the current method for providing the local match, in advance of the FY15 Work Program development.

Benton Harbor

Under Section 12.0 Freight Planning, the UPWP should indicate who the responsible party will be (consultant vs. SWPMC staff) for various freight planning tasks. Also, the Benton Harbor UPWP should describe the MPO's ongoing coordination with MDOT and other partners to implement the web-based STIP during FY 2014.

While the tasks identified overall are good with regard to transit planning efforts, it would be helpful to see clearly identified products within each task/project area, and actual funding breakdowns for the project areas in terms of PL and 5303 funding.

Flint

With over \$1M in carryover funding under Section 5303, the MPO should make it a little more clear what the estimated timeframes are for completion of the transit needs study for the I-75 Corridor and the Transit Technology Assessment Study. (page 17)

Grand Rapids

Under Tasks 6.1, 6.2 and 6.5, the funds should be identified as 5307. We would suggest that the MPO or ITP be identified as a lead agency for some type of coordinated planning effort with respect to human service transit planning and special needs populations. This was still an outstanding certification review issue in that neither party was identified as being responsible for updating the Region's Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan in the MOA between the MPO and ITP.

FY 2013 CMAQ funding is being utilized to support the Clean Air Action Program. GVMC should discuss with MDOT the ability to utilize carry-over CMAQ funding for this program.

Funding for 5.0 Ridesharing is shown as FTA-CMAQ, but CMAQ is FHWA funding.

Asset Management task shows \$19,982.92 of MDOT-SPR funding, but Asset Management funding is state funding, not federal.

Holland

It is suggested that more attention (and funding) be given to the transit system planning and development. Some of the products seem light in content / impact (i.e. participation in other transit-related initiatives on page 12). Also, it was noted that the federal funding was evenly distributed amongst planning tasks. Is this realistic? Are all tasks so equal that they require the same amount of funding?

Jackson

The Jackson UPWP should describe the MPO's ongoing coordination with MDOT and other partners to implement the web-based STIP during FY 2014. Also, the Jackson UPWP Certificate of Indirect Costs needs to be signed.

Lansing

The Lansing UPWP refers to the CMP in the Long Range Transportation Plan section 502.02 and in the Transportation Systems Management 503.01 section. However, these sections do not indicate the CMP will be updated during FY 2014 or as part of the 2040 MTP update. In the Transportation Improvement Program section 505.02, an update to the CMP is described along with the STP Priority Assessment Guidelines and the Commission's regional growth policies. It would be helpful to consistently convey among the sections that the CMP will indeed be updated in FY 2014 as part of the 2040 MTP update.

The Lansing UPWP also does not mention an update to the existing Public Participation Plan or Title VI Plan during FY 2014. Section 504.01 describes applying the Public Participation Plan, not updating it, and an update of the Title VI Plan is not mentioned in section 504.02. It is our understanding that these tasks will be completed during FY 2014 and should be reflected in the UPWP.

It is encouraging to see the identification of transit roles and responsibilities throughout the document.

Muskegon

The work program is missing the Certificate of Indirect Cost and associated indirect cost calculation.

Niles

The Niles UPWP identifies that generally tasks will be accomplished during FY 2014. The addition of a schedule for the completion of specific tasks would improve the work program and

better satisfy federal requirements. Also, the Niles UPWP should describe the MPO's ongoing coordination with MDOT and other partners to implement the web-based STIP during FY 2014.

While the tasks identified overall are good with regard to transit planning efforts, it would be helpful to see clearly identified products within each task/project area, and actual funding breakdowns for the project areas in terms of PL and 5303 funding.

Saginaw

A discussion of priorities for the region needs to be added to the Work Program (including references to MAP-21). A logical location to place this text would be to accompany the table of "Transportation Issues" on page 5. Request that this be done prior to January 1, 2014.

Please add the July 29, 2013 letter (and its attachments) from Denise Jackson to Appendix D. This letter addressed our questions about valuation methodologies. Request that this be done prior to January 1, 2014.