

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

COMMENTS RECEIVED



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The MPO appreciates all comments/suggestions, and encourages every member of the public to become active participants in the decision making process.

- 1. Comment Received Date: May 13, 2019
Comment Received By: Wendy Maurer, Stafford County Board of Supervisor
Comment(s):**

While I appreciate moving this along, I am wondering why there is such a rush and why we are doing this annually, as opposed to biannually as allowed (see page 8, item 2). If we reviewed and approved this biannually, we would free up a significant amount of staff time (a concern that is expressed quite frequently at our meetings) to get caught up on other items. Is there a compelling reason to do this now?

- 2. Comment Received Date: May 13, 2019
Comment Received By: Wendy Maurer, Stafford County Board of Supervisor
Comment(s):**

I will be unable to attend the May 20th meeting but here are my concerns regarding the FY2020 UPWP. First we are going from 7FTEs including an intern to 8 FTEs plus an intern for 9 total. Without budgetary input, I consider that a significant risk to both GWRC and FAMPO. Additionally, I am not certain we could get fully staffed considering we just added a few positions that remain vacant. Keep in mind that most funding requires matching from the localities and Spotsylvania just cut their budget and we are uncertain of the multiplier effect of that cut. There is \$61k of required match highlighted on page 11 that does not have a corresponding reference to the prior years funding nor is it broken down by source of local funding. Btw, Billy Withers and I are potentially meeting on May 23 to discuss the Finance Committee resurrection proposed by Tim McLaughlin at the last GWRC meeting.

On page 13 and 14 a list of tasks are identified for FY2020 but they do not tie to the current or proposed staffing model. Each item should have a staff member identified that will be assigned that project and the estimated time necessary, the funding source and amount that will be allocated for the task. Some of the items have further breakdown on pages 20-33 which are helpful but do not have a direct tie to the amount and type of staff members needed to complete the work. Typically in government contracting (especially when people are 100% billable) you have an allocation of hours for specific tasks under each contracted item so you can ensure the right personnel mix and funding. Throughout the year, management should be provided status reports on each project, the number of hours allocated, and the number of hours remaining for completion. This is called a "burn report" and it allows management to focus on ensuring the right personnel mix are available to complete the work that is being contracted to us by the

government. I am hopeful that by the end of the year, these reports will become available to our FAMPO Board.

Finally, I do not see a significant change in work from this UPWP to last years. Most items indicate that we are "continuing" projects from last year. Unless there are material changes, I recommend making amendments to this UPWP (identified as a possibility on page 8) and work towards a more detailed UPWP for FY 2021 incorporating some of the suggestions mentioned at the May 1st meeting and detailed work plans that correlate the tasks to the staff changes recommended.

FAMPO Response to comments 1 & 2:

Response Date: May 14, 2019

Response Given By: Paul Agnello, FAMPO Administrator

Response:

Good afternoon Wendy,

The federal regulation that cites the UPWP timeframe is [23 CFR 450.308\(c\)](#): "...each MPO, in cooperation with the State(s) and public transportation operator(s), shall develop a UPWP that includes a discussion of the planning priorities facing the MPA. The UPWP shall identify work proposed for the next 1- or 2-year period by major activity and task..." The 2-year option was made available in SAFETEA-LU. Before that all UPWPs were annual.

The UPWP development schedule is driven the State of Virginia's fiscal year and the availability of state financial projections for FAMPO monies. The State projections for Virginia MPOs are currently annual and typically become available in February/March. This year, additional Smart Scale monies resulted in some information not being available until April/May. Currently, all Virginia MPOs are on an annual UPWP schedule and the schedule for many MPOs involved with Smart Scale is similar to FAMPO with a draft in May and final in June.

If FAMPO were to go to a biannual UPWP, it would not be a decision that the FAMPO Policy Board could make alone. It would also require support from the State and public transportation operator(s) and require State projections for FAMPO monies for the biannual period. If FAMPO would like staff to work with the State and public transportation operator(s) to investigate this for FY-21/FY-22, this is something we could look into, but it is too late to make this type of change for FY-20 UPWP development.

The state of Florida recently worked with its 27 MPOs to switch from an annual to biannual UPWP system. The results may be of interest below:

-----Summary of Florida
Experience in moving all 27 MPOs to a 2-year UPWP schedule -----

A few years ago all 27 MPOs in Florida moved to a 2-year UPWP schedule.

Each year FDOT provides the MPOs with a UPWP balance sheet, which includes year one allocation and the anticipated year two allocation. Although the MPOs each adopt a 2-year UPWP, FDOT still does multiple authorizations over that time period because the State and Federal governments have different start-end dates for their fiscal years and because the Florida Legislature grants FDOT budget authority for only one year at a time. Also, FHWA will authorize/approve funds only one fiscal year at a time.

Florida has a heavily-administrative MPO process. If they approach the end of a fiscal year and have PL funds remaining that they want to use in the next FY they have to take steps to have FDOT de-obligate the funds in order to carry them over. One benefit of the 2-year cycle is the MPOs only need to close-out or de-obligate funds every other year in this case. Even with this, they still have to be careful to invoice against the correct year in order to get reimbursed, and if they use the funds for a new or unrelated task in the second year, a UPWP amendment is still required.

The statewide MPO association did a quick survey of the FL MPOs on 1-year vs. 2-year UPWPs after a couple rounds with the 2-year UPWPs. The responses were pretty evenly split between those who liked the change and those that did not, although the smaller MPOs seemed to like the change to 2-years (see graph and text below).

Common Positive Satisfaction Responses (Pros):

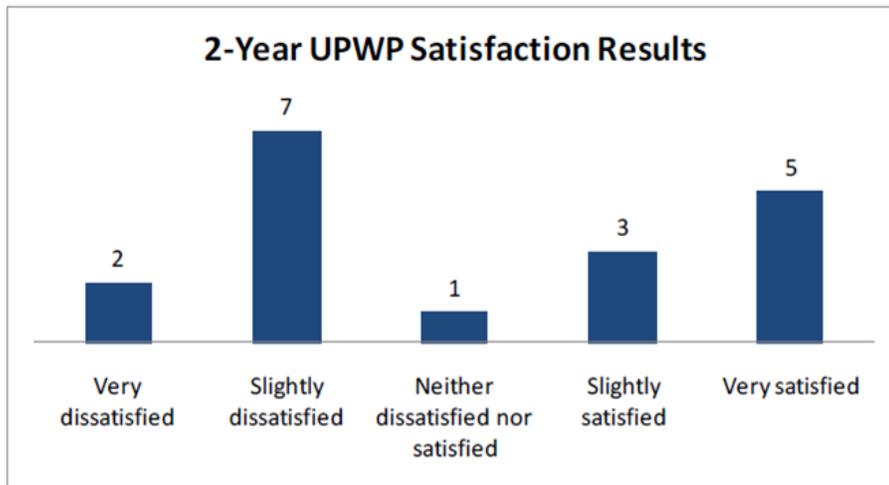
- Fewer administrative tasks
- Can accommodate projects that span more than one year
- Less labor intensive to complete one document

Common Negative Satisfaction Responses (Cons):

- Difficult to align data with auditor requirements

- Many amendments required in year two
- Difficulty rolling funds over from year one to year two
- Overhauling the UPWP for year two took equal or more time as completing a new UPWP
- Revenue estimates for year two were incomplete or uncertain

1) How would you rate your experience operating with a 2-year UPWP?



Respondents were asked their level of satisfaction with the two-year UPWP on a scale from one to five, with one being very dissatisfied, and five being very satisfied. The mean overall response was 3.1. However, only one response was neutral — all other respondents had a satisfied or dissatisfied experience. The responses were divided into MPOs with large and small populations, with a cutoff for being a large MPO set at 500,000. Most independent MPOs also fall into the large MPO category. Smaller MPOs were strongly satisfied with a two-year UPWP, with a mean response of 4.3. The five smallest MPOs (all non-TMAs) all reported being “very satisfied.” As a group, large MPOs reported being dissatisfied with a two-year UPWP, with a mean of 2.4. The results were also divided into independent MPOs and hosted MPOs. Hosted MPOs generally indicated satisfaction with a two-year document (mean = 3.5), while independent MPOs generally indicated dissatisfaction with the two-year document (mean = 2.3).

3. Comment Received Date: May 14, 2019

Comment Received By: Fredericksburg District, Virginia Department of Transportation
Comment(s):

- Please address FHWA comments in providing a clear breakdown of budgetary items.

“We have conducted a cursory review of FAMPO’s draft FY20 UPWP. At this time, our review of the attached budget makes it difficult for our office to determine fiscal constraint since the State’s commitment to matching RSTP funds (20%) is missing (attached). Additionally, since match requirements for PL and RSTP are different and since planning activities utilizing RSTP must be administered and accounted for separately for fiscal purposes, please ensure that FAMPO’s FY2020 UPWP separately identifies the specific activities and

end products that are proposed to be funded with RSTP funds from those funded with PL. We note that there is general language throughout in the UPWP that states, "Initiatives funded with a mix of RSTP, PL, and 5303 funds."

Finally, as mentioned above and consistent with the regulation below, RSTP funded activities must be in the metropolitan UPWP and TIP. PL funded activities do not have this requirement. At a minimum, VDOT should be able to cross-match

RSTP funded activities in the UPWP and TIP."

- In "**Section 1, Introduction**," please assure accuracy of the following statement: "All decisions of the MPO are made by the FAMPO Policy Committee." The MPO's fiscal agent has limited, joint, decision-making responsibilities associated with the MPO. If their involvement is required in any decision-making process, please indicate this.
- Under "**Planning Priorities**", Air Quality Planning and ITS are listed. However there are no tasks that include language to conduct these activities. Please add proposed activities.
- In "**Table 1**," the VDOT representative serves as the "Representative for the Secretary of Transportation."
- In "**Figure 1**," on the map it appears that both FAMPO & GWRC Planning Areas each have only 2 counties each.
- In "**FAMPO Accomplishments in FY2019**," spell out work tasks that were not completed or completed later than expected. Also be specific on tasks completed (i.e. #4 - how did FAMPO maintain & support Regional Land Use Scenario Planning Efforts, #16 How were these tools utilized?)
- For all **budget tables**, please change "State" funding to either "DRPT State" or include an asterisk with grant identified.
- Has every planning study in the UPWP, using RSTP funds, undergone a prioritization process? If yes, include process & outcome in an Appendix. (If not, please provide an explanation.)
- Under "**Key planned activities for FY2020**," #6 & #12 are the same task.
- In "**Section 4.1**," in introduction, state correct fiscal year. Under #4, verify that BRAC is still an active program. If not, please remove BRAC reference.
- For each work task under "**Participants**," add "Public" where pertinent.
- Please include work tasks associated with resiliency planning or emergency planning (i.e. evacuation routes), as appropriate.

The following items are suggestions that could improve the clarity and readability of the document:

- For each “**Budget & Breakdown by Funding Source**” table, consider adding Task number in front of each table header.
- On “**Section 5, Summary of Financials,**” add task numbers before names and correct first two activities as “Long Range...” & “Short Range...”
- Under Section “**4.4 Public Participation,**” consider listing which social media engagements that FAMPO is active on and add measure for social media impressions.
- Under Section “**4.5 TDM/Transit Planning,**” consider adding info about P&Rs, OmniRide, & Amtrak.
- Under Section “**4.7 FAMPO Administration,**” under “End Products,” numbers 1, 5 & 6 are mostly the same thing. Consider expanding participants to include community, federal, state & local agencies.
- Consider adding tasks to address website organization, document retention policies, and developing QA/QC for paper and electronic files.
- Consider keeping consistent in **naming and formatting structures**. Examples include:
 - Should it be FY-2020, FY-20 or FY20 (ditto for FY19)?
 - Is it Lafayette Boulevard Phase I or Lafayette Boulevard Multimodal study?
 - “Section 4” header is a different font size than “Section 3” font size.
 - Correct page numbers where they transition from Roman Numerals to Numbers.
- In the “**Contents,**” the header for “Section 4” is missing and entry for line 4.6 should be capitalized.
- In “**Figure 2,**” consider adding numbers before each of the activities.
- In “**Section 4.1,**” consider grouping similar activities (i.e. modeling is scattered throughout activities).
- In “**Section 4.2,**” should the first line read “short-range” not “long-range?” Ditto for “Planning Factors” in this section.
- Under “**End Products,**” please review language. For example, “Work towards completion of 2050 LRTP for FAMPO and GWRC by FY2020,” should read as completed – “Completed 2050 LRTP...”

General Questions:

- What purpose does Section “**4.8 Contingency**” task serve? It will not save time since amendments, as noted in text, still go through the TAC & PC approval process.
- Under “**Proposed Funding by Federal Source for FY2020,**” RSTP funds are normally disallowed by FHWA for non-TMA MPOs. Please explain why it’s different for FAMPO.

- Under “**FAMPO’s FY2020 Planning Activities,**” please explain why the CMP & Title VI documents are being updated again so soon (the last updates were in FY2019).