

4D. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a required document describing all anticipated planning activities for the Metropolitan Planning Organization; It includes a description of tasks and budgets for the Federal Fiscal Year (October 1 to September 30). The UPWP describes the regional transportation plans and programs carried out in the 8-county Metropolitan Planning Area:

- Development of all required planning products or activities (primarily the Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Congestion Management Process, etc.);
- Continuous and one-time planning activities related to safety, freight, transit, subregional areas, active transportation, air quality, data and modeling, and livable centers; and
- Special planning activities (e.g. Safe Streets and Roads for All, PROTECT resiliency planning, and development of grant-funded plan development).

CURRENT SITUATION

The Transportation Policy Council (TPC) approved the 2024 Unified Planning Work Program on September 9, 2023. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved the TPC's adopted UPWP on October 7, 2023.

Staff is preparing an amendment to the adopted UPWP to address the following items:

1. As part of the regular process of approval of the H-GAC's UPWP, the Federal Highway Administration typically provides comments that require various minor modifications to the adopted UPWP. FHWA's comments are still under review, but the amendment under development will make minor edits to clarify or address FHWA's comments. At this time staff does not anticipate any substantive edits to the adopted UPWP to address FHWA's comments.
2. During development of the H-GAC 2024 Annual Budget, adjustments to the UPWP budgets were identified that would better achieve the planning goals and more accurately distribute funds within H-GAC. These adjustments will be made to the 2024 UPWP; the overall budget amount utilizing Metropolitan Planning funds will be increased to reflect these adjustments.
3. Following adoption of the 2024 UPWP, H-GAC received two additional work orders (funding authorizations) for FY2023 planning activities. These additional funds increased the amount of carryover funds for FY2023 by more than \$17 million, making the total FY2023 carryover amount approximately \$28 million. To partially utilize these new funds, staff is proposing to shift the funding source for all eligible planning activities that are currently funded with Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds to instead utilize the carryover planning funds. This change will utilize between \$11 and \$14 million of the carryover balance.

ACTION REQUESTED

Director's Report: Information and Discussion Only