
[Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)] UPWP Project 13301, Review of Vision Zero Policies amendment (Sent by Marilyn Wellons, marilyn.wellons@gmail.com)

Contact form at Boston Region MPO <drupaluser@ctps.org>

Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 12:59 PM

Reply-To: marilyn.wellons@gmail.com

To: upwp@ctps.org

Marilyn Wellons (marilyn.wellons@gmail.com) sent a message using the contact form at <https://www.ctps.org/contact>.

UPWP largely looks at behavior only insofar as built infrastructure affects it. This is inadequate to achieve Vision Zero.

To achieve it--to reduce cyclists' and others' injuries and fatalities--please admit the limits of the analysis and point to ways change behavior. Bike lanes, bike boxes, priority at traffic signals, "multi-purpose paths," can do only so much. They incorrectly assume knowledge of and enforcement of traffic regulations for cyclists.

Look beyond infrastructure. Cite the need to include licensing of cyclists (tests for eyesight, rules of the road including right-of-way) and of vehicles (inspection, requirements for lights and reflectors beyond current state standards). Helmets for adults is another necessary change in state law to achieve Vision Zero.

Drivers in MA are licensed, their vehicles inspected, for safety. To help protect cyclists, the state driver's manual now includes Dutch Reach.

There are no equivalent requirements for cyclists.

For everyone's safety, there must be. A required eye test for cyclists, for example, means an officer enforcing one-way traffic will know a wrong-way cyclist can see and read the posted signs, and knows the cyclist knows it.

Such laws and regulations are require policing and the will to enforce.

How long did it take until seat belts were mandatory for adults in cars; how many casualties do we need until helmets are mandatory for adult cyclists, as they are for children? To avoid more grief, DOT must look beyond infrastructure narrowly defined. It does so in traffic analysis.

Beyond the MPO's mandate to reduce carbon emissions and thus address climate change, its long-standing strategy has been to attract and retain cyclists (the desired demographic). The resulting "multi-purpose paths" and "greenways" are, according to their specifications, secondary roads suitable for cars and small trucks as well.

Surely licensing and inspecting all vehicles and their operators who use this transportation infrastructure, and enforcing traffic regulations that govern them, is a common sense way to achieve Vision Zero.

ZIP code: 02139

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Sandy Johnston <sjohnston@ctps.org>

Thu, Jul 30, 2020 at 1:51 PM

To: marilyn.wellons@gmail.com, Kate White <kwhite@ctps.org>

Bcc: "Muller, Benjamin (DOT)" <benjamin.muller@state.ma.us>, Jonathan Church <jchurch@ctps.org>, Róisín Foley <rfoley@ctps.org>, Matthew Archer <marcher@ctps.org>

Dear Marilyn,

Thank you for taking the time to comment on the draft Amendment Two to the Boston Region MPO's Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020 Unified Planning Work Program. Your comment will be included in the packet of materials presented to the MPO before its vote on endorsement of the amendment.

We wanted to take this opportunity to talk a little bit about the purpose of the Vision Zero study and how it relates to your comments. MPO staff, the MPO's UPWP committee, and others have all discussed the approach the MPO will take to this study extensively, taking into consideration the characteristics of the Boston region and the lessons we can learn from the current moment of social change and upheaval. The core mission of the study, though, is to learn from the experience of peer metropolitan areas the best ways to achieve Vision Zero.

One of the initial lessons of looking at international Vision Zero experience is that few, if any, of Boston's peer cities have licensing or inspection requirements for bike use, so there will not likely be many cases of licensing of people biking for comparison. Since this is a Vision Zero study, it's important to note that Vision Zero strategies themselves tend to acknowledge the limitations of punitive enforcement, and instead focus on education and infrastructure, among other things. In addition, there are significant racial and social issues around enforcement. The Vision Zero Network recently [released a statement](#) in which they committed to "Promote alternatives to punitive, inequitable fine systems, particularly in relation to traffic infractions, given the disproportionate burden on low-income people, Black people, and Brown people." As expressed by MPO Executive Director Tegin Teich [in her recent messages](#), MPO staff also take these values very seriously.

We appreciate your comments and I understand that you, among many others, are concerned about the safety hazards that may occur when any person on the roadway disobeys rules. We look forward to exploring how other Vision Zero cities have approached this issue, and which strategies they prioritize to achieve safety for all roadway users most effectively, and in a way that is responsible in the context of the very complicated history between enforcement and people of color.

Again, MPO staff thank you for taking the time to engage with this UPWP amendment, and we look forward to hearing more from you in the future.

Thank you,

Sandy Johnston, UPWP Manager

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