



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting held **January 22nd, 2025**. The hybrid meeting was held virtually through Zoom.

CMMPO Advisory Committee Members Present:

- Adam Menard – Town of Auburn
- Connor McCormack – Town of Millbury
- Chris Payant – Town of Westborough
- Matt Benoit – Town of Douglas
- Caleigh McLaren – Blackstone Watershed Collaborative
- Feanna Jatta-Singh - MAWOC
- Liz Myska – Visions Consulting L3C
- Sarah Bradbury – MassDOT District 3
- Daryl Amaral – MassDOT District 2

Ex-Officio Members Present:

- N/A

CMRPC Staff Present:

- Rich Rydant
- Kevin Krasnecky
- Zach Blais
- Jeff Howland
- Sandy Amoakohene
- Nathan Lewis

Guest:

- N/A

Agenda Item #1 – Around the Room Introductions

Chair Adam Menard opened the meeting at 3:06 PM. A roll call of CMMPO Advisory members was announced, followed by the rest of the attendees.

Agenda Item #2 – Approval of December 11th, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Minutes for the December 11th, 2024 CMMPO Advisory meeting were considered for approval. Chair Menard entertains a motion to approve the December 11th, 2024 meeting minutes. Mr. Payant makes a motion to approve. The motion is seconded by Mr. McCormack. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval.

Agenda Item #3 – Transportation Improvement Program FFY 2030 Presentations

Mr. Krasnecky provided an overview of the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), highlighting three candidate project presentations for Federal Fiscal Year (FF) 2030:

Project #613875: Auburn/Worcester – Route 20 Improvements

The project limits are from east of Commerce Drive in Auburn to west of the Greenwood Street intersection in Worcester. The project intends to improve bicycle and pedestrian accommodation to provide safe multimodal access between the housing and commercial sites on Route 20. The project will include the construction of a shared-use path and a sidewalk along Route 20; it will reallocate the existing cross-section with some widening; it may necessitate the construction of retaining walls and modifications to the existing bridge cross-section; it will improve pavement markings and signage; and it will strive to minimize impacts to driveways and parking areas of the abutting businesses.

The project is at the pre-25% design stage. A design consultant will be assigned soon, and a survey will be conducted. Required environmental permits and ROW acquisition/easements are not yet determined and utility relocations will likely be required. The current cost estimate is \$6,527,690.

Project #613873: Sturbridge - Route 20 Improvements

The project limits are from east of Hall Road to before the I-84 ramps. There was a 2017-2019 HSIP crash cluster in the project area and recent commercial growth in the area has increased the number of left-hand turns, increasing the potential for serious crashes. The long-term goal of this project is to install a median to divide Route 20 and provide strategic locations for vehicles to reverse directions, therefore this project could potentially include a roundabout at Hall Road to allow vehicles to reverse

direction without having to make left turn maneuvers. Potential safety improvements to access properties east of Hall Road will be investigated.

The project is at the pre-25% design stage. A design consultant will be assigned soon, and a survey will begin. The required design requirements and ROW acquisition and easements are being determined, and some utility relocations will likely be required. The current cost estimate is \$6,579,155.

Project 613261: Worcester – Lincoln Street Transit Infrastructure Improvements

The project limits are from Burncoat Street to Catherine Street. The project goal is to improve transit service reliability, the user experience, ADA compliance, and to provide bicycle facilities along the project limits. Three WRTA bus routes utilize the corridor, and experience delays due to congestion in the PM peak. Bus stop spacing and locations are not ideal, and many locations lack amenities, signage, or roadway striping. The roadway also lacks marked crossings at several intersections and at bus stops and also lacks bicycle facilities.

In addition, the corridor contains a Top 200 Crash Cluster and a Top 5% Intersection Crash Cluster for crash years 2017-2020 (statewide), a Top 5% Bicycle Crash Cluster for 2010-2019 (statewide), and three locations that are Top 5% MPO Crash Locations for Fatal and Serious Injuries.

The proposed work will include transit signal priority, reconstruction of bus stops and amenities, repair sidewalks, construct ADA compliant curb ramps, and new bicycle facilities. Existing curb to curb widths will be retained where possible and new pavement markings and signage will be included. The pre-25% design process will evaluate cross-section alternatives and potential parking impacts.

The project is at the pre-25% design state. A design consultant has been assigned and is currently developing a Scope and Fee proposal for design services. The required environmental permits and ROW acquisition and easements are being determined, and utility relocations may be required. The current cost estimate is \$3,335,000.

There were no further questions.

Agenda Item #4 – CY 2025 Safety Performance Measures

Kevin Krasnecky presented this agenda item. Safety Performance Measures (PM1) requires annual coordination of target setting with MPOs. MPOs must establish their own set of performance targets each year or adopt the state's performance targets (for the entire Commonwealth) and the performance targets must be incorporated into the Certification Documents. Regarding PM1, MassDOT's goal is towards zero deaths. The Performance Measures are presented in 5 year rolling averages, and the Infrastructure Investment and

Jobs Act (IIJA) requires the targets to demonstrate constant or improved performance. Additionally, MassDOT also developed a 2023-2027 projection to forecast current trends further into the future.

For CY25, the five statewide (MassDOT) safety targets are:

- Total Fatalities: 365
- Fatality Rate per 100 million VMT: 0.58
- Total Serious Injuries: 2,622
- Serious Injury Rate per 100 million VMT: 4.17
- Total Combined Non-Motorist Injuries + Fatalities: 497

Mr. Krasnecky then described MassDOT's methodology in setting their safety targets for the above categories. Graphics were displayed for each category showing the historical data and projected targets for the 5-year rolling averages for both the state and the CMMPO.

For a comparison, the CY25 CMMPO safety targets are:

- Total Fatalities: 38
- Fatality Rate per 100 million VMT: 0.67
- Total Serious Injuries: 279
- Serious Injury Rate per 100 million VMT: 4.82
- Total Combined Non-Motorist Injuries + Fatalities: 38

The state targets are realistic targets, and short incremental steps must be taken to achieve the Commonwealth's goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries. The CMMPO must set their own safety targets or adopt the MassDOT safety targets by February 28, 2025. The safety targets must also be included in the FFY 2026 to FFY 2030 TIPs.

There were no comments or questions following the presentation.

Chair Menard motioned to recommend approval of these changes to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Conor McCormack moved, and Chris Payant seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #5 – PROTECT Grant

Zack Blais provided a summary presentation of the FHWA's Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Grant Program and noted that as part of these efforts, a listing of priorities has been made.

The PROTECT Grant Program aims to strengthen surface transportation projects to be more resilient to natural hazards (i.e., flooding). The program has two types of grants: Planning Grants and Resilience Grants. The Planning Grants include resilience planning,

the development of Resilience Improvement Plans (RIPs), pre-design and design activities, capacity building, and evacuation planning and preparation. On the other hand, the Resilience Grants include resilience improvements to existing surface transportation infrastructure (i.e., elevating bridges, improving drainage), improvements to evacuation routes or adding capacity, and improving coastal infrastructure. For the FY24-FY25 funding period there is about \$500 million available.

Thus far, CMRPC staff have gone through existing plans, like Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) plans, to identify hazard locations throughout the region. Using GIS, staff created maps and added prioritization layers (i.e., flood zones, evacuation routes, environmental justice) to “tier” locations. Locations that were within more priority areas fit into higher “tiers”, helping staff to prioritize locations for potential grant project ideas.

In addition, MassDOT is working on a Statewide RIP and solicited transportation resilience projects from MPOs to include in their RIP. These projects would be included on a “regionally endorsed” list in the plan. The listing of hazard locations that staff came up with was sent to MassDOT for their consideration to be included in their RIP.

Regarding the development of the PROTECT Grant, the next steps for staff are to conduct additional analysis on the “tiered” locations and work on an application to seek PROTECT grant funds for assessment and design on at least one location. The deadline for the PROTECT Grant is February 24, 2025.

Agenda Item #6 – Advisory Committee Member Updates

Caleigh McClaren with the Blackstone Watershed Collaborative gave a comprehensive presentation on the Blackstone Watershed Collaborative and their efforts regarding the Blackstone River. She gave updates on recent grant awards and the efforts to remove dams throughout the entire Blackstone. She then went into activities done in the past and provided an overview of the activities completed the past year.

Agenda Item #7 – Staff Updates

Nathan Lewis introduced the newest committee member Feanna Jatta-Singh. Mrs. Jatta-Singh is a NAACP and MAWOC member. He then provided updates on the following topics:

1. MARPA Meeting occurring the following Thursday
2. WRTA Schedule Changes and Rebranding efforts

There were no questions regarding these updates.

Agenda Item #8 New Business

No new business.

Agenda Item #9 Next Meetings

Adam Menard announced the schedule for the next meeting:

- CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting (virtual) – Wednesday, February 26th, 2025: 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM
- CMMPO Meeting (virtual) – Wednesday, February 19th, 2025, at 4:00PM
- CMTPC Meeting – Thursday, February 27th, 2025, at 6:00 PM

Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment

At 4:29 PM Chair Menard called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. McCormack made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Payant. The group voted unanimously to adjourn.

Meeting minutes prepared: Nathan Lewis, Public Outreach Coordinator

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