



## CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) meeting held **Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024**. This meeting was held virtually using Zoom Webinar.

- **CMMPO Members Present:**

1. Steve Woelfel – MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, designee to MassDOT Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt
2. Ann Sullivan – MassDOT Highway Division District #3, designee to MassDOT Highway Division Administrator Jonathon Gulliver
3. Joshua Rickman – WRTA Administrator
4. Bob Hassinger – designee to CMRPC Commission Chair
5. Brian Pigeon – designee to City Manager Eric Batista
6. Shelby Marshall – Westborough, Northeast Subregion Representative
7. Jesse Limanek – Sutton, Southeast Subregion Representative
8. John Daniel – Southbridge, Southwest Subregion Representative
9. Stephanie Mulroy – Holden, North Subregion Representative

- **CMMPO Ex-Officio Members Present:**

1. Chris Klem, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning

- **Guests:**

1. Daryl Amaral, MassDOT District #2
2. Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District #3
3. Steven Tyler, Howard Stein Hudson
4. Todd Kirrane, Worcester
5. Betsy Goodrich, Worcester
6. Chris Payant, Westborough
7. Jeff Bridges, Spencer
8. John Morgan, CHA
9. Levente Mezo
10. Peg Dean, Southbridge
11. Chris Payant, Westborough

12. Monika Turek

- **CMRPC Staff**

1. Sujatha Krishnan, Deputy Director – Transportation
2. Kevin Krasnecky, Project Manager – Transportation
3. Zack Blais, Associate Planner – Transportation
4. Rich Rydant, Project Manager – Transportation
5. Rob Raymond, Project Manager – Transportation
6. Adam Wriggins, Assistant Planner – Transportation
7. Nathan Lewis, Public Outreach Coordinator – Transportation
8. Eric Gemperline, Associate Planner – Transportation

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**Agenda Item #1 – Introductions**

CMMPO Chair Steve Woelfel opened the meeting at 4:00 PM. A roll call of CMMPO members was announced.

**Agenda Item #2 – Remote Meeting Protocols and Procedures**

Sujatha Krishnan briefly reviewed updated remote meeting protocols and procedures following new changes, in which the meetings will be conducted in a Zoom Webinar format going forward.

**Agenda Item #3 – Approval of December 20, 2023, Meeting Minutes**

Minutes from the December 20, 2023, meeting of the CMMPO were considered for approval. Ann Sullivan motioned to accept the minutes and was seconded by Josh Rickman. A roll call vote was announced, and members voted to unanimously approve the minutes.

Steve Woelfel – Yes

Shelby Marshall – Yes

Ann Sullivan – Yes

Jesse Limanek – Yes

Joshua Rickman – Yes

John Daniel – Yes

Bob Hassinger – Yes

Stephanie Mulroy – Yes

Brian Pigeon – Yes

**Agenda Item #4 – Opportunity for Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

**Agenda Item #5 – Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

- **Potential Action:** Approval of Proposed Amendment #2 to the FFY 2024 to FFY 2028 TIP Transit List

Kevin Krasnecky presented this item. Proposed Amendment #2 included three changes to FFY 2024 of the FFY 2024 to FFY 2028 TIP Transit List. The changes are:

- RTD0010855 – WRTA Buy Replacement 35’ Bus: COST INCREASE. 5307 funding would increase by \$1,010,000 for new total of \$8,189,019. TDC funding would increase by \$95,804 for new total of \$1,637,804.
- WRTA011642 – On-Call (short-term) Planning Services: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$250,000. \$200,000 will be 5307 funding and \$50,000 will be SCA funding.
- WRTA011643 – Preventative Maintenance for WRTA Vehicles and Facilities: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$506,000. \$404,800 will be 5307 funding and \$101,200 will be SCA funding.

Mr. Krasnecky noted that Proposed Amendment #2 was discussed with the CMMPO Advisory Committee and CMRPC’s Transportation Committee and both recommended endorsement. A virtual public meeting to discuss the Amendment was also held on Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>.

There were no comments or questions about the proposed changes.

Bob Hassinger made a motion and was seconded by Ann Sullivan to approve the proposed Amendment #2 to the FFY 2024 to FFY 2028 TIP Transit List. All members present voted unanimously to approve proposed Amendment #2.

Steve Woelfel – Yes  
Ann Sullivan – Yes  
Joshua Rickman – Yes  
Bob Hassinger – Yes  
Brian Pigeon – Yes

Shelby Marshall – Yes  
Jesse Limanek – Yes  
John Daniel – Yes  
Stephanie Mulroy – Yes

- **Potential Action:** Release Proposed Amendment #3 to the FFY 2024 to FFY 2028 TIP Highway and Transit Lists for 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period

Kevin Krasnecky presented this item. Proposed Amendment #3 included several changes to FFY 2024 of the FFY 2024 to FFY 2028 TIP Highway and Transit Lists.

The changes to the Highway List are:

- Worcester #610535 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements on Pleasant Street: REMOVE PROJECT
- Charlton-Oxford #602659 – Reconstruction on Route 20, from Richardson’s Corner Easterly to Route 12, Includes Rehab of C-06-023 and Replacement of O-06-002: Reduce statewide CMAQ funding to \$123,655. Reduce statewide HSIP funding to \$0. Reduce statewide NHPP funding to \$7,956,218. Reduce statewide STBG funding to \$0.

The changes to the Transit List are:

- WRTA011658 – Shrewsbury: Town of Shrewsbury – CTGP Shrewsbury Operating: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$25,000.
- WRTA011661 – Holden: WRTA-Holden to Worcester Extended Service: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$20,000.
- WRTA011686 – Town of Rutland – Rutland Extended Transportation: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$75,477.
- WRTA011687 – WRTA – SCM Elderbus – READYBUS Service: ADD PROJECT. \$70,000.
- WRTA011688 – WRTA – SCM Elderbus Midday Shuttle: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$34,000.

Shelby Marshall made a motion and was seconded by Jesse Limanek to approve the release of the proposed Amendment #3 to the FFY 2024 to FFY 2028 TIP Highway and Transit Lists for 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period. All members present voted unanimously to approve the release of proposed Amendment #3 for 21-day public review and comment period.

Steve Woelfel – Yes  
Ann Sullivan – Yes  
Joshua Rickman – Yes

Bob Hassinger – Yes  
Brian Pigeon – Yes  
Shelby Marshall – Yes

Jesse Limanek – Yes

Stephanie Mulroy – Yes

John Daniel – Yes

- FFY 2025 Micro-Projects Update

Sujatha Krishnan provided updates on the FFY 2025 Micro-Projects Program.

Ms. Krishnan mentioned that for FFY 2024 projects, the Town of Southbridge submitted the scope of work and is in the contracting process with MassDOT for their grant. The Quaboag Connector has flexed their funds to Pioneer Valley Transit Authority and the Town of Ware to access the funds.

For FFY 2025, the deadline for the Micro-Project Application is February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Interest has included the City of Worcester to purchase bicycle racks through an application. Ms. Krishnan announced that anyone interested should reach out to Yahaira Graxirena.

There were no comments or questions.

- FFY 2029 Presentations by Project Proponent
  - Rutland #613655 – Intersection Improvements at Route 122 and Pleasantdale Road: Ann Sullivan presented this project. Existing issues at this intersection include speed, safety, and was a High Crash location from 2017-2019. Route 122 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is 5,917 and the roadway also provides an important connection to Worcester. The scope of the project is to construct a roundabout at the intersection, but other alternatives will also be considered. Also included are improved bike accommodations and upgraded signage and pavement markings. The project is currently at pre-25% design stage and survey work is being done. Required environmental permits and ROW acquisitions or easements are being determined. Utility relocations will be required. The current cost estimate of the project is \$3,013,900. There were no comments or questions following the presentation.
  - West Brookfield #612779 – Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 9 (Phase 3): John Morgan, from CHA, presented this project for the town of West Brookfield. The entire Route 9 reconstruction project includes 4.3 miles. Phase 3 is 1.6 miles and includes resurfacing and related work. Roadway width varies between 24' to 26' and the 85% vehicle speeds are 45 MPH. Existing issues include safety for all users, pavement condition, and drainage issues. Safety concerns include snow and ice, shoulder width/visibility, truck traffic, speeding, signage/pavement markings, and bicycle and pedestrians. The proposed new roadway section includes two 12' travel lanes and two 5' shoulders to accommodate bicycle/pedestrians. There is also the Lamberton Brook culvert that would need to be improved. The project is currently at the pre-25% design stage and the 25% design is anticipated to be submitted in Fall 2024. Survey work and data collection is ongoing. The estimated project cost is \$14,000,000.

Shelby Marshall asked if this is the more complex Phase of the Route 9 project. Mr. Morgan said it is similar, but it does include a culvert which the other phases do not. There were no other comments or questions.

- Westborough #613242 – Roadway Improvements on Route 30 (East Main Street): Chris Payant, Westborough, and Steven Tyler, HSH, presented this project. The goals of the project are to improve traffic safety, improve bicycle/pedestrian safety, fill multimodal connectivity gaps, improve existing shared-use path crossing, improve congestion, and promote economic development through improved walkability and bikeability. Next steps for the project are to perform a topographic survey, conduct evaluation of Flanders Road intersection, conduct local community outreach, and complete the pre-25% design submission.

Shelby Marshall commented that this is a highly interested area of the community for needs of connectivity and bicycle and pedestrian improvements. There were no other comments or questions.

- Worcester #613648 – Intersection Improvements at Lake Avenue and Bigelow Davis Parkway: Betsy Goodrich and Todd Kirrane presented this project. The goal of the project is to improve traffic control at the intersection to reduce speeding, improve safety, and create better multi-modal access for all with a particular focus on vulnerable roadway users. Existing conditions include a significant amount daily traffic, stop sign controlled, non-compliant ADA ramps, and sidewalks. The intersection is a Top 5% HSIP Crash Cluster and has long pedestrian crossing distances. Other problems include speeding, inadequate bike/micro-mobility facilities, multiple conflict points, and lack of gaps & long queues for turning traffic. The project includes traffic control through a traffic signal or a roundabout; a reduced footprint intersection and shorter crosswalks; right sized travel lanes to manage speeds; separated/protected bicycle lanes; and widened sidewalks/improved streetscape. Project planning and design is expected to be completed by the city in 2024-2025.

Rich Rydant asked what the estimated project cost is. Mr. Kirrane said that it is \$6.7 million. There were no other comments or questions.

### **Agenda Item #6 – Presentation on CY 2024 Safety Performance Measures (PM1)**

Eric Gemperline presented this item.

Each year MPO's are required to either set their own or adopt the State's safety performance targets and must be incorporated into Certification Documents. MassDOT's overarching goal is towards zero deaths. The performance measures are presented in 5-year rolling averages. Further, federal law prohibits States from using increasing targets.

The MassDOT safety targets for CY 2024 are:

- Total fatalities: 377
- Fatality rate per 100 million VMT: 0.61
- Total serious injuries: 2,708
- Serious injury rate: 4.36 per 100 million VMT
- Total combined non-motorist injuries + fatalities: 445

Mr. Gemperline then described MassDOT’s methodologies in setting their safety targets for the above categories. Graphics were also displayed showing the historical data and projected targets for the 5-year rolling averages for both the State and CMMPO in each safety category.

Mr. Gemperline explained that while the goal is towards zero deaths and injuries, the State’s targets are not “goals” but realistic targets considering the events of the last 3+ years. Mr. Gemperline also noted that the CMMPO must either set their own five quantifiable safety targets or adopt the MassDOT targets that were presented by February 29, 2024. These targets must be included in the FFY 2025 to FFY 2029 TIPs.

There were no comments or questions.

### **Agenda Item #7 – Staff Updates**

- Grants Funding

Sujatha Krishnan updated the group that CMRPC staff was awarded Safe Streets for All Action Plan funding for Main Street in Worcester. Staff are waiting to hear back on results for Thriving Communities Grant and the Reconnecting Communities Program Grant. Staff will also be helping several communities with the RAISE Grant, which is due at the end of February. Shelby Marshall asked the difference between Thriving Communities and Reconnecting Communities Grant Programs. Ms. Krishnan explained that the Thriving Communities Grant is only for regional and state level planning studies. The project that staff applied for was a feasibility study for the Blackstone River Bikeway. The Reconnecting Communities Program Grant is for communities that were disadvantaged during the highway building era. The project staff submitted was for the Vernon Street bridge over I-290 area that connects Kelley Square and the Vernon Hill area.

### **Agenda Item #8 – New Business**

Ms. Krishnan asked the group to share any input for ways staff could improve the new Zoom webinar process of CMMPO meetings.

Steve Woelfel reminded the group of the upcoming MassDOT Innovation Conference on April 30<sup>th</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup> and that registration is now open.

### **Agenda Item #9 – Next Meetings**

- CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting (virtual) – January 24, 2024, at 3:00PM
- CMMPO meeting (virtual) – February 21, 2024, at 4:00PM

### **Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment**

Bob Hassinger made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Ann Sullivan. The meeting concluded at 5:00 PM.

*Meeting Minutes prepared by: Zachary Blais, Transportation Associate Planner*