



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Transportation Planning Committee In-Person/Virtual meeting held Thursday, May 29, 2025, using Zoom.

T-Committee Members Present:

1. Bob Hassinger, Grafton, Committee Chairperson
2. Brian Pigeon, Worcester
3. Matt Stencel, Millbury
4. Otto Lies, Holden
5. Rick Baker, Boylston

CMRPC Staff Present:

1. Kevin Krasnecky
2. Rich Rydant
3. Zack Blais
4. Sandy Amoakohene

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Around-the-Room Introductions

Committee Chairperson Bob Hassinger opened the meeting at 6:00 PM and asked for around the room introductions.

Approval of April 24, 2025, T-Committee Meeting Minutes

Minutes from April 24, 2025, meeting were considered for approval. Brian Pigeon motioned to accept the minutes and was seconded by Otto Lies. Members voted to approve the minutes, with one abstention.

Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Oxford Food Access Study Presentation

Sandy Amoakohene presented this agenda item. The goal of this study was to identify transportation barriers to food resources for vulnerable populations, specifically for older adults and people with disabilities in Oxford. For the study, priority destinations considered included food pantries, farmers markets, supermarkets and grocery stores, convenience stores, and other essential destinations. The project scope included quantitative data (i.e., active transportation network, demographics, transit access); partners interviews with Oxford FoodShelf, Oxford Senior Center, Tri-Valley, Inc., and Oxford Housing Authority; study findings; and recommendations including recommended activities and possible funding resources.

During the interviews, themes included limited funding to support food delivery/transport programs; older adults that can't afford groceries; concerns on limitations to SNAP benefits and other safety-net services; and bag limits on fixed routes for those using transit services for grocery shopping.

Several study findings included a strong dependence on cars over walking/biking or transit; the pedestrian network and fixed route bus routes focus mainly on Route 12 (Main Street) and Route 20; majority of identified food resources are focused along Main Street and Route 20; majority of identified food resources are convenience stores; and COA van services and Senior Center van services do not align with Food Pantry hours due to an impact of driver shortage.

Lastly, the recommendations were:

- First-and-Last-Mile Connections
 - Prioritize gaps between an individual and/or destination and the existing transportation network along Main Street and Route 20.
- Partnerships with Private Transportation Providers
 - Partner with on-demand private transit to allow service to be available to qualifying Oxford residents.

- Food Pantry/Van Service Alignment
 - Use funding opportunities to expand the capacity of Senior Center or COA transport services.
- Mobilizing Food Resources
 - Partner with grocers, farmers markets, or other food resources to provide food delivery and mobile van services.
- Pedestrian Network Improvements
 - Improve “fair” or “poor” sidewalk segments in central and southern Oxford.

There were no comments or questions.

FFY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- **Action Item:** Seeking a recommendation concerning CMMPO endorsement of the Draft FFY 2026 UPWP.

Rich Rydant presented this agenda item. Mr. Rydant first reviewed the table of contents of the UPWP and summarized the work tasks for FFY 2026. Next, Mr. Rydant discussed the funding table and noted a 3.3% increase in funding from last year’s budget.

There were no comments or questions.

On a motion from Matt Stencel and a second from Otto Lies, the members unanimously voted to recommend CMMPO endorsement of the Draft FFY 2026 UPWP.

Environmental Consultation Presentation

Rich Rydant started off this agenda item. Mr. Rydant noted that the Environmental Consultation meeting is held annually during the development of the TIP but also includes work activities from the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the UPWP. Mr. Rydant gave a brief overview of the environmental consultation process and then summarized some of the various GIS data layers that staff use. The data layers are culverts, open space, flood zones, wetlands, and endangered species. The Massachusetts Project Intake Tool (MAPIT) was then discussed and how it is used to initiate a TIP project.

As an example, the Route 16 TIP project in Uxbridge was discussed. The project goals, existing conditions, and proposed improvements were summarized. A locus map of the project area was shown along with each of the environmental layers that were previously shown. As part of the TIP, an environmental-related funding source is Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ). This is a funding source used for projects that reduce vehicle emissions. Kevin Krasnecky talked about various examples of CMAQ eligible projects and noted numerous projects that have been funded with CMAQ since 2017 and the corresponding amount of potential emission savings.

Next, Zack Blais talked about electric vehicles in relation to the LRTP program development. Mr. Blais noted that staff has completed an update (version 2.0) of its CMMPO Electric Vehicle

Charger Dashboard. The new version considered many comments from the public and is also updated live. The new dashboard contains a general map, resource page, and separate dashboards for the CMMPO region, Massachusetts, as well as the entire United States.

Lastly, Mr. Blais provided an updated on the CMRPC culvert assessment program. Since 2022, over 500 culverts have been assessed in the region. Staff recently completed assessments in Berlin and Boylston and developed reports and dashboards for each town. Staff also assisted the town of Warren with a DER Culvert Replacement Municipal Assistance (CRMA) grant and were awarded \$140,000. For the grant, the town performed field data collection, pre-design and design work for two culverts on New Reed Street, a roadway that experiences frequent flooding.

There were no comments or questions.

Staff Updates

Rich Rydant provided the following updates:

- Vernon Street/I-290 Study: Staff announced a news release naming Stantec as the consultant chosen for the study. The project will kick off at the beginning of June and a Citizens Advisory committee will be created.
- Safe Streets for All (SS4A): The Request for Proposals (RFP) was released on May 12th. The deadline for submittals is Monday, June 9th and consultant interviews will be held soon after.
- Regional Housing Study: Consultant interviews have been completed. A preferred consultant has been selected, and staff are currently working on finalizing the contract. The consultant will be announced once the contract is finalized.

New Business

There was no new business.

Next Meetings

- CMMPO Meeting – Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 4:00 PM.
- CMMPO Advisory Committee Meeting – Wednesday, June 25, 2025, at 3:00 PM.
- CMTPC Meeting – Thursday, June 26, 2025, at 6:00 PM.

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Brian Pigeon and a second from Matt Stencel, the members unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:50 PM.