



## CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the CMMPO Advisory Committee held **Wednesday, April 26, 2023**. This meeting was held virtually through Zoom.

### **CMMPO Advisory Committee Members Present:**

- Adam Menard, Chair, Town of Auburn
- Chris Payant – Vicechair, Town of Westborough
- Jeremy Thompson – 495/Metrowest Partnership
- Sandy Amoakohene, Division of Public Health, City of Worcester
- Sarah Bradbury – MassDOT District 3
- Daryl Amaral – MassDOT District 2
- Benjamin Breger – MassDOT District 2
- Nick Burnham - WRTA

### **Ex-Officio Members Present:**

- Chris Klem – MassDOT OTP

### **CMRPC Staff Present:**

- Sujatha Krishnan
- Yahaira Graxirena
- Kevin Krasnecky
- Eric Gemperline
- Rob Raymond
- Greer Jarvis
- Emily Glaubitz
- Rich Rydant

The CMMPO fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The CMMPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, English proficiency, income, religious creed, ancestry, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, military service, or gender identity or expression. Any person who believes himself/herself or any specific class of persons have been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI or related statutes or regulations may, himself/herself or via a representative, file a complaint with the CMMPO. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the date on which the person believes the discrimination occurred. Contact the CMMPO Title VI Coordinator at (508) 459-3313 or [titleVIcoordinator@cmrpc.org](mailto:titleVIcoordinator@cmrpc.org), to obtain a copy of the CMMPO Complaint Procedure and forms, or visit <http://cmrpc.org/title-vi-policy> to review online.

## **Agenda Item #1 – Around the Room Introductions**

Chairperson Adam Menard opened the meeting at 3:03 PM. A roll call of CMMPO Advisory members was announced, followed by the rest of the attendees.

## **Agenda Item #2 – Approval of March 22, 2023 meeting minutes**

Minutes for March 22, 2023, CMMPO Advisory meeting were considered for approval. Mr. Menard entertains a motion to approve the March 22, 2023, meeting minutes. Vicechair Payant makes a motion to approve. The motion is seconded by Mr. Thompson. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval.

## **Agenda Item #3 – CMMPO FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

**Potential Action:** Seeking recommendation to the CMMPO.

- Release Proposed Amendment #6 to the FFY 2023 to 2027 TIP Highway Project Listing for 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period

Mr. Krasnecky presented this item. The Proposed Amendment #6 included cost increases for three TIP highway projects in FFY 2023. These projects included:

- Cost increase of \$2,507,579 for Project #609219 – Holden – Pavement Rehabilitation on Main Street, Shrewsbury Street, and Doyle Road, from State Police Barracks to Brattle Street. STBG funds will be increased by \$5,164,257 from \$1,000,000 to a total of \$6,164,257. The new Total Project Cost is \$13,049,700.
- Cost increase of \$3,278,953 for Project #608873 – Spencer – Roadway Rehabilitation of Meadow Road. CMAQ funds will increase by \$13,185, STBG funds will increase by \$1,32,103, and TAP funding will be added in the amount of \$1,790,665. The updated Total Project Cost is \$12,821,789.
- Cost increase of \$1,034,249 for Project #610826 – Sturbridge – Bridge Replacement, S-30-019, Champeaux Road over Long Pond. The Statewide STBG-BR-OFF funding will go from \$2,143,668 to a new Total Project Cost of \$3,177,917.

There were no questions regarding the proposal. Chairperson Menard entertains a motion to recommend changes to the CMMPO. Vicechair Payant makes the motion to approve the changes. The motion is seconded by Mr. Burnham

## **Agenda Item #4 – Review DRAFT FFY 2024-2028 Statewide Highway Project Listing**

- **Potential Action:** Seeking recommendation to the CMMPO to endorse Draft FFY 2024 to 2028 TIP

Mr. Krasnecky presented this item. The target projects for the Draft FFY 2024 to 2028 TIP Highway Project Listing include:

### 2024

- #606517 – West Brookfield – Route 9 Resurfacing (Phase 1)
- #608171 – Uxbridge – Route 122 (South Main Street) Reconstruction
- #608433 – Webster – Intersection Improvements at I-395/Route 16/Sutton Road
- S12815 – Ware – MicroProjects: Purchase of Hybrid Minivan
- S12816 – Southbridge – MicroProjects: Public Transportation Multi-Media Communications Campaign

### 2025

- #602659 – Charlton/Oxford – Route 20 Reconstruction
- #609049 – West Brookfield – Route 9 Resurfacing (Phase 2)
- #608778 – Southbridge – Intersection Improvements at Central Street/Foster Street/Hook Street/Hamilton Street
- #608961 – Worcester – Intersection Improvements at Chandler Street and May Street

### 2026

- #608456 – Upton – Route 140 Culvert Replacement over Unnamed Tributary to Center Brook
- #608990 – Worcester – Chandler Street Intersection Improvements from Main Street to Queen Street
- #611933 – Sturbridge – Route 20 and Route 131 Roundabout Construction
- #609411 – Northbridge – Intersection Improvements at Route 122/School Street/Sutton Street/Upton Street
- S12812 – CMMPO LRTP MicroProjects Program Reserve Funding

### 2027

- #610931 – Uxbridge – Route 16 (Douglas Street) Rehabilitation
- #612011 – Worcester – Chandler Street Intersection Improvements from Queen Street to Park Avenue
- #612629 – East Brookfield – Route 9 Resurfacing
- S12812 – CMMPO LRTP MicroProjects Program Reserve Funding

### 2028

- #611988 – Oxford – Route 12 (Main Street) Rehabilitation
- #613097 – Spencer – Intersection Improvements at Route 9 and Route 49

- S12811 – CMMPO LRTP MicroProjects Program Reserve Funding

In addition to the regional target projects, Mr. Krasnecky said the Statewide highway projects that were discussed at the March CMMPO meeting remained the same and they are included in the Draft 2024-2028 TIP Highway Project Listing. Following the highway list, Mr. Krasnecky also provided a summary of the draft Transit Project Listing. Mr. Krasnecky noted that the same projects were programmed in all five years of the TIP such as Operating Assistance, Purchasing Support Equipment, Purchasing Spare Parts, Purchasing new Bus Shelters, and improvements to the WRTA Hub and Maintenance Facility. It was also noted that the WRTA is purchasing new electric buses in 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027, for a total number of 23 buses. Additionally, a total of 17 new paratransit vans are being purchased in 2024 and 2026.

Mr. Burnham had a question regarding the 2024 transit listing and the public transportation multimedia communications project in Southbridge. Mr. Krasnecky responds that the Town is using microproject funds to advertise the services in the Town including the fixed route bus service and the elder bus.

Ms. Amoakohene asks about pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements on Pleasant Street in Worcester to see to what extent the project will take place on the street. Mr. Krasnecky states the infrastructure improvement is from Tatnuck Square to the Paxton Town Line.

There were no further questions. Chairperson Menard asks for a motion to recommend the endorsement to the MPO. Vicechair Payant makes a motion to recommend the endorsement. Mr. Burnham seconds the motion. Chairperson Menard asks for a vote. The vote is unanimous in favor of recommending the endorsement.

## **Agenda Item #5 – FFY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Sujatha Krishnan presented this item.

First, Ms. Krishnan presented the proposed FFY 2024 UPWP budget, which included a table comparing the budget for FFY 2024 to the FFY 2023 UPWP budget for the activities under each UPWP element. Last year, increases in funding were given as a result from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), therefore there is an increase of about 2% in total funding for the FFY 2024 UPWP. For the most part, funding numbers have stayed relatively the same. The big changes for the FFY 2024 UPWP budget is seen in the LRTP. In this current year CMRPC staff are developing the LRTP, so for FFY 2024 the budget for the LRTP is decreasing for implementation purposes. That funding is allocated into other planning activities, like congestion, safety, and asset management. The other big change is seen in the contract with the WRTA. There were three full-time staff members helping with that contract, and after conversations with WRTA the intention is for a staff member within WRTA to help with that work. The budget will fully fund the transportation staff members and potential future employees for roles that need to be filled. This budget will be included in the upcoming draft UPWP that will be released in May by the CMMPO.

Secondly, Ms. Krishnan presented the major task listing for the FFY 2024 UPWP. This included a list of different tasks and products for the different work activities within the upcoming UPWP. Some examples are the Annual Environmental Consultation session, Annual MassDOT Title VI report, asset management data collection, drone flights, conduct/participation in Road Safety Audits (RSAs), develop

a Regional Trails Plan, Highway Trucking Accommodation Studies, implementation of 2050 Connections LRTP, a corridor study, and many more.

- Socio-Economic Plan

Rob Raymond presented this item.

Mr. Raymond started off the presentation saying the Federal regulation requires socioeconomic and population projections to guide the development of the LRTP. This includes how many people will live in the region and where they will live, as well as how many people will work in the region and where they will work. This helps inform the planning process by identifying growth areas, identifying transportation system deficiencies, and helping establish travel/commuting patterns.

MassDOT took the lead in developing the population and employment projections. Additionally, the UMass Donahue Institute and MAPC led the effort in collaboration with all the Regional Planning Agencies. Between the UMass Donahue Institute (UMDI), MAPC, and UrbanSim Model, the projections follow a workflow using data on population, households, household characteristics, MA resident labor force, estimates of commuters, industry projections, and employment. This whole process starts at the state, which comes up with state-level forecasts and works with the regions to come up with population, household, and employment projections for each of the planning agencies. From here, the UrbanSim Model is used to allocate growth to 2020 Census Block groups. That projection data is then used for town totals, which are used for the transportation analysis zones that make up the regional travel demand forecasting model, which are different than 2020 Census Blocks.

Regarding national population trends, the U.S. population grew by only 0.1% from July 1, 2020, to July 1, 2021. This can be attributed to decreased international migration, decreased fertility, and increased mortality due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic. As for retirement trends, by 2030, more than one in five Americans will be over age 65. This additional information is being used to come up with population and workforce projections at the state level.

Moving on, Mr. Raymond discussed four maps that showed forecasting for towns across the state for percent change for population in households, households with children, workers, and jobs from 2020 to 2050. Population in households show a mixed bag of change in the CMMPO region, households with children show mostly a loss throughout the CMMPO region, workers also show mostly a loss in the CMMPO region, and jobs show a mixed bag of change in the CMMPO region.

Next, Mr. Raymond discussed the MassDOT/UMDI methodology for population forecasting out to 2050. Five-year age groupings were used with cohorts for births, deaths, and migration. CMRPC also did its own set of forecasting and a separate methodology. This is because MassDOT represents their projections as a bottom, or low forecast; the MassBuilds Database influences projections, but only includes active projects; MassDOT projections has a conservative view of in-migration and a conservative view of higher education and the ability of the CMRPC region to retain graduates; and historically, MassDOT projections have been conservative. To build a more optimistic set of projections for the region, CMRPC applied previously computed absolute growth rates to new 2020 census numbers. Therefore, while MassDOT population projections for the region show slight increases in population out to 2040 and then a decrease in population out to 2050, the CMRPC population

projections show a steady increase in population all the way out to 2050. Similarly, while MassDOT employment projections show only slight growth for the region out to 2050, CMRPC employment projections show steady growth for the region out to 2050.

Following this, Mr. Raymond showed a set of maps for both population and employment projections to show growth in each community out to 2050. For each projection there were three sets of maps that were split into three 10-year spans (2020-2030, 2030-2040, and 2040-2050). Growth was symbolized by “Below Average Growth”, “Average Growth”, and “Above Average Growth”. For population projections, there was “Above Average Growth” throughout the majority of the region from 2020 to 2030, however that tapers off to become majority “Average Growth” and “Below Average Growth” between 2030 and 2050. For employment projections, the region was split between “Below Average Growth” and “Above Average Growth” from 2020 to 2030. From 2030 to 2040 the region becomes a mix of all types of employment growth, and from 2040 to 2050, the region experiences a mix of mostly “Average Growth” and “Above Average Growth”.

As for the next steps, staff will input both the MassDOT and CMMPO projections into the CMRPC travel demand model for scenario planning. Staff will utilize both MassDOT and CMMPO projections for scenario planning in the CMRPC regional plan. And staff will continue to monitor local, regional, and state datasets in preparation of future efforts.

Chairperson Menard notes that Worcester’s population decline is surprising before asking for any questions. Mr. Raymond responds that using the UrbanSIM model may not reflect the true population in Worcester as it has to do with new development in the calculation. There are no further questions.

## **Agenda Item #6 – Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Updates**

- Financial Plan

Yahaira Graxirena presented this item, which includes financial scenarios that are being considered as part of the development of the LRTP.

First, the presentation displayed a table shows regionally estimated target funds provided by MassDOT until 2050, which are allocated in five-year bands. As part of current TIP funding, total available funding from FY2024 to FY2025 is \$52,397,899. From FY2026 to FY2030, total available funding is \$154,432,094. From FY2031 to FY2035, total available funding is \$174,436,471. From FY2036 to FY2040, total available funding is \$194,518,660. From FY2041 to FY2045, total available funding is \$213,832,411. And from FY2046 to FY2050, total available funding is \$235,849,508. This comes to a total of \$1,025,467,044 in total available funding provided by MassDOT from 2024 to 2050 for the region. As MassDOT only provided funding up to 2044, staff used a 2% increase per year up to 2050.

Ms. Graxirena then showed a slide which included a table of the Programmatic Areas that were set in the previous LRTP, and the percentages and dollars associated with each one that were set by the CMMPO. The table also included information on the percentages and dollar amounts from the TIP (FFY2022-2028) to show what has been allocated within the Programmatic Areas. While some Programmatic Areas align closely between the LRTP and with how TIP funding is being spent (Major

Infrastructure Projects, Climate Change and Resiliency), there are differences with other areas (System Maintenance and Operations, Active Transportation, and Transit Support).

Moving forward, staff have done extensive public outreach as part of the LRTP, *2050 Connections*. A pie chart was displayed showing a breakdown of public survey results of transportation priorities. These priorities included improving pedestrian infrastructure, improving public transportation, reducing traffic congestion, reducing vehicles crashes, maintaining pavement conditions, stormwater management, expanding bicycle infrastructure, EV charging infrastructure, accommodating freight needs, and expanding trail network. Using our data management systems, staff were able to run a budgeting scenario for how much it would cost to do many of the projects in the region. For example, it would take about \$100 million to replace 100 culverts, about \$256 million for planned Complete Streets projects in approved Prioritization Plans, and \$80 million for pavement structural improvements on 74.4 miles of federal-aid roadway.

Taking all the public priorities and data, staff created two options for target funding percentages for each of the Programmatic Areas. Option A aligns closely with what has been traditionally spent on the TIP (FFY2022-2028). Option B is the staff's preferred option, and it takes the public comment and data into account to come up with a scenario that staff believes works better for the region.

The CMMPO agreed that Option B would be the preferred alternative for developing the LRTP. The percentage breakdown by Programmatic Area for Option B is:

- Major Infrastructure Projects – **15%**
- System Maintenance and Operations – **38%**
- Active Transportation – **30%**
- Climate Change and Resiliency – **12%**
- Transit Support – **5%**

Chairperson Menard asks for questions or comments on the presentation. Chairperson Menard clarifies that MPO staff prefer Option B. Both Ms. Graxirena and Ms. Krishnan confirm that the preferred staff choice is Option B. Vicechair Payant believes the recommendation is sound and supports Option B. A consensus is reached by the committee to support Option B.

## **Agenda Item #7 – CMRPC Regional Efforts: Housing**

This item was presented by Emily Glaubitz

Ms. Glaubitz was invited to present to the CMMPO Advisory Committee some of the work done by the CMRPC related to housing in the region.

Ms. Glaubitz begins with a brief background interconnecting housing and transportation within the context of planning. The adoption and widespread use of personal automobiles after World War II created land uses favorable to low-density zoning and a subsequent decline in the urban cores and village centers as housing moved into the suburbs. Central Massachusetts very much followed this pattern which has led to a majority low-density, single-family housing stock throughout the region.



Ms. Glaubitz's work looks at how this housing stock might not be the most appropriate for all people or sustainable and looks for better solutions. This involves planning, community engagement, and education to create more sustainable, inclusive, and healthy communities. This can be achieved through transit-oriented development, village center studies, zoning bylaws, low impact development, housing production plans, and more.

Housing in Massachusetts is expensive and is rising with slower housing production trends. There is a need for deed-restricted affordable housing as well as more diverse housing options and sustainable land use practices. Currently, Massachusetts has Chapter 40B mandates that all communities must have 10 percent of their housing stocks as deed-restricted affordable housing. At this moment, only four out of 40 communities in the CMMPO are meeting the Chapter 40B mandate: Berlin, Northborough, Westborough, and Worcester. There are barriers to housing production including regulatory constraints, market competition, environment, and infrastructure.

Housing production plans (HPP) are in place or being developed by communities to comply with Chapter 40B mandates. The following communities have approved HPPs: Boylston, Princeton, Sutton, Sturbridge, Shrewsbury, and West Boylston. The following communities are in the process of developing a HPP: Spencer, Berlin, Upton, Mendon, Oxford, and Auburn.

HPPs are important for communities. The State recognizes the need for TOD development and has designated 177 communities as MBTA communities' multi-family zoning requirements and must follow new state legislation that requires an affordable housing district with a gross density of 15 units per acre. Fourteen of these communities are located with the CMMPO. These are mandates to allow, not create housing inventory.

An additional aspect of housing planning are Designated Housing Choice Communities, of which there are five in the region: Rutland, Worcester, Millbury, Boylston, and Berlin. This designation allows for the application of various grants. Lastly, there are communities who have adopted the Community Preservation Act which allows for the funding of housing. These communities include: Berlin, Boylston, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Northborough, Northbridge, Shrewsbury, Sturbridge, Upton, West Boylston, Westborough, and Worcester.

The CMRPC is prepared to assist communities if they wish to seek these designations. Beyond that, CMRPC is working on policy guidance for approaching short term rentals, a regional housing coordinator, and the regional plan, Imagine 2050.

## **Agenda Item #8 – Staff Updates and New Business**

There were no new staff updates.

## **Agenda Item #9 – Next Meetings**

- CMMPO Advisory Committee Meeting – May 24, 2023, at 3:00 PM

- CMMPO Meeting – Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 4:00 PM

### **Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment**

At 4:15PM Chairperson Menard entertained a motion to adjourn. Vicechair Payant made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Thompson. The group voted unanimously to adjourn.

Meeting minutes prepared: Eric Gemperline, Transportation Associate Planner