



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) meeting held **Wednesday, January 18th, 2023**. This meeting was held virtually using Zoom.

- **CMMPO Members Present:**

1. Steve Woelfel – MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, designee to MassDOT Secretary Gina Fiandaca
2. Ann Sullivan – MassDOT Highway Division District #3, designee to MassDOT Highway Division Administrator Jonathon Gulliver
3. Dennis Lipka – WRTA
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. Stephanie Mulroy – Holden, North Subregion Representative

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

1. Derek Krevat, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
2. Chris Timmel, FHWA

- **Guests:**

1. Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District #3
2. Daryl Amaral, MassDOT District #2
3. Ben Breger, MassDOT District #2
4. Jeff Bridges, Town of Spencer
5. Kevin Dandrade, TEC Engineering
6. Lori Aho, TEC Engineering
7. Jared Duval, Town of Oxford DPW Director
8. John Morgan, CHA Engineering
9. Greg Russel, VHB Engineering

- **CMRPC Staff Present:**

1. Sujatha Krishnan, Deputy Director – Transportation
2. Kevin Krasnecky, Project Manager – Transportation
3. Rob Raymond, Project Manager – Transportation
4. Yahaira Graxirena, Project Manager – Transportation
5. Zack Blais, Associate Planner – Transportation
6. Nahrin Sangkagalo, Associate Planner – Transportation
7. Greer Jarvis, Assistant Planner – Transportation
8. Rich Rydant, Project Manager – 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, followed by the rest of attendees.

Agenda Item #2 – Approval of December 21, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the December 21, 2022, meeting of the CMMPO were considered for approval. Bob Hassinger motioned to accept the minutes and was seconded by Ann Sullivan. A roll call vote was announced, and all members present voted to accept the minutes. Stephanie Mulroy abstained due to her not being present at last month’s meeting.

Steve Woelfel – Yes
Ann Sullivan – Yes
Dennis Lipka – Yes
Bob Hassinger – Yes

Brian Pigeon – Yes
Shelby Marshall – Yes
Jesse Limanek – Yes
Stephanie Mulroy – Abstain

Agenda Item #3 – Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Agenda Item #4 – Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- **Potential Action:** Release Proposed Amendment #3 to the FFY 2023 to 2027 TIP Transit Project Listing for 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period

CMRPC staff, Kevin Krasnecky, presented the Proposed Amendment #3 to the FFY 2023 to 2027 TIP Transit Project Listing. Proposed Amendment #3 calls for additions of the following Community Transit Grant Awards to FFY 2023:

- Project #T00235 – Town of Shrewsbury – Funding of operation of Shrewsbury Council on Aging vehicle with a focus on out-of-town trips for a total of \$50,000
- Project #T00237 – WRTA – Holden demand response service for a total of \$24,000
- Project #T00238 – WRTA – Midday demand response service for a total of \$30,000
- Project #T00239 – WRTA – ReadyBus Service for a total of \$90,000

Shelby Marshall made a motion and was seconded by Jesse Limanek to release proposed Amendment #3 to the FFY 2023 to 2027 TIP Transit Project Listing for a 21-day public review and comment period. All members voted unanimously.

Steve Woelfel – Yes
Ann Sullivan – Yes
Dennis Lipka – Yes
Bob Hassinger – Yes

Brian Pigeon – Yes
Shelby Marshall – Yes
Jesse Limanek – Yes
Stephanie Mulroy – Yes

There were no comments or questions.

- **Update on MicroProjects Applications**

CMRPC staff, Yahaira Graxirena, discussed recent updates with the MicroProjects Program applications. An Information Session for the Program was hosted in December and more than 40 guests were present. The deadline for the Program applications was January 20, 2023.

Ms. Graxirena continued to summarize some of the towns and organizations that reached out to staff regarding the Program. The Senior Center Director in Hopedale was interested in expanding transit service. UMass Chan Medical School Sustainability Director was interested in docking stations and e-bikes for their employees. The Latin American Business Organization (LABO) was interested in workforce transportation to support working women and transportation for day care and after school for children. The Town of Southbridge is interested in transit operations to support the Quinsigamond Community College. The Town of Westborough is interested in using funds for the design and construction of the Boston-Worcester Airline Trail, as well as bikesharing. The Quaboag Connector is interested in purchasing a vehicle to expand transit services in the Town of Hardwick. For VIA, they wanted to know more about the Program. Finally, MassBike is interested in bicycle rack purchasing to support their initiative.

Shelby Marshall asked what happens to the funds set aside for MicroProjects if there are no projects presented and/or approved. Ms. Graxirena replied that if those funds are not used then those funds would likely be reallocated to another TIP project.

There were no other comments or questions.

- **FFY 2028 Presentations by Project Proponents**

- East Brookfield #612629 – Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 9

The limits of the Route 9 TIP Project #612629 are from the Brookfield Town Line to just West of Route 49 in Spencer, a distance of 3.3 miles. Existing conditions for this project include poor ADA accessibility compliance issues, a lack of bicycle accommodations, poor drainage, and poor pavement conditions. There are several goals for the design of this project, including enhancing vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle safety, mobility, and operations; pavement rehabilitation and curb upgrades; drainage system upgrades; pavement markings and signage updates; and guardrail upgrades. The proposed roadway width for this project is 36 feet. This includes two 11-foot travel lanes, 5-foot bicycle lanes with 2-foot buffers on each side, and 5.5-foot sidewalks on each side. The status of the project is currently at 25% design. For Right of Way, there will be some temporary construction easements, some permanent easements for drainage and utilities relocation, and only minor land takings. For Environmental Permitting, a Notice of Intent (NOI) will be needed in East Brookfield and Spencer, and a NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) Checklist will also be needed. The estimated total construction cost for this project is \$8 million. The potential project timeline is a Design Public Hearing in 2023, project final design by 2025, and project construction by 2026.

There were no comments or questions.

- Oxford #611988 – Roadway Rehabilitation on Route 12 (Main Street)

The limits of this TIP Project on Route 12 (Main Street) are from Fairlawn Avenue to Front Street. There are several goals for this project, including the introduction of safe transportation alternatives for all users within the current footprint of the roadway; creating a more accessible Town Center; reducing vehicular speeds through the Town Center; limiting delays at the traffic signal; introducing streetscape and beautification opportunities; and creating an attractive Town Center for the residents and local business owners. Between 2014 and 2020, the Charlton Street and Sutton Avenue intersection experienced 106 crashes and 21 injury crashes. Other current challenges at this project location include high speeds, long pedestrian crossings, lack of ADA-compliant curb ramps, delays at traffic signals, and lack of bicycle accommodations. This project is currently in the preliminary design stage and there are many design options being considered for the project. Some of these options include sidewalk reconstruction, pavement restoration, streetscape beautification, separated bike lanes, bus stops, crosswalks with curb bumpouts or median islands with warning devices, and opportunities for bicycle signals. In addition, alternatives for either upgrading the traffic signal with new geometry or a new roundabout at the Charlton Street/Sutton Avenue intersection are being considered as part of the design. Upcoming project milestones include 25% design submission by Fall 2023, 25% Design Public Hearing by Spring 2024, 75% Design and Permitting Applications by Summer 2025, 100% Design and PS&E Design Submissions by 2026, and potential Advertisement in the FY 2028.

Rich Rydant asked about what the estimated cost of the project is. It was replied that the estimated cost of the project is about \$8.5 million.

There were no other comments or questions.

- Spencer #613097 – Intersection Improvements at Route 9 and Route 49

This project is located at the intersection of Route 9 and Route 49. Existing conditions at this location include a lack of pedestrian facilities, lack of bicycle accommodations, poor drainage, high vehicle speeds/large intersection, and poor level of service/long delays on the Route 49 approach, specifically left turning vehicles. Project design goals include providing pedestrian and bicycle amenities; improving driver safety; improving traffic operations and capacity; pavement rehabilitation and curb upgrades; upgrading the drainage systems; and updating pavement markings and signage. There is a proposed concrete paved roundabout included in the design concept. Currently the project is at preliminary 25% design stage. Next steps include a Design Public Hearing and then 75% Design submission. For Right of Way, there are only temporary construction easements and no permanent easements or land takings. For Environmental Permitting, a NOI is needed for the work in the buffer zone and a NEPA CE Checklist is also needed. The estimated project cost is \$5 million. The potential project timeline is the Design Public Hearing in 2023, Final Project Design by 2025, and potential project construction by 2026.

There were no comments or questions.

Agenda Item #5 – Presentation on CY 2023 Safety Performance Measures (PM1)

CMRPC staff, Kevin Krasnecky, presented the 2023 safety targets as staff will be looking for CMMPO members to set the regional safety targets for 2023.

Setting regional safety targets was required under MAP-21 (Section 1203) and is continued with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Setting the targets requires annual coordination with MPO's. MPO's must either establish their own set of quantifiable performance targets every year or adopt the State's performance targets. Once targets have been set, MPOs must incorporate them into their Certification Documents. For CY 2023, the five Statewide safety targets are:

- Total Fatalities: 355
- Fatality rate per 100 million VMT: 0.59
- Total Serious Injuries: 2,569
- Serious Injury Rate: 4.25 per 100 million VMT
- Total Combined Non-Motorist Injuries and Fatalities: 437

MassDOT's overarching goal is towards zero deaths. The Performance Measures are presented in five year rolling averages and the trendline has been established using historical data. The non-motorized definition includes wheelchairs, rolling blades, skaters, and other motorized devices. Per federal requirements, the term "Serious Injuries" is used instead of "Incapacitating Injuries". The BIL requires "performance targets to demonstrate constant or improved performance". During the pandemic shutdowns in 2020 and the lingering impacts in 2021, 2020 and 2021 fatalities and serious injuries increased relative to previous years. Also, it was noted that 2022 data was not yet complete and therefore was not used for target setting purposes.

For fatalities, MassDOT was unable to use a pure trendline approach to set CY 2023 targets, so they set their targets by projecting 2022 fatalities to be equal to 3% higher than the state's lowest year in recent history, and projecting 2023 fatalities to be equal to 3% lower than the lowest year. This methodology was developed in order to project a future downward trend based on the data available at the time. The fatality rate is calculated using the five year average fatalities divided by a five year average VMT's. For MassDOT the CY 2023 total fatality safety target is 355 and the rate is 0.59. Using a similar process for the CMMPO fatalities, the CY 2023 total fatality safety target is 33 and the rate is 0.59.

For serious injuries, MassDOT was also unable to use a pure trendline approach to set CY 2023 targets, although the methodology to set the serious injury targets differed from the way fatality targets were defined. In this case, the targets were developed by projecting the 2022 annual serious injuries to be equal to the lowest year in recent history and the 2023 annual serious injuries to continue downward at a roughly 10% annual decrease, which reflects the average decrease in the years in which the state experienced reductions in serious traffic injuries. This methodology was developed in order to project future downward trends based on the data available at the time. The serious injury rate is calculated using the five year average fatalities divided by the five year average VMT's. For MassDOT the CY 2023 total serious injuries safety target is 2,569 and the rate is 4.25. Using a similar process for the CMMPO, the total serious injuries safety target is 243 and the rate is 4.37.

For total combined non-motorized injuries and fatalities, MassDOT was also unable to use a pure trendline approach to set CY 2023 targets. To set the total combined non-motorized injuries & fatalities, the fatality methodology was used to set the CY 2023 target. For MassDOT the CY 2023 total combined

non-motorized injuries and fatalities total is 437. Using a similar process for the CMMPO, the CY 2023 total combined non-motorized injuries and fatalities total is 29.

As for the next steps, MPOs must either set their own five quantifiable safety targets or adopt MassDOT's safety targets as an action item by February 28, 2023. Once adopted, the safety targets must be included in the FFY 2024-2028 TIP's. Mr. Krasnecky noted that In recent years all MPO's have adopted the MassDOT targets.

Shelby Marshall asked why the MPO adopts MassDOT targets rather than their own. Mr. Krasnecky replied that if the MPO creates their own targets they are required to meet them or the MPO would incur penalties. It is also better for the MPO's to adopt the MassDOT targets and help the state meet their overall targets. Steve Woelfel mentioned that not reaching MPO set targets would include a penalty of being required to spend safety money differently. In addition to helping the state meet their goals, MPO's usually do not set their own targets because it requires a whole set of reporting and data collection that they may not have access to, whereas MassDOT does. Ann Sullivan mentioned that even if an MPO sets their own targets they would still need to complete state reporting as well, meaning double the work would be needed.

There were no other comments or questions.

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

- **Socio-Economic Update and Presentation**

CMRPC staff, Rob Raymond, presented on socio-economic updates being done for the state. MassDOT is leading this statewide effort and they have formed a committee of all the RPA's and MPO's. To develop the projections, MassDOT partnered with the UMass Donahue Institute and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). Federal regulation requires socioeconomic and population projections to guide the development of the LRTP, so these projections will be used for the CMMPO Long Range Transportation Plan, 2050 Connections. These projections will help us understand how many people live in the region, where people will live in the region, how many people work in the region, and where people will work in the region, and more. Using these projections and answering these questions will help inform the planning process by identifying growth areas and establishing travel and commuting patterns.

The main products of this process are population projections, households projections, economic/jobs projections, and labor force projections. These projections will be made out from the town level to 2050 in five-year increments. Age, gender, and race information will also be used.

Certain National population trends are impacting Massachusetts. From July 1, 2020 to July 1, 2021, the U.S. population grew by only 0.1%, the slowest rate since the nation's founding. Overall, growth in the U.S. is slowing, boomers are aging into high-mortality cohorts, and millennials are passing out of high-fertility cohorts with no apparent "third wave" coming behind them. These trends are representative of what is happening in Massachusetts.

For population projections, the forecasting methodology is starting with 2020 and aging the population in five year cohorts out to 2050 and considering births, deaths, and migration at each timeframe. In

2020, the census shows the CMRPC population to be 604,631. Based on the projections, from 2020 to 2050 the CMRPC region will experience population growth, with the highest projected population being in 2040 at 624,210. In 2050, the population is projected to be 621,469.

For households and jobs, both are projected to increase by 2050. In 2020, the census shows the CMRPC region to have 232,512 households. By 2050, CMRPC households are projected to increase to 257,006. In 2020, the census shows the CMRPC region to have 246,770 jobs. By 2050, CMRPC jobs are projected to increase to 255,275.

Moving forward, Development Sites comments are due to MassDOT by January 20th. Final population, employment, and household numbers will be released from MassDOT around March or April. The Town level breakdowns will be provided by MassDOT and projections will also be available by gender, age cohorts, and major employment categories.

Shelby Marshall asked when the data would be available for local use. Mr. Raymond replied that they would be available sometime in March or April. Once staff can review the data, we will then prepare to send that data out to the communities.

There were no other comments or questions.

Agenda Item #7 – Staff Updates

Sujatha Krishnan announced that on January 27th, 2023 there is a Statewide meeting of all RPA's and MassDOT to receive guidance on the TIP, UPWP, and LRTP documents. Outcomes from this meeting will be presented at the February MPO meeting. Ms. Krishnan also announced that February 7th, 2023, will be the TIP Readiness Day meeting.

Agenda Item #8 – New Business

Steve Woelfel reminded the group about the 2023 MassDOT Innovation Conference coming up on May 2nd and 3rd, 2023, at the DCU Center. The call for abstracts recently went out.

Agenda Item #9 – Next Meetings

- CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting (virtual) – January 25, 2023, at 3:00pm
- CMMPO meeting (virtual) – February 15, 2023, at 4:00pm

Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment

Bob Hassinger made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Shelby Marshall. The meeting concluded around 5:30 PM.

Meeting Minutes prepared by: Zachary Blais, Transportation Associate Planner