



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) meeting held **Wednesday, July 19th, 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. Jesse Limanek – Sutton, Southeast Subregion Representative

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

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

- **Guests:**

1. Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District #3
2. Derek Shooster, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
3. Benjamin Breger, MassDOT District #2
4. Keith Abaka
5. Peg Dean, Southbridge

- **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. Yahaira Graxirena, Project Manager – Transportation
6. Connie Mellis, Project Manager - Transportation

7. Sarah O'Brien, Associate Planner - RCCP
8. Eric Gemperline, Associate Planner - Transportation
9. Kerrie Salwa, Project Manager - RCCP
10. Ian McElwee, Principal Planner - RCCP
11. Rowan Compton, Intern – Transportation

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Agenda Item #1 – Introductions

CMMPO Chair Steve Woelfel opened the meeting at 4:06 PM. A roll call of CMMPO members was announced, followed by the rest of attendees.

Agenda Item #2 – Approval of June 21, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the June 21, 2023, meeting of the CMMPO were considered for approval. Ann Sullivan motioned to accept the minutes and was seconded by Dennis Lipka. A roll call vote was announced, and members voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

Steve Woelfel – Yes

Bob Hassinger – Yes

Ann Sullivan – Yes

Brian Pigeon – Yes

Dennis Lipka – Yes

Jesse Limanek – Yes

Agenda Item #3 – Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

Agenda Item #4 – Transportation Improvement Program

- **Potential Action:** Approval of Proposed Amendment #8 to the FFY 2023-2027 TIP Transit Project Listing

Kevin Krasnecky presented Amendment #8 to the FFY 2023-2027 TIP Transit Project Listing. Mr. Krasnecky said there were no comments during the 21-day public review period and both the MPO Advisory Committee and CMRPC’s Transportation Committee recommended endorsement of the amendment. The amendment included the addition of the following Community Transit Program (FTA 5310) Vehicle Awards in both FFY 2023 and 2024:

- Add **WRTA011548 – WRTA Buy Replacement Vans (5-1 type E)** to FFY 2023 in the amount of \$106,000 under 5310 funding source.
- Add **WRTA011549 – WRTA Buy Replacement Vans (5-1 type E2a)** to FFY 2023 and 2024. \$93,360 of 5310 funding will be added to FFY 2023 and \$23,340 of GOBOND funding will be added to FFY 2024. The total cost of the project is \$116,700.
- Add **WRTA011550 – WRTA Buy Replacement Vans (5-3 LF)** to FFY 2023 and 2024. \$453,413 of 5310 funding will be added to FFY 2023 and \$106,555 of GOBOND funding will be added to FFY 2024. The total cost of the project is \$559,968.
- Add **WRTA011570 – Town of Uxbridge – Buy Replacement Van (5310 Carryover)** to FFY 2023 in the amount of \$78,604 under 5310 funding source.
- Add **WRTA011574 – Town of Millville – Buy Expansion Van (5310)** to FFY 2023 in the amount of \$78,604. \$62,883 is 5310 funding and \$15,721 is LF funding.

There were no questions or comments.

Mr. Krasnecky requested members to approve the proposed Amendment #8. Jesse Limanek made a motion and was seconded by Bob Hassinger to approve the Proposed Amendment #8 to the FFY 2023-2027 TIP Transit Project Listing. All members present voted unanimously to approve.

Steve Woelfel – Yes

Bob Hassinger – Yes

Ann Sullivan – Yes

Brian Pigeon – Yes

Dennis Lipka – Yes

Jesse Limanek – Yes

Agenda Item #5 – Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

- **Potential Action:** Endorsement of LRTP *2050 Connections*

Sujatha Krishnan is requesting CMMPO members to endorse the LRTP *2050 Connections*. Ms. Krishnan briefly reviewed the LRTP Hubsite, which includes a page dedicated to the endorsed LRTP *2050 Connections* document. Additionally, there is also a dedicated page for the 2050 Connections Brochure, which has been translated in multiple languages. The Hubsite also includes updates for accessibility and language translation.

Jesse Limanek commented that the Hubsite looks great and accessible.

Bob Hassinger made a motion and was seconded by Ann Sullivan to endorse the LRTP *2050 Connections*. All members voted unanimously to endorse the LRTP *2050 Connections*.

Steve Woelfel – Yes

Bob Hassinger – Yes

Ann Sullivan – Yes

Brian Pigeon – Yes

Dennis Lipka – Yes

Jesse Limanek – Yes

- **Potential Action:** Endorsement of Certification of the CMMPO Greenhouse Gases (GHG) Requirements

Ms. Krishnan announced that CMRPC staff are looking for CMMPO members to endorse the Certification of the CMMPO GHG Requirements as part of the LRTP *2050 Connections*. Ms. Krishnan briefly explained the requirements as part of the certification.

Bob Hassinger made a motion and was seconded by Jesse Limanek to endorse the Certification of the CMMPO GHG Requirements. All members voted unanimously to endorse the Certification of the CMMPO GHG Requirements.

Steve Woelfel – Yes

Bob Hassinger – Yes

Ann Sullivan – Yes

Brian Pigeon – Yes

Dennis Lipka – Yes

Jesse Limanek – Yes

- **Potential Action:** Endorsement of Self-Certification of the CMMPO Transportation Planning Process

Ms. Krishnan announced that CMRPC staff are looking for CMMPO members to endorse the Self-Certification of the CMMPO Transportation Planning Process as part of the LRTP *2050 Connections*. Ms. Krishnan briefly explained the requirements as part of the certification.

Jesse Limanek made a motion and was seconded by Bob Hassinger to endorse the Self-Certification of the CMMPO Transportation Planning Process. All members voted unanimously to endorse the Self-Certification of the CMMPO Transportation Planning Process.

Steve Woelfel – Yes

Bob Hassinger – Yes

Ann Sullivan – Yes

Brian Pigeon – Yes

Dennis Lipka – Yes

Jesse Limanek – Yes

Agenda Item #6 – 2023 Regional Infrastructure Plan Presentation

Sarah O'Brien presented an overview of the 2023 Regional Infrastructure Plan. The planning effort was facilitated by the CMRPC. The goal of the plan was to work with towns to identify top issues faced with improving infrastructure in their towns.

The Regional Infrastructure Plan included several facets. The following includes the top issues about each type of infrastructure:

- Water
 - Cost of connecting water systems
 - Cost of treatment chemicals
 - Cost of upgrades
 - Supply chain issues
 - Low capacity of water departments
 - Cost of resiliency projects
 - Cost to fix private pipes
 - Water source and pipe vulnerability
 - PFAS and other contaminants
 - Transit pipe breaks
 - High water bills
- Wastewater
 - Age of infrastructure
 - Replacement/upgrade issues
 - Treatment center capacity limits
 - Conflict between increased development and infrastructure capacity
 - Cost of new state regulations
- Stormwater
 - Public outreach/education on stormwater compliance
 - Friction between increasing development and cost of stormwater systems
 - Adopting and implementing Stormwater Management Bylaws
 - Town capacity to map current stormwater systems
 - Problems with undersized culverts
 - Lack of expertise in stormwater management design
 - Beaver infestation

- Road salt
- Energy
 - Electricity line lack resiliency
 - Staying on track to be net zero by 2050
 - Limited back up power
 - Costs from private electric companies
 - Prevalence of fallen trees on exposed wires
 - Shortage of transformers and increased costs
 - Pole replacements
 - Under capacity for development
 - Transitioning from gas powered municipal vehicles and equipment
 - Influx of solar energy
 - Sustaining a rapid transition to electrical over fossil fuels
 - Substations cannot handle new solar developments
- Natural Gas
 - Lack of natural gas providers
 - Size of existing gas lines
 - Lack of lines as a potential hinderance to future development
 - Slow process to establish new gas lines
 - Communication issues with gas companies
 - Gas leaks
- Broadband
 - Back-up generators for phone and cell towers
 - Deploying fiber optics
 - Coverage in rural or hilly areas
 - Company monopolies
 - Cybersecurity of infrastructure
 - Cost
 - Municipal capacity to develop broadband
 - Issues with cybersecurity impacting municipal infrastructure
 - Radio systems and towers for emergency town management

Following the presentation, Ms. O'Brien shared a link to the full plan which is at <https://www.cmrpcregionalservices.org/the-plan>.

Ann Sullivan commented that the plan has a lot of great information and resources for towns. There were no further questions or comments.

Agenda Item #7 – MA Vehicle Census Presentation

This presentation was postponed to a future meeting. The MA Vehicle Census website link was posted in the meeting chat for attendees to visit check out the data.

Agenda Item #8 – Staff Updates

- Age Friendly Walk Audit

Yahaira Graxirena provided a presentation on the Webster Square Age Friendly Walk Audit. The Audit was hosted by staff on July 18. Since 2020, Webster Square has had more than 200 crashes. Most crashes were property damage only, and there was a high number of hit and runs. There were 10 pedestrian crashes, resulting in two fatalities and five serious injuries. Half of the pedestrian crashes were individuals aged 55+. Many of the overall crashes happened in dark conditions. Ms. Graxirena shared several photographs that were taken during the audit to highlight some of the issues around Webster Square. The overall goal of the Audit is to bring community members together to share feedback of the area to help planning efforts to improve walking conditions.

Brian Pigeon applauded the CMRPC staff's effort on the Audit.

There were no other comments or questions.

- Safe Streets for All Grant Application

Sujatha Krishnan announced that CMRPC staff have applied for Safe Streets for All Grant. The application is to develop an action plan for Safe Streets for All for the region and would result in a regional plan. As part of the application, staff collaborated with Worcester to add a demonstration project in the Main South neighborhood. Staff are also working with the Town of Southbridge to see if similar collaborations can be made. For the grant, MassDOT is providing a 20% match. Grant awards are expected to be announced sometime around October, and CMMPO members will be updated.

There were no comments or questions.

- Data Collection Activities

Kevin Krasnecky presented an update on the CMRPC's data collection activities this year. Mr. Krasnecky said that the staff has about 277 planned traffic counts, and the focus will be in the southern towns. 33 of the locations are requested by MassDOT and 21 locations were requested by the towns. There will also be about 20 Turning Movement Counts (TMCs) completed this year, with about half already completed in the spring.

The staff is also working on its Asset Management program. There are about 300 pavement segments, around 2,000 ramps, and about 100 miles of sidewalks planned for this year. Additionally, staff will inventory the handicapped/accessible parking spaces during the sidewalk data collection. The CMMPO Asset Management Dashboard will also be updated with the new data.

Other data collection activities included culvert assessments in Sturbridge and Berlin, bike rack inventory along federal-aid roads, signal inventory at TMC locations, Travel Time & Delay studies along CMP-identified roadways, Park and Ride/Commuter Rail Lots utilization observations, and other community technical assistance as needed. Staff have already provided assistance for the towns of Berlin, Dudley, and Sutton.

There were no comments or questions.

Agenda Item #9 – New Business

Steve Woelfel announced that registration for Moving Together on October 4 is now open.

Agenda Item #10 – Next Meetings

Sujatha Krishnan said that there would likely be no CMMPO meeting in August and September unless there is an action that needs to be taken. Tentatively, the next meeting would be in October.

- CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting (virtual) – TBD
- CMMPO meeting (virtual) – October 18, 2023, at 4:00PM

Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment

Bob Hassinger made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Jesse Limanek. The meeting concluded at 4:45 PM.

Meeting Minutes prepared by: Zachary Blais, Transportation Associate Planner