



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Transportation Planning Committee Hybrid meeting held Thursday, May 25, 2023 using Zoom.

T-Committee Members Present:

1. Bob Hassinger, Grafton, Committee Chairperson
2. Rick Baker, Boylston
3. Dick Williams, Rutland
4. Otto Lies, Holden

CMRPC Staff Present:

1. Rich Rydant
2. Kevin Krasnecky

The CMRPC fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The CMRPC 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 CMRPC. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the date on which the person believes the discrimination occurred.

Around-the-Room Introductions

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

Approval of the April 27, 2023 T-Committee Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the April 27, 2023 meeting were considered for approval. Dick Williams motioned to accept the minutes and was seconded by Otto Lies. All members voted to approve the minutes.

Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

FFY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

- **Potential Action Item:** Seeking recommendation to the CMMPO concerning endorsement of the Draft FFY 2024 UPWP.

Rich Rydant reviewed this agenda item with the attendees. Mr. Rydant noted that Draft FFY 2024 was released for a 21-day public review and comment period by the CMMPO at their May 17th meeting. Additionally, there will be a virtual public meeting to discuss the FFY 2024 UPWP on Tuesday, June 6, 2023 at 5:00 PM. The Draft FFY 2024 UPWP document is available on the CMRPC website. Next, Mr. Rydant summarized each of the work tasks included within the draft document and then asked for a recommendation to the CMMPO from the T-Committee members regarding endorsement of the Draft FFY 2024 UPWP.

There were no comments or questions.

On a motion from Dick Williams and a second from Otto Lies, the members unanimously voted to recommend endorsement of the Draft FFY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Long Range Transportation Plan

- Prioritization Process Presentation

Rich Rydant presented this agenda item. When coming up with priorities for the LRTP, *2050 Connections*, there were many areas to consider. They included data management systems, public outreach, environmental consultation, performance-based planning, financial constraint, land use and economic development, new policies and emphasis areas, and equity analysis and regional environmental justice “plus” (REJ+).

Priorities from these areas were also combined with priorities from the previous LRTP (*Mobility 2040 the Update for 2020*) to show progress that has been completed since that Plan and then were filtered into bins of what is completed, in-progress, being monitored, and new. These

were organized by *2050 Connections'* Five Programmatic Areas. Then Mr. Rydant discussed some of the projects that have been completed, currently in progress, being monitored, and new projects. They included TIP projects, bicycle pathway projects, culvert assessments, Safe Routes to School projects, WRTA services, and EV charging infrastructure studies.

Lastly, Mr. Rydant shared that staff will be hosting a Public Hybrid Meeting on May 31st, at 5:00 PM in the Paul Revere Room in Worcester (1 Mercantile Street). This meeting will review all the LRTP's priorities and seek feedback from the public on which are their top priorities. This meeting will officially close the broad-ranging public outreach process used for the compilation of *2050 Connections*.

There were no comments or questions following the presentation.

EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant Presentation

Kevin Krasnecky presented this agenda item. The money for the EPA grant is coming from the Inflation Reduction Act, which was signed by President Biden in 2022. It is a non-competitive grant and there is a total of \$3.6 billion available throughout the country. The CMRPC will receive a total of \$1 million in planning funds over a 4-year period.

The CMRPC will lead this joint effort while working with the CMRPC communities, Montachusett RPC, a couple of towns in the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) planning region, and the Northeast Connecticut Council of Governments (NECCOG). Overall, there are 82 cities and towns involved. A baseline inventory of emissions for all sectors will be developed by CMRPC, MA & CT, and various consultants. There will be several community engagement efforts that will be conducted to develop the needs, strategies, identify vulnerable areas of EJ populations, and formulate potential projects that can be implemented in the region. Additionally, staff will work with the respective MPOs and RTAs to identify potential projects that could help reduce emissions.

There are several documents that staff will be expected to complete while working on the grant over the next four years. There will be a short-term Climate Action Plan, a medium/long-term Climate Action Plan, and a final Status Report which will include what has been achieved, what projects were implemented, and how emissions in the greater region have been reduced.

The CMRPC staff will be submitting the necessary grant application by the end of May and the associated planning process is expected to start in July. In addition, staff will start to look at various community plans to see what work has been previously completed and what projects have been implemented so staff can determine what else still needs to be done. Some of the plans are Municipal Vulnerable Preparedness (MVP) Plans, Hazard Mitigation Plans, and Climate Plans. Additional updates will be provided in the future as staff progress with the work funded by this EPA grant.

Howard Drobner asked if CMRPC has the staff to accomplish this work. Mr. Krasnecky said that other agencies will be involved in the planning work for this grant and CMRPC is the lead agency for this grant.

Staff Updates

Rich Rydant mentioned that the LRTP priorities public meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 31st at 5:00 PM. On Monday, June 5th at 6:00 PM the MassDOT Capital Investment Plan (CIP) virtual public meeting will be held for the Central Massachusetts region. On Tuesday, June 6th at 5:00 PM the Draft FFY 2024 UPWP public meeting will be held virtually. On Thursday, June 8th the 60th CMRPC Annual Meeting will be held at the Southwick Zoo in Mendon. Lastly, the CMMPO will be releasing the Draft LRTP at their June 21st meeting, culminating the year-long development effort.

New Business

There was no new business.

Next Meetings

- CMMPO Meeting – Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at 4:00 PM
- CMMPO Advisory Committee Meeting – June 28, 2023 at 3:00 PM
- CMTPC Meeting – Thursday, June 29, 2023 at 6:00 PM

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Dick Williams and a second from Otto Lies, the members unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:45 PM.