



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Transportation Planning Committee Hybrid meeting held Thursday, December 1, 2022 in-person at the CMRPC Office and also using Zoom.

T-Committee Members Present:

1. Bob Hassinger, Grafton, Committee Chairperson
2. Rick Baker, Boylston
3. Dick Williams, Rutland
4. Otto Lies, Holden
5. Brian Pigeon, Worcester
6. Jeff Howland, New Braintree

CMRPC Staff Present:

1. Rich Rydant
2. Kevin Krasnecky

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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 the October 27, 2022 T-Committee Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the October 27, 2022 meeting were considered for approval. Dick Williams motioned to accept the minutes and was seconded by Jeff Howland. All members voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- **Potential Action Item:** Seeking recommendation concerning CMMPO endorsement of the Proposed Amendment #2 to the 2023 – 2027 Transit project listing.

Kevin Krasnecky presented this agenda item to the members. Proposed Amendment #2 to the FFY 2023-2027 TIP Transit List includes the increased cost of Project #RTD0010843 – Worcester Regional Transit Authority: Buy Replacement 35 FT Bus (8). The Federal funds will increase \$1,200,000 and the State funds (TDC) will increase \$240,000. The updated total project cost is \$5,541,148. Additionally, the project description will change from (8) to (9).

Jeff Howland asked what kind of buses were being purchased. Mr. Krasnecky said they were not electric buses, but likely either hybrid or diesel buses.

On a motion from Jeff Howland and a second from Rick Baker, the members unanimously voted to recommend endorsement of Proposed Amendment #2 to the 2023-2027 TIP Transit project listing.

- **Micro-Projects Update**

Kevin Krasnecky presented this agenda item to the members. As a refresher, the major goals of Micro-Projects are to support access to essential services, access to jobs, education, health services, and healthy foods. Other goals are to create first-and-last mile connections to transit and other modes of transportation as well as to fill the gaps within the transportation network.

Micro-Projects can include several different project types: bikeshare, microtransit, vans/shuttles, and TDM strategies. For bikeshare, this includes capital costs of bikeshare stations and bicycles, docks and related equipment. For microtransit, this includes operating assistance to introduce new services or pilots. In addition, the new service needs to demonstrate an increase in transit ridership and reductions in congestion, emissions, and single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips. For vans/shuttles, this includes the purchasing of new vehicles

and equipment that results in emissions reduction. Other equipment may be eligible if it represents a major upgrade to improve reliability of service. For TDM strategies, this includes guaranteed ride-home programs, capital expenses for new or expanded TDM programs, real-time network information, and the project needs to demonstrate congestion reduction and/or SOV trip reductions.

The timeline for Micro-Projects includes the finalization of applications and comments/edits from MassDOT OTP that happened in November. Sharing the applications with communities and organizations, and a virtual forum about the Micro-Projects Program will be held during December. Presentations to the CMMPO Advisory Committee of potential projects and CMAQ evaluations will occur from January to March while final evaluation and CMMPO endorsement are planned for May and June.

There were no questions about this agenda item.

CMMPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Updates

Rich Rydant presented this agenda item to the members. Staff is continuing to work on the development of the LRTP, *2050 Connections*. For public outreach, there have been dozens of meetings with various stakeholders. The needs gathered from the numerous outreach meetings will be compiled into a list to be featured in the LRTP document. In December, staff will finish up any final initial outreach for the development of the document. In late January, staff will receive the LRTP financial guidance from MassDOT OTP. Staff will also be working on writing the chapters for the document with an expected draft release in June and potential CMMPO endorsement in July.

Staff has received over 200 surveys and will be compiling the results. Recently, staff met with MassDOT OTP, D2 & D3 staff to discuss project priorities and, in addition, staff also met with the Rural Caucus. Further, staff presented the LRTP development process at the 495 MetroWest Partnership's Transportation Committee meeting held yesterday. Staff has also collaborated with MassDOT concerning outreach activities for the state's LRTP, *Beyond Mobility*.

Dick Williams asked if there will be another Rural Caucus meeting. Mr. Rydant was not sure but would inquire. Mr. Williams also commented on Rutland's concerns about the capacity of their sewers.

Age Friendly Update Presentation

For this agenda item, Kevin Krasnecky played a recording about an Age Friendly Update prepared by staff member Faye Rhault. By 2030, 72 million adults across the United States will be age 65 or older. In 2030, the country will be comprised of more older adults than children. In Central Massachusetts, it is projected to come sooner. In response to this projected shift,

the World Health Organization launched the network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities in 2006 as an international effort to promote livable communities through preemptive and adaptive planning strategies, which is administered across the United States through the AARP. An age-friendly community would continue to support older adults even after they are no longer able to care for themselves.

In Central Massachusetts, several communities have already begun taking advantage of this program. The towns of North Brookfield and Barre are currently designated as age friendly communities with AARP-approved Action Plans. Additionally, several communities have received a dementia friendly designation. In March of this year, staff from both the transportation and regional collaboration divisions sought District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) funding to pursue a regional age friendly designation, which was awarded later that month. In April, CMRPC formed an Age Friendly Action Team. The team then released a survey that remained open until late August. During the summer, five Subregional listening sessions were held across the region. As the public engagement phase ended in August, staff began development of the survey summary report, which was released in September. Additionally, the Action Team started to work on the Action Plan, which is projected to be completed sometime in December.

As staff progressed through the initiative, a website was developed, which houses the survey summary report and more information about the program. Next, Ms. Rhault discussed some of the survey results. There were many responses from the City of Worcester while a few communities did not respond. Most respondents were women and Caucasian. Transportation, housing, community & health services, and communication & information seemed to be the most important topics, but the focus on this presentation was transportation. Survey results indicated limited transportation services in rural/suburban communities, limited WRTA service area, the need for on-demand transit services, public infrastructure, and local services. 90% of respondents do not use public transportation and 49% claimed to not have convenient access to information about alternative transportation services. About 50% of respondents claim to walk or rely on a family member for a ride to appointments or activities. Additionally, 51% of respondents identified a desire for a walkable community as a major factor to stay or move to a new residence or community.

The survey results and notes were compiled and analyzed to develop goals and strategies that would be identified throughout the Action Plan. Some of the goals included: expanding transportation services in rural communities, investing in multi-modal infrastructure, supporting older adult transportation services, and coordinating with the WRTA to expand and improve transit access. While the Age Friendly Action Plan will have a standalone document, the findings will also be included in the *Imagine 2050* regional plan and the new LRTP, *2050 Connections*. As the plan is developed and released, staff will be soliciting communities to

adopt the Action Plan. By adopting the plan, communities will be conglomerated into the larger Age Friendly Central Mass Initiative and have access to AARP's suite of resources and funding programs.

There were no questions or comments.

Staff Updates

Rich Rydant noted that staff is conducting an EV survey and was sent to the Town Managers/Administrator in all 40 communities. So far, 14 towns have responded. The deadline for the survey at this point is mid-December. After staff closes the survey, the results will be compiled and analyzed. The survey findings will then be shared at a future meeting.

New Business

There was no new business.

Next Meetings

- CMMPO Meeting – Wednesday, December 21, 2022 at 4:00 PM
- CMMPO Advisory Committee Meeting – Wednesday, January 25, 2023 at 3:00 PM
- CMTPC Meeting – TBD

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Dick Williams and a second from Otto Lies, the members unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:43 PM.