



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Transportation Planning Committee Hybrid meeting held Thursday, January 25, 2024 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
3. Eric Gemperline

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 January 4, 2024 T-Committee Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the January 4, 2024 meeting were considered for approval. Dick Williams motioned to accept the minutes and was seconded by Otto Lies. Members voted to approve the minutes with one abstention from Jeff Howland.

Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

CY 2024 Safety Performance Measures (PM1)

- **Action Item:** Seeking recommendation concerning CMMPO adoption of the State's safety targets.

Eric Gemperline presented this agenda item. Each year MPO's are required to either set their own or adopt the State's safety performance targets and they must be incorporated into the Certification Documents. MassDOT's overarching goal is towards zero deaths. The performance measures are presented in 5-year rolling averages and federal law prohibits States from using increasing targets.

The MassDOT safety targets for CY 2024 are:

- Total fatalities: 377
- Fatality rate per 100 million VMT: 0.61
- Total serious injuries: 2,708
- Serious injury rate: 4.36 per 100 million VMT
- Total combined non-motorist injuries + fatalities: 445

Mr. Gemperline then described MassDOT's methodologies in setting their safety targets for the above categories. Graphics were also displayed showing the historical data and projected targets for the 5-year rolling averages for both the State and CMMPO in each safety category.

Mr. Gemperline explained that while the goal is towards zero deaths and injuries, the State's targets are not "goals" but realistic targets considering the events of the last 3+ years. Mr. Gemperline also noted that the CMMPO must either set their own five quantifiable safety targets or adopt the MassDOT targets by February 29, 2024. These targets must be included in the FFY 2025 to FFY 2029 TIPs.

Otto Lies asked how the projected targets were derived. Mr. Gemperline said MassDOT provides a word document with their targets and methodology describing how the targets were

created. Mr. Gemperline said staff will provide the MassDOT information to all members after the meeting. Jeff Howland asked what the consequences would be if the targets were not met. Mr. Krasnecky said if the targets were not met that more money would have to be allocated towards safety-related projects. Rich Rydant commented that the CMMPO has always adopted MassDOT's safety targets.

On a motion from Jeff Howland and a second from Dick Williams, the members unanimously voted to recommend the adoption of the State's safety targets.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- **Action Item:** Seeking recommendation concerning CMMPO endorsement of the Proposed Amendment #3 to the 2024-2028 TIP Highway & Transit Project Listings.

Kevin Krasnecky presented this item. Proposed Amendment #3 included several changes to FFY 2024 of the FFY 2024 to FFY 2028 TIP Highway and Transit Lists.

The changes to the Highway List are:

- Worcester #610535 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements on Pleasant Street: REMOVE PROJECT
- Charlton-Oxford #602659 – Reconstruction on Route 20, from Richardson's Corner Easterly to Route 12, Includes Rehab of C-06-023 and Replacement of O-06-002: Reduce statewide CMAQ funding to \$123,655. Reduce statewide HSIP funding to \$0. Reduce statewide NHPP funding to \$7,956,218. Reduce statewide STBG funding to \$0.

The changes to the Transit List are:

- WRTA011658 – Shrewsbury: Town of Shrewsbury – CTGP Shrewsbury Operating: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$25,000.
- WRTA011661 – Holden: WRTA-Holden to Worcester Extended Service: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$20,000.
- WRTA011686 – Town of Rutland – Rutland Extended Transportation: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$75,477.
- WRTA011687 – WRTA – SCM Elderbus – READYBUS Service: ADD PROJECT. \$70,000.
- WRTA011688 – WRTA – SCM Elderbus Midday Shuttle: ADD PROJECT. Total cost of \$34,000.

Dick Williams asked if the Rutland project is for the elderly. Mr. Krasnecky said that a van was donated to the town and the project is to operate the service.

On a motion from Dick Williams and a second from Jeff Howland, the members unanimously voted to recommend endorsement of Proposed Amendment #3 to the 2024-2028 TIP Highway & Transit project listings.

➤ FFY 2025 Micro-Projects Update

Rich Rydant presented this agenda item. Mr. Rydant summarized Worcester's Micro-Project proposal presentation that was given by staff from the city's Transportation & Mobility Department at the CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting. The project was for \$35,000 and would include the purchase of 10 4-Hoop Racks on Rails & Delineators, 42 New Post & Hitch Racks, and 30 Post & Hitch Meter Retrofit Racks. The bike parking goals for this project are in line with Worcester's Complete Streets Policy, Green Worcester Plan, and Mobility Action Plan. Other project goals are encouraging mode shift, supporting everyday trips, providing safe and secure places for people to park their bikes, and to support business and economic development. Mr. Rydant also noted that this project has been the only one submitted thus far for FFY 2025 funding. (The deadline for submittals to be considered for this year's Micro-Projects program is **2/21/24.**)

There were no comments or questions.

➤ FFY 2029 TIP Candidate Project Presentations Summary

Kevin Krasnecky presented this agenda item. Mr. Krasnecky summarized all four project presentations that were given by their respective proponents at the January 17th CMMPO meeting. The following are the details of the four candidate projects:

Rutland #613655 – Intersection Improvements at Route 122 and Pleasantdale Road: Existing issues at this intersection include speed, safety, and prior identity as a High Crash location from 2017-2019. Route 122 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) is 5,917 and the roadway also provides an important connection to Worcester. The scope of the project is to construct a roundabout at the intersection, but other alternatives will also be considered. Improved bike accommodation and upgraded signage and pavement markings will also be incorporated. The project is currently at the Pre-25% design stage and survey work is being done. Required environmental permits and ROW acquisitions or easements are being determined. Utility relocations will be required, and the current cost estimate of the project is \$3,013,900. Dick Williams asked if all the utility poles will be moved as they are blocking motorist sight lines. Mr. Krasnecky said it was not known at this time as the project is in the preliminary design stage.

West Brookfield #612779 – Resurfacing & Related Work on Route 9 (Phase 3): The entire Route 9 reconstruction project is 4.3 miles. Phase 3 is 1.6 miles and includes resurfacing and related work. Roadway width varies between 24' to 26' and the 85th percentile vehicle speeds are 45 MPH. Existing issues include safety for all users, pavement conditions, and drainage issues. Safety concerns include snow and ice, shoulder width/visibility, truck traffic, speeding,

signage/pavement markings, and bicycle and pedestrians. The proposed new roadway section includes two 12' travel lanes and two 5' shoulders to accommodate bicycle/pedestrians. There is also the Lamberton Brook culvert that would need to be improved. The project is currently at the Pre-25% design stage and the 25% design is anticipated to be submitted in the Fall of 2024. Survey work and data collection is ongoing, and the consultant-estimated project cost is \$14,000,000.

Westborough #613242 – Roadway Improvements on Route 30 (East Main Street): The goals of the proposed project are to improve traffic safety, improve bicycle/pedestrian safety, fill multimodal connectivity gaps, improve existing shared-use path crossings, improve congestion, and promote economic development through improved walkability and bikeability. Next steps for the project are to perform a topographic survey, conduct an evaluation of the Flanders Road intersection, conduct local community outreach, and complete the pre-25% design submission.

Worcester #613648 – Intersection Improvements at Lake Avenue and Bigelow Davis Parkway: The goal of this proposed project is to improve traffic control at the intersection in order to reduce speeding, improve safety, and create better multi-modal access for all with a particular focus on vulnerable roadway users. Existing conditions include a significant amount of daily traffic, minor approach “Stop” sign control, non-compliant ADA ramps and sidewalks. The intersection is a Top 5% HSIP Crash Cluster and has lengthy pedestrian crossing distances. Other problems include speeding, inadequate bike/micro-mobility facilities, multiple conflict points, and lack of gaps & long queues for turning traffic. The project includes traffic control through a traffic signal or a roundabout; a reduced footprint intersection with shorter crosswalks; right sized travel lanes to manage speeds; separated/protected bicycle lanes; and widened sidewalks/improved streetscape. Project planning and design is expected to be completed by the city in the 2024-2025 timeframe.

Staff Updates

Rich Rydant provided updates on various federal grants. The staff is collaborating with Southbridge and Worcester on the RAISE grant. Also, the City of Gardner has reached out to CMRPC to assist with their RAISE grant application. The EPA’s Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) continues to be worked on by CMRPC staff. Details about the CPRG will be presented at the CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting in February. There is also a Mass Trails grant that is now open and the deadline is February 1st. Further, MassDOT’s Innovation Conference will be at the DCU Center on April 30th and May 1st and early registration is now open.

New Business

There was no new business.

Next Meetings

- CMMPO Meeting – Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 4:00 PM
- CMMPO Advisory Committee Meeting – February 28, 2024 at 3:00 PM
- CMTPC Meeting – Thursday, February 29, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Adjournment

Upon a motion by Jeff Howland and a second from Dick Williams, the members unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:50 PM.