



## CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The minutes of the CMMPO Advisory Committee held **March, 27, 2024**. This meeting was held virtually through Zoom.

### **CMMPO Advisory Committee Members Present:**

- Adam Menard - Chair, Town of Auburn
- Chris Payant – Co-Chair, Town of Westborough
- Connor McCormack – Town of Millbury
- Sandy Amoakohene – Worcester Division of Public Health
- Claudia Pavia – WSU Center for Civic Engagement
- Caleigh McLaren – Blackstone Watershed Collaborative
- Sarah Bradbury – MassDOT District 3
- Daryl Amaral – MassDOT District 2
- Joanne Clarke – AARP
- Ben Breger – MassDOT District 2 (Alt)
- Alex Salcedo - MassBike
- Thomas Coyne – WRTA

### **Ex-Officio Members Present:**

- Chris Klem – MassDOT OTP
- Joshua Barber – FHWA

### **CMRPC Staff Present:**

- Yahaira Graxirena
- Sujatha Krishnan
- Kevin Krasnecky
- Eric Gemperline
- Rich Rydant
- Rob Raymond

- Nathan Lewis
- Tyler Distefano

Guests:

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## **Agenda Item #1 – Around the Room Introductions**

Chairperson Adam Menard opened the meeting at 3:05 PM. A roll call of CMMPO Advisory members was announced, followed by the rest of the attendees.

## **Agenda Item #2 – Approval of February 28, 2024, meeting minutes**

Minutes for February 28, 2024, CMMPO Advisory meeting were considered for approval. Mr. Menard entertains a motion to approve the February 28, 2024, meeting minutes. Mr. Coyne makes a motion to approve. The motion is seconded by Mr. Payant. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval.

## **Agenda Item #3 – 2024 – 2028 Transportation Improvement Program**

- **Action Item:** Amendment #5 to the 2024-2028 TIP Highway Project Listing 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Kevin Krasnecky presented this item. Proposed Amendment #5 included two changes to FFY 2024 of the highway list and one change to FFY 2024 of the transit list of the FFY 2024 to FFY 2028 TIP Highway and Transit Lists.

The Highway changes are:

1. #612098 Upton/Grafton, Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 140
  - a. Increase cost of project from \$5,000,000 to \$5,817,840. An increase of \$717,840.
2. #609528 Grafton, Millbury Street Improvements (SRTS)
  - a. Increase cost of project from \$1,931,230 to \$3,177,661. An increase of \$1,246,431.

The Transit change is:

1. Add Project: WRTA011811 – Worcester Regional Transit Authority, Buy Replacement Van (7) to FFY 2024
  - a. \$202,068 will be funded by 5307 and \$40,413 will be funded by Toll Development Credits (TDC).

Ms. Clarke asks about the cost increase for the Route 140 resurfacing project and if it was just normal costs. Mr. Krasnecky responds to the increase in items because of comments of 75% review and adjustment of unit prices for materials. Mr. Menard asks for a motion; Mr. McCormack makes the motion. Mr. Payant seconds the motion. The motion passes unanimously.

- **ACTION ITEM:** Seeking recommendation to the CMMPO concerning Draft Options for the 2029 TIP Highway Target Projects

Kevin Krasnecky presented this item.

Staff developed 2025 – 2029 Highway Listing for TIP two options developed two options for MPO members for draft 2025-2029 TIP. CMMPO decided on an option and the staff is looking for a recommendation going forward.

In 2027, Option A includes the funding of “PRC#612011 - Worcester Chandler Street (Phase II): PM Score 17” while Option B does not. In both options Route 9 resurfacing in East Brookfield and Spencer is put off.

In 2028, it is the reverse of 2027 with Option A no longer including “PRC#612011 - Worcester Chandler Street (Phase II): PM Score 17” and would be programmed under Option B in 2028.

In 2029, both options remained the same. Staff is looking for a recommendation to the MPO. Staff prefer Option A.

Mr. Barber from FHWA ask for pros and cons for Option A and Option B. Mr. Krasnecky replies that the only difference between the two options is that Chandler Street being programmed in one year (Option A, preferred) or being programmed in two years (Option B). Mr. Krasnecky also mentions that the City of Worcester preferred Option A.

Mr. Barber asks about excess funding and if there are any projects that could be listed or if they are for a project overrun. Mr. Krasnecky responds that it is a combination of both. Mr. Barber asks about the Option B splitting and the reasoning, Mr. Krasnecky responds that originally it was not able to be funded in one period, however funding became open. Ms. Krishnan adds that the City of Worcester is working on the design for the complete corridor and would prefer to do the improvements as one project.

Mr. Payant asks if remaining funding is tied to individual years, which Mr. Krasnecky responds to affirmatively. Mr. Klem praises Mr. Krasnecky for the good job in running the TIP and the remaining funds may be used to in the case of cost overruns.

Chairperson Menard asks for a motion to recommend Option A. Mr. Payant makes the motion to suggest option A. Mr. McCormack seconds the motion. The vote was unanimous.

- Review of FFY 2025 to FFY 2029 Statewide Highway and Transit Project Listing

Mr. Krasnecky presented this item. A brief review of the projects that are on the draft FFY 2025 to FFY 2029 Transit Project Listing was provided.

Ms. Clarke asks about paratransit and if there will be funding for paratransit. Mr. Coyne responds that paratransit is an operating assistance and covered. Vehicles are usually from grants through MassDOT. Ms. Clarke asks about driver training and Mr. Coyne mentioned that it is also covered in the operating assistance. Mr. Barber asks if the difference in cost will be made up in future years. Mr. Krasnecky responds yes that programs funds are seen for that year. There were no more questions.

## **Agenda Item #4 – FFY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

- Budget and Major Task Listing

Sujatha Krishnan presented this item. Ms. Krishnan provided a brief review of the FFY 2025 UPWP budget and major task listing. The differences between FFY 2024 & FFY 2025 include a decrease in Task 2.3 (Community & Regional Technical Assistance) and the addition of Task 2.5 (Housing, Economic Development and Transportation Planning). Ms. Amoakohene asks if the decrease in assistance will affect how CMRPC will work, Ms. Krishnan does not believe anything will be taken away and it is more of a book-keeping maneuvering. Ms. Krishnan also mentioned the hiring of a staff engineer to assist communities.

Other changes included additional funds to Task 3.7 (LRTP Implementation) and Task 4.2 (funding coming from WRTA). In total, the budget for the FFY 2025 UPWP increased by 5% to \$1,593,595. After reviewing the budget, Ms. Krishnan reviewed the different tasks that staff anticipated to work on during FFY 2025.

Ms. Krishnan highlights some of the work done by staff, noting that community technical assistance and data collection have really expanded over the years into robust programs for the commission.

Ms. Clarke asks about safety, in which Ms. Krishnan responds with work being done for safe streets for all and it will be inline with vision zero. Ms. Clarke asks about working with councils on aging to increase paratransit services. Ms. Krishnan responds that staff works closely with both COAs and the WRTA to help provide services.

There were no further questions.

## **Agenda Item #5 – CMRPC Active Transportation Overview**

Yahaira Graxirena presented this item. Ms. Graxirena provided a review of the staff's work regarding Active Transportation. Active Transportation includes walking, biking, trails, transit, and micromobility. Staff have completed work with Complete Streets, sidewalk condition data analysis, bicycle rack inventories, regional bicycle & pedestrian plan studies (these will be updated), bicycle compatibility index, bikesharing studies, walk audits, trail work (data mapping, grant support, community engagement, and more), various initiatives like the E-Bike Program, mobility hubs, and placemaking efforts in Worcester.

Ms. Clarke mentions that CMRPC should monitor social media to gather feedback and input. Ms. Clarke also added that trails in Worcester are disconnected and asks about future walk audits. Ms. Paiva and Ms. Amoakohene add that they do not know of any new walk audits. Ms. Graxirena says that staff will continue to promote trails in the region.

## **Agenda Item #6 – Staff Updates**

- CMMPO Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan

Tyler Distefano presented this item.

The CMMPO develops the Coordinated Human Service Transportation (HST) Plan every 5 years and the plan guides federal funding relating to Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 “Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and People with Disabilities”. The HST Plan should improve regional transportation and address the needs of diverse groups while soliciting input from the community and stakeholders. The HST Plan includes an Available Service Assessment, Transport Needs Assessment, Strategies and Opportunities, and Priorities for Implementation. The timeline for the HST is from 2024 to 2029 and will help in preparation for the FY 2040 LRTP update. Funding sources and community stories were then provided.

Ms. Graxirena announced that the following grants, DER grant for culverts (April 12 deadline), Mass Clean Energy Center for Accelerating Clean Transportation for All (May 31 deadline), and a federal active transportation infrastructure investment program grant (June 17 deadline).

## **Agenda Item #7 – New Business**

Ms. Graxirena mentions the City of Worcester Division of Public Health was awarded the Golden Shoe Award from WalkMassachusetts and wanted to acknowledge Ms. Amoakohene’s work.

## **Agenda Item #9 – Next Meeting**

April 24, 2024, at 3 PM

## **Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment**

At 4:35 PM Mr. Menard entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Payant made the motion and was seconded by Mr. McCormack. The group voted unanimously to adjourn.

Meeting minutes prepared: Eric Gemperline, AICP, Transportation Associate Planner