



## CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) meeting held **Wednesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025**. This meeting was held virtually using Zoom Webinar.

- **CMMPO Members Present:**

1. Steve Woelfel – MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, designee to MassDOT Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt
2. Ann Sullivan – MassDOT Highway Division District #3, designee to MassDOT Highway Division Administrator Jonathon Gulliver
3. Joshua Rickman – WRTA Administrator
4. Bob Hassinger – designee to CMRPC Commission Chair
5. Betsy Goodrich – designee to City Manager Eric Batista
6. Michelle Conlin – Shrewsbury, Northeast Subregion Representative
7. Jesse Limanek – Sutton, Southeast Subregion Representative
8. Brad Kadelski – Brookfield, West Subregion Alternate

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

1. Derek Shooster, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
2. Joshua Barber, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

- **Guests:**

1. Robin Grimm, Sturbridge
2. Heather Blakeley, Sturbridge
3. Debra Bolz
4. John Jovan, Southbridge
5. Jean Bubon, Sturbridge
6. Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District #3
7. Brian Le
8. Doug Johnson, MassDOT
9. Daryl Amaral, MassDOT District #2
10. Steven Tyler, HSH
11. Eleanor

12. Michael Trepanier, MassDOT

- **CMRPC Staff**

1. Sujatha Krishnan, Deputy Director – Transportation
2. Kevin Krasnecky, Project Manager – Transportation
3. Rich Rydant, Director of MPO Activities – Transportation
4. Zack Blais, Principal Planner – Transportation
5. Yahaira Graxirena, Project Manager – Transportation
6. Sandy Amoakohene, Principal Planner – Transportation

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**Agenda Item #1 – Introductions**

CMMPO Chair Steve Woelfel opened the meeting at 4:02 PM. A roll call of CMMPO members was announced.

**Agenda Item #2 – Approval of December 18, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Bob Hassinger made a motion and was seconded by Betsy Goodrich to approve the December 18, 2024 meeting minutes. All members present voted unanimously to approve the December 18, 2024 meeting minutes.

Steve Woelfel – Yes  
Ann Sullivan – Yes  
Josh Rickman – Yes  
Bob Hassinger – Yes

Betsy Goodrich – Yes  
Michelle Conlin – Yes  
Jesse Limanek – Yes  
Brad Kadelski – Yes

**Agenda Item #3 – Opportunity for Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

**Agenda Item #4 – Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

**FFY 2030 Presentations by Project Proponents**

- *#613875: Auburn/Worcester – Route 20 Improvements*

Ann Sullivan presented this project. The project limits are from just east of Commerce Drive in Auburn to just west of the Greenwood Street intersection in Worcester. The project intent is to improve bicycle and pedestrian accommodations to provide safe multimodal access between the housing and commercial sites on Route 20. The project will include the construction of a shared use path and a sidewalk along Route 20; it will reallocate the existing cross-section with some widening; it may necessitate the construction of retaining walls and modifications to the existing bridge cross-section; it will improve pavement makings and signage; and it will strive to minimize impacts to driveways and parking areas of the abutting businesses.

The project is at pre-25% design stage. A design consultant will be assigned soon, and a survey will be conducted. Required environmental permits and ROW acquisition/easements are not yet determined and utility relocations will likely be required. The current cost estimate is \$6,527,690.

Michele Conlin asked if the project would connect to the infrastructure on the side roads. Ms. Sullivan said that it would.

- *#613873: Sturbridge – Route 20 Improvements*

Ann Sullivan presented this project. The project limits are from just east of Hall Road to before the I-84 ramps. There was a 2017-2019 HSIP crash cluster in the project area and recent commercial growth in the area has increased the number of left-hand turns, increasing the potential for serious crashes. The long-term goal of this District is to median divide Route 20 to provide strategic locations for vehicles to reverse locations, therefore this project could

potentially include a roundabout at Hall Road to allow vehicles to reverse direction without having to make left turn maneuvers. Potential safety improvements to access properties east of Hall Road will be investigated.

The project is at pre-25% design stage. A design consultant will be assigned soon, and a survey will begin. The required design requirements and ROW acquisition/easements are being determined, and some utility relocations will likely be required. The current cost estimate is \$6,579,155.

Robin Grimm, Sturbridge Town Administrator, noted the town's support of the proposed project. Brad Kadelski asked if there was a concern for the roundabout related to traffic impacts. Ms. Sullivan said the roundabout would be designed for the current needs of the corridor.

- *#613261: Worcester – Lincoln Street Transit Infrastructure Improvements*

Doug Johnson presented this project. The project limits are from Burncoat Street to Catherine Street. The project goal is to improve transit service reliability and user experience, ADA compliance, and provide bicycle facilities along the project limits. Three WRTA bus routes utilize the corridor, and experience delays due to congestion in the PM peak. Bus stop spacing and locations are not ideal, and many locations lack amenities, signage, or roadway striping. The roadway also lacks marked crossings at several intersections and at bus stops and also lacks bicycle facilities.

In addition, the corridor contains a Top 200 Crash Cluster and a Top 5% Intersection Crash Cluster for crash years 2017-2020 (statewide), a Top 5% Bicycle Crash Cluster for 2010-2019 (statewide), and three locations that are Top 5% MPO Crash Locations for Fatal and Serious Injuries.

The proposed work will include transit signal priority, reconstruction of bus stops and amenities, repair sidewalks, construct ADA compliant curb ramps, and new bicycle facilities. Existing curb to curb widths will be retained where possible and new pavement markings and signage will be included. The pre-25% design process will evaluate cross-section alternatives and potential parking impacts.

The project is at pre-25% design state. A design consultant has been assigned and is currently developing a Scope and Fee proposal for design services. The required environmental permits and ROW acquisition/easements are being determined, and utility relocations may be required. The current cost estimate is \$3,335,000.

Josh Rickman, WRTA, commented on his support for the Lincoln Street project. Joshua Barber, FHWA, asked what the long-term vision was for the corridor. Mr. Johnson said that there is not a long-term vision yet and MassDOT is trying to limit the project area and the improvements.

#### **Agenda Item #5 – Presentation on CY 2025 Safety Performance Measures (PM1)**

Kevin Krasnecky presented this agenda item. Safety Performance Measures (PM1) requires annual coordination of target setting with MPOs. MPOs must establish their own set of performance targets each year or adopt the state's performance targets (for the entire Commonwealth) and the performance

targets must be incorporated into the Certification Documents. Regarding PM1, MassDOT's goal is towards zero deaths. The Performance Measures are presented in 5 year rolling averages, and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) requires the targets to demonstrate constant or improved performance. Additionally, MassDOT also developed a 2023-2027 projection to forecast current trends further into the future.

For CY25, the five statewide (MassDOT) safety targets are:

- Total Fatalities: 365
- Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT: 0.58
- Total Serious Injuries: 2,622
- Serious Injury Rate per 100 Million VMT: 4.17
- Total Combined Non-Motorist Injuries + Fatalities: 497

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

For a comparison the CY25 CMMPO safety targets are:

- Total Fatalities: 38
- Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT: 0.67
- Total Serious Injuries: 279
- Serious Injury Rate per 100 Million VMT: 4.82
- Total Combined Non-Motorist Injuries + Fatalities: 38

The state targets are realistic targets, and short incremental steps must be taken to achieve the Commonwealth's goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries. The CMMPO must set their own safety targets or adopt the MassDOT safety targets by February 28, 2025. The safety targets must also be included in the FFY 2026 to FFY 2030 TIPs.

There were no comments or questions following the presentation.

#### **Agenda Item #6 – CMRPC Priorities for the Massachusetts Statewide Resilience Improvement Plan (RIP)**

- **Potential Action:** Concurrence of CMRPC Priorities

Zack Blais provided a summary presentation of the FHWA's Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Grant Program and noted that as part of these efforts, a listing of priorities has been made.

The PROTECT Grant Program aims to strengthen surface transportation projects to be more resilient to natural hazards (i.e., flooding). Within the program there are two different grant types: Planning Grants and Resilience Grants. Planning Grants include resilience planning, the development of Resilience Improvement Plans (RIPs), pre-design and design activities, capacity building, and evacuation planning and preparation. Resilience Grants include resilience improvements to existing surface transportation infrastructure (i.e., elevating bridges,

improving drainage), improvements to evacuation routes or adding capacity, and improving coastal infrastructure. For the FY24-FY25 funding period there is about \$500 million available.

Thus far, CMRPC staff have combed through existing plans, like Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) plans, to identify hazard locations throughout the region. Using GIS, staff created maps and added prioritization layers (i.e., flood zones, evacuation routes, environmental justice) to “tier” locations. Locations that were within more priority areas fit into higher “tiers”, helping staff to prioritize locations for potential grant project ideas.

In addition, MassDOT are working on a Statewide RIP and solicited transportation resilience projects from MPOs to include in their RIP. These projects would be included on a “regionally-endorsed” list in the plan. The listing of hazard locations that staff came up with was sent to MassDOT for their consideration to be included in their RIP.

Regarding the development of the PROTECT Grant, the next steps for staff are to conduct additional analysis on the “tiered” locations and work on an application to seek PROTECT grant funds for assessment and design on at least one location. The deadline for the PROTECT Grant is February 24, 2025.

Joshua Barber asked about the tiering of locations and if “Tier 1” meant that the location is more vulnerable or critical. CMRPC staff replied that yes, “Tier 1” meant that either the location is more vulnerable or critical than the other tiers.

Following the presentation, all members present concurred with the priority listing sent to MassDOT for its inclusion in their Statewide RIP.

There were no other comments or questions.

#### **Agenda Item #7 – Staff Updates**

- Legislative Affairs Breakfast

CMRPC staff announced that the Legislative Affairs Breakfast will be taking place on January 17, 2025, at the Charlton Public Library.

- MARPA/MassDOT Meeting

CMRPC staff announced that the MARPA/MassDOT Meeting will be held on January 23, 2025. Funding guidance for the UPWP and TIP will be provided.

#### **Agenda Item #8 – New Business**

There was no relevant new business that was discussed.

#### **Agenda Item #9 – Next Meetings**

- CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting (virtual) – Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at 3:00 PM
- CMMPO Committee meeting (virtual) – Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 4:00 PM

#### **Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment**

Betsy Goodrich made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Josh Rickman. The meeting concluded at 4:50 PM.

*Meeting Minutes prepared by: Zack Blais, Transportation Principal Planner*