



## **CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting held **January 22nd, 2025**. The hybrid meeting was held virtually through Zoom.

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

- Adam Menard – Town of Auburn
- Connor McCormack – Town of Millbury
- Chris Payant – Town of Westborough
- Matt Benoit – Town of Douglas
- Alex Salcedo – MassBike
- Karin Valentine-Goins – Walk/Bike Worcester
- Joanne Clark – AARP
- Robert Bilotta - CLW
- Feanna Jatta-Singh – NAACP, MAWOC
- Liz Myska – Visions Consulting L3C
- Sarah Bradbury – MassDOT District 3
- Daryl Amaral – MassDOT District 2

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

- N/A

### **CMRPC Staff Present:**

- Sujatha Krishnan
- Rich Rydant
- Kevin Krasnecky
- Yahaira Graxirena
- Jeff Howland

- Adam Wriggins

**Guest:**

- Jenny Gingras
- Kristen Belanger
- Doug Johnson
- Betsy Goodrich
- Jake Dorick

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

Chair Adam Menard opened the meeting at 3:03 PM. A roll-call of the CMMPO Advisory members was announced, followed by the rest of the attendees.

## **Agenda Item #2 – Approval of January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, Meeting Minutes**

Minutes for the January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, CMMPO Advisory meeting were considered for approval. Chair Menard entertains a motion to approve the January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, meeting minutes. Mr. Payant makes a motion to approve. The motion is seconded by Mr. McCormack. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval with Karin Valentine-Goins Abstaining.

## **Agenda Item #3 – 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program**

Mr. Krasnecky provided an overview of the Proposed Amendment #3 to the 2025 – 2029 TIP Transit Listing being released for public review and comment that was presented at the MPO with 3 changes:

### **Cost increase of Project RTD0010857 – WRTA – Purchase Support Equipment for Fixed Route and Demand Response.**

5307 funding would increase by \$4 Million, from \$1,771,900 to \$5,771,900 and Toll Development Credit (TDC) funding would increase \$800,000, from \$200,000 to \$1,000,000.

- Funding increase is used to purchase charging equipment and switchgear for the 7 battery-electric buses that are incoming to the WRTA sometime this

calendar year and also for the systemwide CAD/AVL replacement project that will upgrade all existing ITS hardware on all WRTA vehicles.

**Cost increase of Project RTD0010863 – WRTA – Renovations and Maintenance to WRTA Hub.**

5307 funding would increase by \$800,000, from \$20,000 to \$820,000. Toll Development Credits (TDC) would also be added in the amount of \$160,000.

- Funding increase is used to fund the renovation of the WRTA Hub Lobby. The project is nearing 90% design completion, with construction scheduled to take place later this calendar year.

**Cost increase of Project RTD011648 – WRTA – Engineering and Design of WRTA Facilities.**

5307 funding would increase by \$200,000, from \$80,000 to \$280,000. Toll Development Credits (TDC) would also be added in the amount of \$40,000.

- Funding increases are used for OPM services related to both the Hub Lobby Renovation and BeB infrastructure improvements at the M&O.

Fianna Jatta-Singh asked if there would be any indoor seating for passengers.

Kevin is unaware of the exact details of the WRTA Hub change, and Kevin said that they will reach out to the WRTA staff to find the answer.

Liz Myska asked about the consultation process for people with disabilities in the design of the facilities, specifically whether they were consulted and, if not, if they would have an opportunity to do so.

Sujatha mentioned that there is representation from the disability community on the WRTA Advisory Board and they were part of the entire process. But CMRPC will confirm that with the WRTA.

Liz mentions that she is the Vice Chair of the Accessibility Advisory Commission for the City of Worcester, and they have not yet presented it to them with the design.

Chair Menard motioned to recommend approval of these changes to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Conor McCormack moved, and Chris Payant seconded. The motion passed unanimously, with Liz Myska abstaining.

## **Agenda Item #4 – 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

### **FFY 2026 TIP MicroProjects**

#### Westborough Bicycle Parking

Kristen Belanger presented the Westborough Bicycle Parking project, explaining that TIP funding will be used to install bicycle parking in two areas within the town. She outlined the project's goals:

- Encouraging residents to make short everyday trips using their bikes, resulting in reduced parking congestion and improved air quality through reduced emissions.
- Provide a safe and secure parking location for travel to work, school, recreation, downtown, and shopping.
- Create visibility within the community that highlights the efforts being made to improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure.

Kristen then presented data supporting the project, referencing various town plans, including the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, Master Plan, Climate Action Plan, Downtown Development Plan, BWALT Multi-Use Trail Development, and Branding/Wayfinding initiatives.

The town discussed potential locations for bicycle parking. Existing bike parking is currently available at the Library and Bay State Green Area. The newly selected locations are:

1. North of Route 9 - a high-recreation area that includes a town beach, recreational facilities, a dog park, land trust areas, baseball fields, and approximately 700 units of elderly housing.
2. South of Route 9 (Downtown Area) - Close to key community destinations such as the high school, library, town hall, retail stores, food pantry, medical facilities, Roche Bros. grocery store, Post 22 Training Center for adults with disabilities, community center, and senior center.

The project focuses on locations where a 3-mile distance is considered too far to walk but not far enough to require a car. Kristen presented a map illustrating a 3-mile radius from each proposed location, covering nearly all Westborough residents.

The funding request for the project is \$15,165.20, a portion of which is an \$8,600 in-kind contribution from the Department of Public Works (DPW) for installation and materials. The project will add:

- 7 circular racks on Main Street
- 13 inverted U-racks at other locations
- 40 new bicycle parking spots in total.

#### Millbury Transit Access Enhancements

Conor McCormack presented the WRTA Bus Stop Enhancements project for Downtown Millbury at the Main St & Elm St bus stop. The location previously had a bus shelter, but it was removed a few years ago. The project aims to improve amenities for bus riders by installing:

- A cloth awning attached to the Millbury Housing Authority building to provide shelter from the elements.
- A bench for rider comfort.
- A bus stop sign to increase ridership and awareness of the service.

Joanne Clark asked about the type of awning being installed, specifically whether it would be cloth or plastic. Conor clarified that it will be a cloth awning, designed to be non-permeable to rain, offering sufficient weather protection. Joanne expressed concerns about durability. Conor noted that the awning shown in the provided photo has lasted over a decade, suggesting it has a reasonable lifespan.

Karin Valentine Goins asked if a bus shelter was considered. Conor explained that a shelter previously existed but was removed due to conflicts with the intake vent on the Housing Authority building. The awning was chosen as a compromise solution.

Joanne recommended adding side partitions for additional weather protection. Conor said he would look into this option. Robert Bilotta inquired about the possibility of a windscreen. Conor stated that it is something they can explore further.

## **FFY 2030 New Project Presentation**

### **613311: Worcester – Millbury Street: Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements**

Kevin Krasnecky presented Project #613311, a MassDOT-led initiative focused on bicycle and pedestrian improvements along Millbury Street in Worcester. The project extends 1.1 miles from Millbury and Harding Street to Millbury and Vernon Street, just before the pedestrian bridge crossing Route 146.

**Project Needs & Justification:** Using a data-driven approach, this segment of Millbury Street has been identified as being in the top 5% statewide for bicycle and pedestrian improvements based on:

- High potential for biking and walking
- Significant bicycle and pedestrian safety risks

#### **Existing Issues:**

- WRTA bus stops lack amenities, signage, and roadway striping.
- Some curb ramps are not ADA-compliant.
- Several intersections and bus stops lacked marked crossings.
- No dedicated bicycle facilities currently exist.

#### **Regional Significance:**

The project enhances pedestrian and bus stop accommodations along the southwest border of Vernon Hill, a REJ+ Community (Racial and Economic Justice). It also improves connectivity across Route 146 to key destinations, including:

- The Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center
- Middle River Park
- College of the Holy Cross and its recreational areas
- Blackstone River Bikeway
- Walmart shopping area

#### **Project Scope**

- Bus stop reconstruction and amenities
- Sidewalk repairs and ADA-compliant curb ramps
- New bicycle facilities

- Retaining curb-to-curb widths, except where expansions are needed for bus stops and buffered bike lanes
- Pavement markings and signage
- Evaluation of speed limits & traffic calming measures in the 25% design process.

#### Project Status & Next Steps:

- Design Stage: 25% complete
- Consultant: The Engineering Corporation (TEC)
- Survey: completed
- Right-of-Way (ROW): Acquisitions & easements still being determined
- Utility Relocations: Minimal; only a few light poles affected
- Estimated Cost: \$3,475,000.

#### Discussion:

Feanna Jattan-Singh added a comment saying that the community would greatly improve from this project. Joanne pointed out that people are still upset about Mill Street, and that MassDOT should consider gathering more public input on this section. Karin Valentine Goins reacted saying that this project seems to already be done without any community input. Sujatha stepped in to explain that MassDOT will continue to get community input and that there may be a little confusion as Millbury Street was at one point thought to be MassDOT owned, but it turns out it is Worcester-owned.

Feanna Jattan-Singh asked if there be any bicycle parking added. Kevin added that he does not think so, just bike lanes and pedestrian accommodations.

Robert Bilotta added that this is excellent and will really help connect the corridors.

## 2026 – 2030 TIP Readiness Day Updates

Kevin Krasnecky presented the FFY 2026 to FFY 2030 TIP Readiness Day updates, these included the following projects:

#### FFY 2025

- **608961 – Worcester – Intersection Improvements on Chandler St. and May St.**
  - Still at 25% design. 75% design is due soon.

- Design not progressing quickly enough to address the ROW concerns before the end of FFY 2025
- City must resolve the drainage design
- Recommended pushing back to FFY 2026
- **610769 – Sutton – Superstructure Replacement, Manchaug Rd. over Rumford River**
  - Still at 25% design, 75% design due in April
  - The current schedule shows a May 2026 Advertisement date.
  - Recommended pushing back to FFY 2026
- **612195 – Worcester – Superstructure Replacement, I-290 over East Central St.**
  - Still at 25% design, 75% design due in April
  - The current schedule shows a January 2026 Advertisement date
  - Recommended pushing back to FFY 2026

#### FFY 2026

- **611933 – Sturbridge – Roundabout Construction at Route 20 and Route 131**
  - Pre-25% design, 25% design due July 2025
  - ROW submission needed
  - Potential Chapter 91 permitting needed for Cedar Pond impacts
  - Recommended pushing back to FFY 2027
- **612084 – Barre – Bridge Replacement, Old Coldbrook Rd. over Prince River**
  - Pre-25% design, 25% design due June 2025
  - The current schedule shows the March 2027 Advertisement date
  - Still need ROW plan and potential A97
  - Will likely need wetlands permits
  - Recommended pushing back to FFY 2027
- **612092 – Uxbridge – Bridge Replacement, Homeward Ave. over PW Railroad**
  - Still need ROW and updated schedule submission
  - Recommended pushing back to FFY 2027
- **609186 – Dudley - Bridge Replacement, Route 131 over Quinebaug River**
  - Delays with preliminary design, 25% design due April 2025
  - Still need ROW submission
  - Will likely need environmental permits
  - Recommended pushing back to FFY 2027
- **612893 – Sturbridge – Improvements at Burgess Elementary School (SRTS)**
  - Pre-25% design



- Determining impacts of boardwalk and environmental impacts
- Potential re-scoping or revisiting appropriateness for SRTS funding
- Designer to investigate other alternatives further
- Recommendation to push back to an unknown year at this time

#### FFY 2027

- **608990 – Worcester – Intersection Improvements on Chandler St., from Main St. to Park Ave.**
  - Combined back into one project with 612011
  - Pre-25% design, 25% design due March 2025
  - Still on track for FFY 2027
  - Likely to be AC'd due to high cost
- **611967 – Sturbridge/Charlton – Intersection Improvements on Route 49 at Putnam Rd., Walker Pond Rd. and Route 20**
  - Pre-25% design, 25% design due March 2025
  - Updated project schedule needed
  - Recommended pushing back to FFY 2028
- **613367 – Westborough – Fisher St. Improvements (SRTS)**
  - Pre-25% design, 25% design due March 2025
  - Current design schedule shows FFY 2028 Advertisement date
  - Recommended pushing back to FFY 2028

#### FFY 2029

- **608490 – Upton – Resurfacing and Related work on Route 140 and Roundabout Construction at Route 140, Church St. and Grove St.**
  - Pre-25 design, 75% design due February 2025
  - The project could potentially be moved up to FFY 2028

Joanne asked what impact the 1–2-year pushback has on residents. Kevin responded and mentioned that construction will not begin until the pushback date so the residents will not be impacted till then.

## **FFY 2030 TIP Potential Candidate Project – Performance Management Scoring Review**

Kevin Krasnecky presented the FFY 2030 TIP Potential Candidate Project – Performance Management and Scoring Review, which includes the following:

- #613875: Auburn/Worcester – Improvements on Route 20 (Washington Street), from 1000 FT east of Commerce Drive to the Auburn/Worcester TL, \$6,512,940
- #613873: Sturbridge – Improvements on Route 20 (Charlton Road), from 1,000 FT east of Hall Road to East of the I-84 Ramps, \$6,559,461
- #613261: Worcester – Lincoln Street Transit Infrastructure Improvements, \$3,335,000.
- #613311: Worcester – Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements on Millbury Street, \$3,322,634

The projects were scored on performance management

- 1<sup>st</sup> Category Safety (PM1): Objective: Reduce the number and rate of fatal and serious injury crashes in the region and move towards zero deaths.
  - Project will help reduce all types of crashes (1pt)
    - All 4 projects received a point
  - Project roadway has an identified HSIP crash cluster (1pt)
    - Worcester – Lincoln Street
- State of Good Repair (PM2): Objective: Maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair.
  - Project is improving roadway pavement (1pt), or project is improving roadway pavement in poor condition (2pts)
    - All 4 projects received a point
  - Project is rehabilitating or replacing a bridge (1pt), or Project is rehabilitating or replacing multiple bridges (2pts)
    - No projects received points
- Congestion (PM3): Objective: Achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the national highway system.
  - Project is improving an existing signalized intersection, installing a new signalized control or roundabout, or adding ITS (1pt)
    - Sturbridge – Route 20
    - Worcester – Lincoln Street
  - Project roadway is considered unreliable (1pt)
    - No projects received points
  - Project is potentially eligible for CMAQ funding (reducing emissions) (1pt)
    - All 4 projects received a point

- Project is along an established primary freight route (1pt) or Project is on a primary freight route and reducing average freight delay (2pts).
  - Auburn/Worcester – Route 20 (1pt)
  - Sturbridge – Route 20 (1pt)
- Security: Objective: Enhance the transportation security coordination and preparedness regionwide.
  - Project roadway is a primary established evacuation route (1pt)
    - Auburn/Worcester – Route 20
    - Sturbridge – Route 20
  - Project roadway is listed in the town’s Hazard Mitigation/MVP Plan as a potential hazardous location (1pt)
    - Worcester – Millbury Street
- Multimodality Objective: Improve and/or expand transportation accessibility for all modes (bicycle, pedestrian, transit) in the region.
  - Project is improving existing or building new sidewalks (1pt)
    - All 4 projects received a point.
  - Project is improving existing or building new ADA ramps (1pt)
    - All 4 projects received a point
  - Project is increasing bike lane mileage or infrastructure (1pt)
    - All 4 projects received a point
  - Project is improving accessibility to fixed route transit (1pt)
    - Worcester – Lincoln Street
    - Worcester – Millbury Street
  - Project roadway is included in the community’s approved Complete Streets prioritization plan (1pt)
    - Sturbridge - Route 20
    - Worcester – Lincoln Street
    - Worcester – Millbury Street
- Sustainability: Objective: Avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects.
  - Project is within a Priority Development Area (PDA) (1pt)
    - Sturbridge – Route 20

- Worcester – Lincoln Street
  - Worcester – Millbury Street
- Project includes extensive environmental mitigation work (1pt)
  - No projects received points
- Equity: Objective: Assure that improvements are fairly distributed among populations, towns, and subregions.
  - Project is within an identified Regional Environmental Justice Plus (REJ+) community (1pt)
    - Worcester – Lincoln Street
    - Worcester – Millbury Street
  - Project is within a community that is below the average per capita of distributed TIP target funds (1pt)
    - Auburn/Worcester – Route 20
    - Worcester – Lincoln Street
    - Worcester – Millbury Street.
- Economic: Objective: Improve the accessibility to jobs in the region.
  - Project improves mobility in an area that is losing job access between the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 55<sup>th</sup> percentile of other areas in the region (1pt) or improves mobility in an area that is losing job access greater than the 66<sup>th</sup> percentile (2pts)
    - Auburn/Worcester – Route 20 (2pts)
    - Worcester – Lincoln Street (2pts)
    - Worcester – Lincoln Street (2pts)
- Stormwater Management: Objective: Create a transportation network that is resilient to the impacts of stormwater.
  - Project is improving stormwater infrastructure (i.e. – drainage, culverts) (1pt) or project is improving stormwater infrastructure within an identified 100- or 500-year flood zone (2pts)
    - Auburn/Worcester – Route 20 (1pt)
    - Sturbridge – Route 20 (2pts)
- Travel and Tourism: Objective: Enhance the region’s travel and tourism opportunities.
  - Project is improving the mobility to/from tourist attractions/recreations areas (1pt)
    - Worcester – Millbury Street

- Scoring Results
  - Worcester – Lincoln Street – 15
  - Worcester – Millbury Street – 15
  - Sturbridge – Route 20 – 13
  - Auburn/Worcester – Route 20 – 12

Discussion:

Feanna Jattan Singh added that she agrees with the chart. Robert Bilotta mentioned that he would recommend Lincoln Street the most because there are a fair number of pedestrian accidents on the street itself, and it is a heavily foot-trafficked area. Joanne added: There's a hospital, churches, and a school on Lincoln Street, so it is very congested. Karin Valentine Goins added their support for the Lincoln Street project.

Adam Menard added that Route 20 has a lot of development, so if those projects don't receive funding this time around, he hopes the next one will.

Action Item:

Feanna Jattan Singh motioned for the current scoring rank of Lincoln Street #1, Millbury Street #2, Sturbridge Route 20, and Auburn/Worcester Route 20 combined as #3. Robert Bilotta seconded. The scoring review was approved unanimously.

## **FFY 2030 TIP Potential Candidate Project – Performance Management Scoring Review**

### **Agenda Item #5 – TIP/UPWP Guidance Summary**

Sujatha Krishnan presented a guidance summary based on input from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and MassDOT. Key points included:

- Alignment with State Initiatives: Ensuring CMRPC's work connects with ongoing state-level projects.
- Integration with Community Master Plans: Incorporating local master plans into CMRPC's work program.
- Statewide Plan Incorporation: Including elements from Beyond Mobility, the Freight Plan, and the Bike & Pedestrian Plan into regional planning efforts.

- Housing & Transportation Coordination: Examining housing and transportation together through Access to Regional Housing Study, with an RFP expected in the coming weeks.
- Federal Certification Recommendations:
  - De-obligating funds as required.
  - Ensuring discretionary grants and non-state projects are included in TIP documents.
- Financials for the 2030 TIP:
  - Projected a 2% increase in funding from federal and state sources.
  - The Livability budget increased from \$76,689 to \$89,080.
  - Complete Streets budget reduction from \$40,000 to \$27,609.

There were no questions following the presentation.

#### **Agenda Item #6 – Staff Updates**

Sujatha Krishnan provided an update on the PROTECT grant, noting that CMRPC identified two bridge structures in Northbridge for funding due to their nearly 100% design completion. However, federal and state partners have informed CMRPC that the grant is currently on hold, which has paused progress on the project.

Yahaira presented an update on MetroMobility, a software company specializing in bike-sharing solutions. They applied for a MassCEC grant to support transit connections with e-bikes and were awarded funding by MassCeC. The program will launch in Worcester, specifically near Union Station. An initial meeting was held with city officials to identify locations that best connect to transit.

The request for proposals (RFP) for the Vernon Street Project was released on January 31<sup>st</sup>. An initial meeting was held with interested parties, and the proposal submission deadline is this upcoming Friday. Following submission, the Steering Committee and CMRPC will conduct interviews to evaluate and rank consultants.

There were no questions regarding these updates.

#### **Agenda Item #7 New Business**

A public meeting will be held to discuss TIP Amendment #3.

#### **Agenda Item #8 Next Meetings**

Adam Menard announced the schedule for the next meeting:

- CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting (virtual) – Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025: 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM
- CMMPO Meeting – Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 4:00PM

**Agenda Item #9 – Adjournment**

At 4:20 PM Chair Menard called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Payant made the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Valentine Goins. The group voted unanimously to adjourn.

Meeting minutes prepared: Nathan Lewis, Public Outreach Coordinator

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