



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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

CMMPO Advisory Committee Members Present:

- Conor McCormack – Town of Millbury
- Chris Payant – Town of Westborough
- Alex Salcedo – MassBike
- Erin Quael – Worcester Department of Public Health
- Joanne Clarke – AARP
- Claudia Oliviera De Peiva - Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center
- Caleigh McClaren - Blackstone Watershed Collaborative
- Robert Bilotta – Center for Living and Working
- Feanna Jattan Singh - MAWOCC
- Anya Wilczynski - Blackstone Heritage Corridor
- Sarah Bradbury – MassDOT District 3
- Daryl Amaral – MassDOT District 2

Ex-Officio Members Present:

- N/A

CMRPC Staff Present:

- Nathan Lewis
- Kevin Krasnecky
- Yahaira Graxirena
- Adam Wriggins
- Jordan Hollinger

- Sandy Amoakohene
- Jeff Howland

Guest:

- N/A

Agenda Item #1 – Around the Room Introductions

Co-chair Chris Payant opened the meeting at 3:01 PM. A roll-call of the CMMPO Advisory members was announced, followed by the rest of the attendees.

Agenda Item #2 – Approval of May 28th, 2025, Meeting Minutes

Minutes for May 28th, 2025, CMMPO Advisory meeting were considered for approval. Co-chair Payant entertains a motion to approve May 28th, 2025, meeting minutes. Conor McCormack makes a motion to approve. The motion is seconded by Alex Salcedo. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval.

Agenda Item #3 – CMMPO Microprojects

CMRPC staff, Yahaira Graxirena, presented this item. The presentation provided a brief review of the MicroProjects funding application touching what is a microproject, funded projects, guiding questions, findings, recommendations, and next steps.

Microprojects are low-cost projects that address regional and local priorities such as first/last mile options, connectivity gaps, and transit access. These projects help maximize the CMMPO's impact in the region and create geographic equity. Microprojects have been programmed on the TIP every year since FY2024. The CMMO allocates up to \$400k for these types of projects.

Some funded projects include an accessible hybrid van (\$75,000), Transit promotion (\$20,000), Bicycle Parking (\$60,000), and Transit Access Enhancements (\$6,000). The funding sources come from a multitude of places including CMAQ, TAP (STBG Set-Aside), HSIP, Safe Routes to School, Shared Streets & Spaces (MassDOT), and FTA 5307/5339 Flex funds.

The criteria for evaluation:

- Strategic alignment
- Fairness and Inclusion
- Project readiness

- Financial leverage
- Competitiveness
- Administrative efficiencies
- Long term impact
- Governance and accountability
- Data, metrics, and performance
- Innovation

The limitations include:

- Funding source restriction – CMAQ only
- Limited project types
- Air quality data requirements – Burden
- No scoring or public evaluation matrix
- No design readiness or clear technical assistance relationship
- No mechanism to track post-installation success.
- Program operates somewhat standalone from broader MPO initiatives (safety, equity, Complete Streets).

Recommendations include

- Diversify funding base by creating a funding crosswalk that matches project type, funding source, and eligibility.
- Add a “Complete Streets / Safety & Accessibility” category that can include quick-build safety projects, pilot-level placemaking or demonstrations, or school-area crosswalk and sidewalk infill projects.
- MPO staff will explicitly mention that they will calculate the CMAQ benefit behind the scenes rather than making proponents do it.
- Publish a weighted evaluation matrix (e.g., 25% air-quality, 20% equity, 20% readiness, 15% partnership, 10% innovation, 10% cost-effectiveness).
- Identify opportunities through the UPWP for Planning-to-Conceptual Design tasks.
- Strengthen the relationship with the MPO’s Access & Mobility Framework and align with LRTP performance measures.
- Request a post-project report, photo audit, or community impacts narrative.

Following the presentation, Ms. Clarke asked whether funds are still available. Ms. Graxirena confirmed that funding remains, noting that the MPO allocates \$400,000 annually and does not impose minimum or maximum award amounts. Ms. Clarke also asked about a pediatric walk audit, and Ms. Graxirena clarified that such a project would be funded through the UPWP.

Mr. Payant asked what happens to unspent funds. Mr. Krasnecky explained that remaining funds are used to increase project spending within the same fiscal year.

There were no further questions or comments.

Agenda Item #4 – Preliminary Findings from the Housing and Transportation Study

CMRPC staff, Jordan Hollinger, presented this item. The presentation provided a brief review of the project’s purpose, objectives, and preliminary findings thus far.

The purpose of the study is to provide a strong framework of data to address housing and transportation challenges, and support coordinated planning efforts across municipalities. The study will analyze existing housing and transportation conditions, identify regional housing challenges and barriers to development, assess the intersection of housing and transportation affordability, conduct a housing development suitability analysis, develop regional housing and transportation strategies, and create a toolkit for municipalities.

Key findings thus far have found that the region’s growth has been uneven, with faster growth in the east and slower growth and decline in the west. It has also been found that the region is home to fewer families with children and more small households and seniors. In addition to this, region is also experiencing a range of changing demographics, which may increase the need for a different mix of housing types and sizes. Housing affordability is also a very clear issue, as it has become much less affordable than it was 5-10 years ago. As this impacts all residents, market pressures put the most vulnerable populations at risk of displacement. Moreover, transportation also impacts the region. As access to cars is generally required in the CMRPC region, transportation costs tend to escalate the cost of household expenses, especially for those without alternatives to cars.

Moving forward, this study will look deeper into these initial considerations and develop a suitability analysis that considers land factors (areas eligible for development), accessibility factors (high access areas), and development and cost factors (lower-cost areas).

Following the presentation, Joanne Clarke mentioned there needs to be housing for the LGBTQ+ community.

There were no further comments or questions.

Agenda Item #5 – 2025 CMMPO Regional Bicycle Plan

CMRPC staff, Adam Wriggins, presented this item. The presentation provided a brief review of the bicycle plan, its goals, tasks, community engagement, analysis, and results.

The goals of the 2025 Bicycle Plan are to continue the development of a safe regional bicycle network that encourages mode shift; identify a prioritized list of potential improvements; and support member communities in the implementation of bicycle projects while addressing connectivity gaps in the regional network.

Key tasks of the Bicycle Plan included outreach and community engagement; data collection, assembly, and analysis (i.e. Bicycle Level of Traffic Street (LTS) from MassDOT); an Access to Destinations Analysis; and a Safety Analysis.

Mr. Wriggins presented several maps that displayed Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress, the results of the Access to Destinations Analysis, priority locations, and the off-road regional network (i.e. shared-use paths).

There were no further comments or questions.

Agenda Item #6 – Next Meeting Date

CMRPC staff, Nathan Lewis mentioned since the following November and December meetings will fall on the holidays, CMRPC decided it is best to combine the November and December meetings. CMRPC staff, Nathan Lewis, will reach out to the committee recommending a different date in early December.

There were no comments or questions.

Agenda Item #8 Staff Updates

- Safe Streets for All

Ms. Graxirena updated the group about the SS4A grant. The project has kicked off with Beta Group being chosen as the consultant. Crash data is currently being assembled and analyzed, and a public engagement process is also being developed. A demonstration project will be done on Beacon Street in Worcester, and it is currently being designed. Updates will be made for the group at future meetings.

- Vernon Street / I-290 Interchange

Yahaira Graxirena updated the group about the Vernon Connected Transportation Study. The consultant is currently examining the Existing Conditions and working on community engagement, such as, popups, workshops, and coffee hours. A future update will come regarding the vision of the corridor as part of the project with feedback from community engagement.

Agenda Item #9 Next Meetings

Co-chair Payant announced the schedule for the next meeting:

- CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting (virtual) - TBD
- CMMPO Meeting (virtual) – Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 4:00 PM

Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment

At 4:30 PM Co-chair Payant called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. McCormack made the motion, which Ms. Salcedo seconded. The group voted unanimously to adjourn.

Meeting minutes prepared: Nathan Lewis, Public Outreach Coordinator

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