



## **CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CMMPO)**

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) meeting, on **Wednesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026**. This meeting was held virtually using Zoom Webinar.

- **CMMPO Members Present:**

1. Derek Shooster – MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, designee to MassDOT Interim Secretary Phillip Eng
2. Ann Sullivan – MassDOT Highway Division District #3, designee to MassDOT Highway Division Administrator Jonathon Gulliver
3. Josh 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. Jared Grigg – Spencer, West Subregion Representative

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

1. Miranda Briseno – MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning

- **Guests:**

1. Daryl Amaral – MassDOT D2
2. Sarah Bradbury – MassDOT D3
3. Peg Dean – Southbridge

- **CMRPC Staff**

1. Sujatha Krishnan, Deputy Director – Transportation
2. Kevin Krasnecky, Manager, Transportation Improvement Program – Transportation
3. Zack Blais, Principal Planner, Environmental Planning – Transportation

4. Rich Rydant, Director, MPO Activities – Transportation
5. Yahaira Graxirena, Director, Access and Mobility – Transportation
6. Sandy Amoakohene, Principal Planner, Multimodal – Transportation
7. Ethan Melad, Principal Planner, Regional Services – Regional Services

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**Agenda Item #1 – Introductions**

CMMPO Chair Derek Shooster opened the meeting at 4:00 PM. A roll call of CMMPO members was announced.

**Agenda Item #2 – Approval of March 18, 2026, Meeting Minutes**

Bob Hassinger made a motion and was seconded by Josh Rickman to approve March 18, 2026, meeting minutes. The members present voted to approve of the March 18, 2026, meeting minutes.

Derek Shooster – Yes	Betsy Goodrich – Yes
Ann Sullivan – Yes	Michelle Conlin – Abstain
Josh Rickman – Yes	Jesse Limanek – Yes
Bob Hassinger – Yes	Jared Grigg – Yes

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

There were no comments from the public at this meeting.

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

- **Potential Action:** Approval of the Holden Project (612190) Changes for Amendment #4 to the FFY 2026-2030 TIP Highway Project Listing

Kevin Krasnecky presented this item. Mr. Krasnecky noted that since the last CMMPO meeting, MassDOT decided to use Fair Share funding for the Holden TIP Project (612190), which is non-federal aid and this project would be removed from the TIP as there are no federal funds. However, Derek Shooster informed staff prior to the meeting that the cost increase that was originally released for comment will stay the same and Fair Share funding will not be used.

- 612190 – Holden – Bridge Replacement, H-18-004, Salisbury Street over G&W Railroad: In FFY 2026, the total project cost is being increased from \$6,897,436 to \$8,825,098, which is an increase of \$1,927,662.

Derek Shooster added other details regarding the reasoning Fair Share funding will not be used and the original cost increase will stay the same.

There were no further comments or questions.

Jared Grigg made a motion and was seconded by Bob Hassinger to approve the Holden Project Changes for Amendment #4 to the FFY 2026-2030 TIP Highway Project Listing. All members voted unanimously to approve the Proposed Amendment #4.

Derek Shooster – Yes	Betsy Goodrich – Yes
Ann Sullivan – Yes	Michelle Conlin – Yes
Josh Rickman – Yes	Jesse Limanek – Yes
Bob Hassinger – Yes	Jared Grigg – Yes

- **Potential Action:** Approval of Proposed Amendment #5 to the FFY 2026-2030 TIP Highway Project Listing

Kevin Krasnecky presented this item. Proposed Amendment #5 includes two changes to the following projects:

- *610825 – Shrewsbury/Northborough – Rehabilitation and Box Widening on Route 20, from Route 9 to South Street*
  - In FFY 2026 - \$8.5 million will be added to target funding and \$359,840 in Earmark funding will be added under Section 1B (Earmark of Discretionary Grant Funded Projects).
  - In FFY 2029 – funding will be reduced from \$9,729,166 to \$6,158,947.
  - In FFY 2030 – the \$2,929,694 in funding will be removed
  - The updated Total Project Cost is \$49,235,394.
  - **MassDOT Comments: A new earmark amount was added to the project in the amount of \$1,062,500. The new earmark and the originally repurposed earmark are now reflected in FFY 2026 for \$1,422,340. The NHPP funding in FFY 2029 was reduced to \$5,096,447.**
- *610769 – Sutton – Superstructure Replacement, S-33-002, Manchaug Road over Mumford River*
  - Removed from FFY 2026 and reprogrammed in FFY 2028 on the new FFY 2027-2031 TIP.

Mr. Krasnecky noted that during the comment period staff received comments from MassDOT saying a new earmark was added to the project in the amount of \$1,062,500 and the same amount was being reduced from NHPP funding in FFY 2029.

There were no comments or questions regarding these changes.

Jared Grigg made a motion and was seconded by Ann Sullivan to approve the Proposed Amendment #5 to the FFY 2026-2030 TIP Highway Project Listing. All members voted unanimously to approve the Proposed Amendment #5.

Derek Shooster – Yes  
 Ann Sullivan – Yes  
 Josh Rickman – Yes  
 Bob Hassinger – Yes

Betsy Goodrich – Yes  
 Michelle Conlin – Yes  
 Jesse Limanek – Yes  
 Jared Grigg – Yes

- **Administrative Modification:** Community Transit Grant Awards added to FFY 2026 of the FFY 2026-2030 TIP Transit Listing

Kevin Krasnecky presented this item. Four Community Transit Grant Awards will be added to FFY 2026 of the FFY 2026-2030 TIP Transit Listing, including:

- *Project WRTA012227 – Buy Replacement Vans (4) Type E*
  - Total Project Cost - \$486,864

- \$384,636 is 5310 funding
- \$102,228 is GOBOND funding
- *Project WRTA012248 – Operating Assistance for ADA Holden Transportation*
  - Total Project Cost - \$16,000
    - \$8,000 is 5310 funding
    - \$8,000 is local match (SCA) funding
- *Project WRTA012249 – Operating Assistance for SCM Elderbus ReadyBus*
  - Total Project Cost - \$103,117
    - \$60,000 is 5310 funding
    - \$43,117 is local match (SCA) funding
- *Project WRTA012250 - Operating Assistance for ReadyBus midday service*
  - Total Project Cost - \$50,000
    - \$25,000 is 5310 funding
    - \$25,000 is local match (SCA) funding

Mr. Krasnecky noted that the addition of the Community Transit Grant Awards does not required any action by the CMMPO as there was already a line item in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for the grant funding awards.

There were no comments or questions.

- **Potential Action:** Release Draft FFY 2027-2031 TIP for 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period

Kevin Krasnecky presented this item. Both the FFY 2027-2031 TIP Highway Project Listing and Transit Project Listing were reviewed for the attendees. Mr. Krasnecky also noted that staff compile a TIP document and Technical Appendix which contain additional TIP-related information. The draft documents are located on the CMRPC website.

There were no comments or questions.

Jared Grigg made a motion and was seconded by Bob Hassinger to release the Draft FFY 2027-2031 TIP for 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period. All members voted unanimously to release the Draft FFY 2027-2031 TIP for 21-Day Public Review and Comment Period.

Derek Shooster – Yes  
 Ann Sullivan – Yes  
 Josh Rickman – Yes  
 Bob Hassinger – Yes

Betsy Goodrich – Yes  
 Michelle Conlin – Yes  
 Jesse Limanek – Yes  
 Jared Grigg – Yes

**Agenda Item #5 – FFY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

- **Potential Action:** Approval of Proposed Amendment #1 to the FFY 2026 UPWP

Sujatha Krishnan presented this item. The Proposed Amendment #1 to the FFY 2026 UPWP includes the two following updates:

- *Element 7.0 Regional Housing Study* – reallocates unexpended FY 2025 contract balances to the FFY 2026 UPWP for the Regional Housing Study, reflecting updated personnel and consultant cost allocations without changing the approved scope of work.
  - Total funds added to Element 7.0 - \$14,260.98
- *Element 8.0 Vernon Street over I-290 Project* – reallocates unexpended FY 2025 contract balances to the FFY 2026 UPWP to support continued personnel and consultant activities for the Vernon Street over I-290 project, aligning funding levels with ongoing project needs without changing the approved scope of work.
  - Total funds added to Element 8.0 - \$317,087.46

There were no comments or questions.

Jared Grigg made a motion and was seconded by Ann Sullivan to approve the Proposed Amendment #1 to the FFY 2026 UPWP. All members voted unanimously to approve the Proposed Amendment #1 to the FFY 2026 UPWP.

Derek Shooster – Yes  
 Ann Sullivan – Yes  
 Josh Rickman – Yes  
 Bob Hassinger – Yes

Betsy Goodrich – Yes  
 Michelle Conlin – Yes  
 Jesse Limanek – Yes  
 Jared Grigg – Yes

**Agenda Item #6 – Age Friendly Updates Presentation**

Sandy Amoakohene and Ethan Melad presented this item.

As part of the 2023 Age Friendly Action Plan, status updates are to be provided every year. First, the status of 5 of the 8 domains of livability focus were reviewed, which include:

- Transportation – CHNA9 Transportation Study is underway and a Transportation Management Agency (TMA) was formed; CMRPC funded TriValley to provide long-haul transportation for medical appointments in Charlton, Douglas, Upton, and other communities; lastly, the WRTA provides Travel Training at Senior Centers for older adults.
- Housing – CMRPC is currently working on a Housing and Transportation Study; Worcester has a property tax abatement for low-income adults; and CMRPC is pursuing funding with partners for a HomeShare program that matches older adult homeowners with graduate student renters.
- Community and Health Services – Community health workers are employed by public health entities in Charlton, South Central Mass, and the Blackstone Valley; outreach events to connect older adults to services were organized by various organizations; abs the Worcester Senior Center hosted a behavioral health group for men 65+ and cultural affinity groups.
- Communication and Information – Digital Equity Plans produced for Worcester, Millbury, Brookfield region, and Charlton; Digital Equity Trainings have been held in Worcester; and

CMRPC developed a best practices guide for local cultural councils and provided guidelines for working with older adults.

- Regional Services

Second, the Discovering the Happy Factor Report was reviewed. It is community-based; focused on social connection, volunteerism, civic engagement, and creating a sense of well-being for older adults; and funded through the Massachusetts Community Health and Healthy Aging Fund.

Goals of the report include identifying root causes of loneliness and barriers to civic engagement; identifying characteristics of community involvement that bring happiness and sense of belonging to senior adults; 1 on 1 interviews with Central Massachusetts residents age 65+; creating mixed-media materials for municipal leads on strategies to engage older adults and barriers to social connection; increasing meaningful volunteerism and engagement in civic capacities for older adults; and improving quality of life for older adults, migrating poor health outcomes caused by social isolation and/or loneliness.

Key insights from the interviews revealed:

- People wanted to feel useful and connected.
- Volunteering often improves sense of purpose.
- Committee service can feel confusing or unwelcoming without guidance.
- Meetings need to be accessible.
- People respond positively to being asked directly to serve.
- Local communication and publicity is key.

Report recommendations included advertising and marketing, leveraging career and personal strengths, and optimizing board make-ups for recruiting members. For retaining members there should be trainings, meeting basic needs for participation, and member recognition and success planning.

Next steps include engagement with regional COAs, town administrations, public resources to distribute and present the video and awarding mini-grants to support local efforts that address barriers to civic participation.

After the presentation, there were multiple questions from a few of the CMMPO members.

**Agenda Item #7 – Staff Updates**

- *50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CMMPO*: Rich Rydant announced the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CMMPO and provided an overview of its history.
- *Vernon Connected*: Yahaira Graxirena updated the group about recent and planned upcoming Vernon Connected events over the next couple of months.
- *SS4A*: Sujatha Krishnan updated the group about recent SS4A project updates, including staff one on one meetings with communities and discussing the data and receiving feedback. The demonstration project is currently being reviewed by MEPA. The draft report is planned for November or December.

- *Housing and Transportation Study*: Sujatha Krishnan updated the group that the consultant for the study has recently shared 20+ strategies for the plan and the suitability analysis was completed. A presentation is planned for the CMMPO with draft recommendations in the coming months.

**Agenda Item #8 – New Business**

Derek Shooster informed the group that the MassDOT Innovation Conference is planned for May 5<sup>th</sup> and May 6<sup>th</sup> at the DCU Center in Worcester.

**Agenda Item # 9 – Next Meetings**

- CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting (virtual) – April 22, 2026 at 3:00 PM
- CMMPO Committee meeting (virtual) – May 20, 2026 at 4:00 PM

**Agenda Item #10 – Adjournment**

Jared Grigg made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Michelle Conlin. The meeting concluded at 5:16 PM.

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