CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CMMPO)

The minutes of the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO) meeting, on **Wednesday, October 21st, 2026**. This meeting was held virtually using Zoom Webinar.

- **CMMPO Members Present:**
  1. David Mohler – 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. Stephen Rolle – designee to City Manager Eric Batista
  6. Michelle Conlin – Shrewsbury, Northeast Subregion Representative
  7. Victoria Duckworth – Grafton, Southeast Subregion Representative
  8. John Eul – Oxford, Southwest Subregion Representative
  9. Jared Grigg – Spencer, West Subregion Representative
  10. Leah Whiteman – Rutland, North Subregion Alternate
- **CMMPO Ex-Officio Members Present:**
  1. Samantha Silverberg – MassDOT Undersecretary of Transportation Policy
  2. Miranda Briseno – MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
- **Guests:**
  1. Alan Gordon, Worcester Resident
  2. Daryl Amaral, MassDOT District 2
  3. Austin Pszenny, BETA Group
  4. Bill McGrath, BETA Group

5. Briette Brightman, Worcester Resident
6. Robert A. Bilotta, Worcester City Councilor
7. Chris Starczewski - Dudley, Southwest Subregion Alternate
8. Etel Haxhiaj, Worcester Resident
9. Eric Stratton, Worcester Resident
10. Gregory Waters, Worcester Resident
11. Jaklyn Centracchio, BETA Group
12. Karin Valentine Goins, Walk Bike Worcester
13. Matteo Oliveri Kuhnle, Worcester State University Student
14. Oliver Chadwick, Worcester Resident
15. Peg Dean, Southbridge
16. Raymond Kopacko – Warren, West Subregion Alternate
17. Maureen Dwinnell – Upton, Southeast Subregion Alternate
18. Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3
19. T. Beauregard
20. Todd Kirrane, City of Worcester
21. Brennan Carney, WalkMassachusetts

- **CMRPC Staff**
  1. Janet Pierce – Executive Director
  2. Sujatha Krishnan, Deputy Director – Transportation
  3. Kevin Krasnecky, Manager, Transportation Improvement Program – Transportation
  4. Rich Rydant, Director, MPO Activities – Transportation
  5. Zack Blais, Principal Planner, Environmental Planning – Transportation
  6. Yahaira Graxirena, Director, Access and Mobility - Transportation

The CMMPO fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. The CMMPO does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, English proficiency, income, religious creed, ancestry, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, military service, or gender identity or expression. Any person who believes himself/herself or any specific class of people has been subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI or related statutes or regulations may, himself/herself or via a representative, file a complaint with the CMMPO. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 calendar days after the date on which the person believes the discrimination occurred. Contact the CMMPO Title VI Coordinator at (508) 459-3313 or

titleVIcoordinator@cmrpc.org, to obtain a copy of the CMMPO Complaint Procedure and forms, or visit http://cmrpc.org/title-vi-policy to review online.

Agenda Item #1 – Introductions

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

Agenda Item #2 – Remarks from MassDOT Undersecretary Samantha Silverberg

Undersecretary Silverberg welcomed current and new CMMPO members, CMRPC staff and municipal partners, and shared the following highlights for Central Massachusetts:

- The Healey-Driscoll administration's $20.7 billion five-year capital investment plan, including over $108 million in federal funds to upgrade the 53-mile Worcester–Springfield "Inland Route" rail corridor, and an additional $130 million in federal funding for track reconfiguration near Springfield's Union Station, with construction expected in 2027.
- Continued progress on the $466 million I-495/I-90 interchange overhaul, now the largest active project in the Commonwealth.
- Route 20 Corridor Improvements in Shrewsbury and Northborough: an additional $10 million secured through the August redistribution process, with construction bids to open at the end of the month. She noted a recent fatal crash on Route 20 and the importance of the project. Route 20 reconstruction in Charlton and Oxford was delivered 11 months early and is a finalist for an AASHTO national transportation award.
- Safe Routes to School improvements in Sturbridge (Burgess Elementary) and Westborough (Fisher Street for Armstrong and Gibbons schools).
- Regarding the Reconnecting Communities Program, MassDOT continues its partnership with the City of Worcester and CMRPC on the Vernon Street/I-290 study.
- Increased investment in regional transit authorities, including Transit Connectivity Grant support for the MWRTA 495 Connector, and fare-free service that has helped WRTA ridership approach 5 million trips annually.
- A recent roundtable was held in Ware on the Quaboag Connector and the potential of microtransit to fill service gaps.
- Undersecretary Silverberg closed by noting that MPO decisions matter and that she welcomes feedback and opportunities to work together.

There were no comments or questions.

Agenda Item #3 – Approval of July 15, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Bob Hassinger made a motion and was seconded by Michelle Conlin to approve July 15, 2026, meeting minutes. All members present voted unanimously to approve of the July 15, 2026, meeting minutes.

David Mohler – Yes
Ann Sullivan – Yes
Josh Rickman – Yes
Bob Hassinger – Yes
Stephen Rolle – Yes
Michelle Conlin – Yes
Victoria Duckworth – Yes
John Eul – Yes
Jared Grigg – Yes
Leah Whiteman - Yes

Agenda Item #4 – Opportunity for Public Comment

Numerous public comments were made regarding the TIP Project #608961 – Worcester – Intersection Improvements on Chandler Street and May Street. A summary of the public comments is included below. Additionally, a copy of the three comment letters that were provided to the CMMPO members prior to the meeting can be found at the end of the meeting minutes.

1. **Brennan Carney, Walk Massachusetts -** Voiced support for the project. Also, Walk Massachusetts has collaborated with Worcester residents, City staff, and CMRPC, on walk audits, including a safety walk of the project area with 50+ attendees this year. The project will help people cross safely and slow speeding drivers and urged the MPO to keep it on schedule so more projects can move through the TIP.

2. **Gregory Waters, Worcester Resident –** Mr. Waters said he is speaking on behalf of neighbors and residents who oppose the project and referred to the letter he provided to the CMMPO. The letter cited a petition asking that the $10.1 million in TIP funding be returned to the CMMPO, with 1,451 signatures as of that morning (1,289 on paper and 162 online), mostly from Worcester's West Side. Mr. Watters noted that roughly 50 people in opposition as well as about 50 people in support of the project attended last week's public meeting. At the it was stated that the city reported that the existing remedial measures helped cut crashes by about 50%, which he argued makes the cost less justifiable, and suggested traffic cameras as a cheaper alternative. Asked the MPO to withdraw the funding and redistribute it, ideally to unfunded Worcester projects.

3. **Karin Valentine Goins, Worcester Resident –** Voiced her support for the project and described personal experiences at the crosswalk in the project area and stated that measures already installed affected crashes but not speeds. Asserted that the opposition spread misinformation and that some petition signers were misled, including a Columbus Park neighborhood association leader who asked to have her name removed. Ms. Goins also stated she heard that the opponents declined an offer to meet with City administration about the project. Said speakers favored the project about 2 to 1 at the public meeting.

4. **Robert Bilotta, Worcester City Councilor, District 2 -** As a wheelchair user, described difficult crossings where drivers go around vehicles stopped for pedestrians. Mr. Bilotta reported receiving dozens of emails in support and fewer in opposition to the project. He also asked whether there could be a discussion of how TIP funds are used and noted other District 2 needs (Belmont Street; Lake Avenue at Hamilton Street).

5. **Alan Gordon, Worcester Resident –** Mr. Gordon said he submitted a 9-page letter of opposition and a 23-page study by Andy Singer on roundabouts and asked members to read them. Mr. Gordon Argued that the design in a high-density pedestrian area (about 5,700 Worcester State students, two elementary schools, and two senior living complexes) risks increasing pedestrian crashes. Mr. Gordon also stated that a roughly $9 million aqueduct project must precede construction, so $10.1 million would not be needed this fiscal year. Lastly, Mr. Gordon asked the CMMPO to defund the project and reallocate the money.

6. **Eric Stratton, Worcester Resident -** Stated that safety affects everyone who uses the road, not only abutters. Mr. Stratten praised the City's presentation at the recent public meeting and characterized opposition arguments as selective in their use of data. Also, he voiced support for the project called the project a practical long-term investment for pedestrians, seniors, and families near the schools.
7. **Oliver Chadwick, Worcester Resident -** Stated that opposition claims were inaccurate. He has been advocating for bicycle and pedestrian safety for years. Noted that the opposition website has changed since signatures were collected. The opposition talks about the aqueduct work which is needed and should be coordinated with the project. Mr. Chadwick talked about the roundabout safety (citing about 80% fewer vehicle crashes, plus raised crosswalks, bulb-outs, and RRFBs).
8. **Etel Haxhiaj, former District 5 City Councilor -** Stated that the full City Council approved the project about 10 years ago. She said she does not doubt that opposition speakers care about the neighborhood but stated that they did not attend walk audits (50+ residents attended) or memorials. Cited support from Chandler Elementary parents, Worcester State University students and faculty, and nearby residents. Said the Department of Transportation and Mobility as well as the City Manager offered to meet with councilors who opposed the project and urged the CMMPO not to pull the funding.
9. **Matteo Oliveri Kuhnle, Worcester State Student -** Asked why no study has been done that has proven the claimed safety improvements and recommended that the MPO conduct an objective peer review before the project proceeds.
10. **Stephen Rolle, City of Worcester –** Mr. Rolle stated the City Manager provided a written response to the two opposition letters, which the city considers containing misleading assertions. The city held a public meeting on October 15th with 150+ residents signed in. The design, right-of-way process, and what to expect during construction were discussed at the meeting. The City Manager is committed to this project, and the halting of the project was never under discussion and is currently at 100% design. The letters' roundabout safety claims rely on outdated information, including a decade-old blog post whose cited research showed pedestrian benefits. The roundabouts in this project were selected based on their strong safety performance. Mr. Rolle said the letter stating the city is lowering an aqueduct because of the project is not true. Two water pipes are being replaced as they are very old and need to be replaced to protect the city's water supply. One of the letters claimed that Jeff Speck spoke out against roundabouts. Mr. Rolle reached out to Jeff Speck, and he said that he has never called roundabout unsafe and recommends them often. Lastly, Mr. Rolle said this project is extremely important for the City of Worcester for addressing safety and mobility.

Jared Grigg asked whether the City's official position had changed and whether the city was asking the CMMPO to reconsider the project. Stephen Rolle replied no it has not and they would like the project to move forward. Following the response, Mr. Grigg noted that funding had been pulled for the project at the last CMMPO meeting. Mr. Rolle explained that more community support was needed and Worcester

State University access was still unresolved, so the city was not going to meet the deadlines for FFY 2026. A request will likely be made at some point to have it added back into this year's TIP.

Agenda Item #5 – CMMPO Subregional Representative Election Meeting Results

Kevin Krasnecky reported on the September sub-regional election meetings and other membership changes:

- Southwest Subregion Election: 5 of 7 towns participated. John Eul (Oxford) was elected representative and Chris Starczewski (Dudley) was elected alternate.
- Southeast Subregion Election: 6 of 11 communities participated. Victoria Duckworth (Grafton) was elected representative and Maureen Dwennell (Upton) was elected alternate.
- West Subregion: Staff emailed the Select Boards from the West Subregion to see if any Select Board member had interest in filling vacant Alternate position on the CMMPO. Raymond Kopacko (Warren) was the only Select Board member to respond and he is now the new alternate for the West Subregion. Jared Grigg remains the representative.
- North Subregion: Kristina Pedone (West Boylston) is no longer a Select Board member and has left the CMMPO. Leah Whiteman (Rutland), previously the alternate, agreed to become the representative. An email was sent to the North Subregion towns seeking a new alternate, with the hope of filling the position by the next meeting.

Mr. Krasnecky welcomed the new members. There were no comments or questions.

Agenda Item #6 – Public Participation Plan (PPP)

- **Potential Action: Approval of the FY 2026 PPP**

Yahaira Graxirena noted that a draft Public Participation Plan was released for public review at the last CMMPO meeting. Staff received comments and hosted several public meetings over the summer, and all comments have been incorporated into the final document. Staff asked CMMPO members to vote to approve the FY 2026 PPP.

There were no comments or questions.

Jared Grigg made a motion and was seconded by Victoria Duckworth to approve the FY 2026 PPP. All members voted unanimously to approve the FY 2026 PPP.

David Mohler – Yes
Ann Sullivan – Yes
Josh Rickman – Yes
Bob Hassinger – Yes
Stephen Rolle – Yes
Michelle Conlin – Yes
Victoria Duckworth – Yes
John Eul – Yes
Jared Grigg – Yes
Leah Whiteman – Yes

Agenda Item #7 – SS4A Vision Zero Draft Action Plan Presentation

Jaklyn Centracchio, Austin Pszenny, and Bill McGrath (BETA Group) presented CMRPC's draft Regional Vision Zero Action Plan. It was funded through an SS4A grant and it also included a demonstration project on Beacon Street in Worcester. The plan prioritizes projects by combining crash-history trends, a

new risk-based analysis of roadway attributes, public engagement, and applies the Safe System approach to CMRPC transportation policy and decision-making.

A demonstration project on Beacon Street was also included to allow the City to install safety measures temporarily and evaluate their effectiveness. The demonstration project will install temporary countermeasures (including curb extensions, a raised crosswalk, rapid flashing beacons, and a chicane on Hammond Street) for one year of evaluation. FHWA has approved moving to final design, with bidding and installation expected in the spring. The draft plan will be released for public review, with final approval anticipated in January.

Jared Grigg asked about how many vehicles per day travel on Beacon Street, how many people took part in the public engagement process, did the team consider emergency vehicle operations, and what is the expected impact of the improvements. Mr. McGrath stated that Beacon Street carries about 2,800 vehicles per day, the public workshop drew roughly 30-40 people and the walk audit about 20-25 people, and that the curb extensions are designed to accommodate emergency vehicles within the 10-to-11-foot lanes. Mr. Grigg questioned whether the width is enough with parking on both sides, particularly in snow, and said emergency vehicle operations deserve more consideration in roadway design. Mr. McGrath noted the frequent side streets where vehicles can pull off, and said travel time and queuing will be evaluated after installation, with no significant operational changes expected. Stephen Rolle added that the city coordinates with its fire department on roadway projects and there will be a data collection effort in place during this demonstration project.

Agenda Item #8 – Active Transportation Program Updates Presentation

Yahaira Graxirena highlighted the past year's work:

- Recently completed the Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Plans.
- Recently completed an Engagement Toolkit for Complete Streets projects. With the help from CMRPC staff, Northborough and Uxbridge received FY26 Round 1 Awards. Staff also help Hardwick with its Prioritization Plan.
- Held a walk audit in the Green Island/Vernon Hill area (I-290 underpasses), which was part of the Vernon Connected recommendations. Also, staff received DLTA funds to do Walk Audit Train the Trainer activity in partnership with Walk Massachusetts in Westborough, Grafton, Shrewsbury, and Northborough.
- The Metro Mobility E-Bike share at the WRTA Hub has drawn 800+ users and 7,000+ miles ridden in under a year. It provides transit connections in the City of Worcester.
- Staff collected condition data on various assets. Bicycle and pedestrian counts are also done on various corridors. Currently, staff is developing a schedule of monitoring locations, and the data is available on the CMRPC website.
- Trail work includes Charles River Headwaters Feasibility Study (Blackstone, Mendon, Bellingham) and looking at the Blackstone River Greenway as a resiliency Corridor.

- Staff recently completed an application for Auburn to look at age friendly paths in the town. Also, staff received funds from the Massachusetts Department of Health to work on a Home Sharing Program, which is a 3-year pilot program.
- Completed a Maple Avenue transit corridor assessment in Shrewsbury. Staff looked at how to improve the corridor and made several recommendations to MassDOT and WRTA. A transportation assessment was also completed for several towns in the Blackstone Valley, which do not belong to any transit authority. Staff are looking into what options are available.
- Completed the first phase of Vernon Connected. Final report will be uploaded to the website, and staff are currently looking at next steps

Alan Gordon asked if there are still challenges coordinating with Rhode Island for planning purposes, like for the Blackstone Valley trail. Ms. Graxirena replied that CMRPC's cooperation agreement with RIDOT has supported open conversations, with no issues so far. She said Rhode Island is interested in sharing its experience, since it has a segment where a rail line and trail run together. She added that the Greenway comes up in nearly every community meeting, and that it is not currently on MassDOT's trails priority list, which CMRPC is advocating to change. Josh Rickman (WRTA) added that a regional heavy-duty bus procurement led by the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority included RIPTA, giving the RTAs more buying power.

Agenda Item #9 Staff Updates

- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Krasnecky reported that our federal partners have approved the new FFY 2027–2031 TIPs and STIP, which are now active. Amendments and adjustments are expected over the coming months as project costs are finalized, particularly for first-year projects nearing advertisement. Staff will send the TIP annual development letter for the 2028–2032 TIP in early November to the TIP distribution list (town officials, committee members, legislators, and other interested parties). It includes information on the TIP process, design funding, and the MicroProjects program.

- Vernon Connected Planning Study

Ms. Graxirena referred to her earlier presentation. The first phase, an 18-month study led by Stantec, is complete and includes short-, mid-, and long-term recommendations. The final report will be posted to the Vernon Connected website, and staff are evaluating next steps for this long-range plan project.

- Housing and Transportation Study

Ms. Krishnan reported that the study is complete and on the CMRPC website, with a study, mapping, and a dashboard. She described it as one of very few, possibly the only, studies that connect housing and transportation. She and project manager Jordan Hollinger presented it at last month's AMPO annual meeting, where it was well received. Staff plan to use its findings in the upcoming UPWP, the long-range transportation plan, and community master planning efforts.

Agenda Item #10 – New Business

Raymond Kopacko thanked the Undersecretary for attending and asked MassDOT staff to review the UMass Donahue Institute's economic impact analysis of the Quaboag Connector, which he called a vital resource for the West Subregion. Undersecretary Silverberg replied that she is familiar with the study, which was a focus of the Ware roundtable hosted by the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, and with a recent Transportation for Massachusetts study of microtransit economic impacts in the Berkshires, Hill Towns, and Cape.

Agenda Item #11 – Next Meetings

- CMMPO Advisory Committee meeting (virtual) – October 28, 2026, 3:00PM
- CMMPO Committee meeting (virtual) – November 18, 2026, 4:00PM

Agenda Item #12 – Adjournment

Bob Hassinger made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Victoria Duckworth. The meeting concluded at 5:30 PM.

Meeting Minutes prepared by: Zack Blais, Principal Planner

October 14, 2026

Mr. David Mohler, Chair
CMRPC MPO Committee
Central Mass Regional Planning Commission
One Mercantile Place
Worcester, Mass. 01608

Dear Mr. Mohler & MPO Committee Members,

My name is Alan Gordon and I'm a City of Worcester resident. I'm also a professional urban planner, having worked for over 45 years in the urban planning profession. My career positions have included serving as the City of Worcester Planning Coordinator, Town Planning Director for several Central Massachusetts towns and Executive Director of a Massachusetts regional planning agency. I currently serve as the urban planning instructor at Worcester State University.

I'm writing to the MPO Committee and CMRPC in my combined role as a Worcester resident, professional urban planner and urban planning academic to respectfully request that the MPO deny the request of the City of Worcester to designate $10.1 million in TIP list funding in fiscal year 2026-2027 for the City's proposal to install two (2) traffic roundabouts on Chandler Street in the vicinity of

Worcester State University, the Chandler Dual Language Magnet School and the May Street Elementary School.

Professional urban planning research and study confirms that roundabouts actually increase pedestrian and bicycling safety hazards and lead to increased car-to-pedestrian and car-to-bicyclist accidents, injuries and potential fatalities. The definitive research proving this negative roundabout impact is authored by St. Paul, Minnesota-based journalist and leading bicycling and walkability advocate Andy Singer. I've attached to this letter for the MPO's reading a copy of Mr. Singer's definitive research article on the subject entitled "Are Roundabouts Safer For Pedestrians?"

Mr. Singer confirms the increase of safety dangers for pedestrians and bicyclists resulting from the installation of traffic roundabouts. He accurately confirms the flaws of often-referenced civil engineering studies that value vehicle traffic flowage improvements at the expense of pedestrians and bicyclists.

In October of 2024, the City of Worcester held a Park Avenue walkability workshop that I attended along with some of my students. The workshop was conducted by Mr. Jeff Speck, a nationally-respected urban planning consultant specializing in walkability, smart growth urban design and multi-modalism. Mr. Speck spoke against traffic roundabouts, stating that studies (such as Mr. Singer's attached study) confirm that, in the words of Mr. Speck, car-to pedestrian accidents skyrocket in the vicinity of

roundabouts and they should never be installed in high pedestrian areas.

The current enrollment at Worcester State University is approximately 5,700 students combined with hundreds of faculty and employees, plus daily numbers of campus visitors and a daily heavy stream of on-campus truck deliveries. Added to these numbers are the very high volume of children and their parents coming-and-going from the two adjacent City elementary schools, two abutting senior living elderly and disabled residence complexes and thousands of pass-through vehicles using this stretch of Chandler Street on a daily basis. The result will be a minimum of three (3) years of scheduled disfunction and chaos during the scheduled project construction period, followed by the permanent skyrocketing of pedestrian-to-car and pedestrian-to-bicycling accidents and the resulting injuries and deaths.

In addition to this serious danger, I wish to inform you of the following specific project dangers, negative impacts and concerns, as follows:

1. The former Temple Emanuel parking lot now owned by Worcester State provides about 150 spaces of student parking and is located on the north side of Chandler Street across the street from the campus, requiring users to walk across Chandler Street to access the campus, thereby increasing pedestrian dangers from the proposed roundabouts.

2. Since this past Spring, a coalition of neighborhood and West Side residents have actively opposed the proposed roundabouts project for the reasons already detailed in this letter. The project opponents have obtained approximately 1500 signatures of residents opposing the project.

3. This neighborhood petition includes several hundred signatures of parents of schoolchildren attending the two City elementary schools in this location.

4. In June of 2024, the City of Worcester DPW Director told me in a conversation that he had recently looked at the double roundabout design plan and saw that the current elevation of the water aqueduct beneath Chandler Street conveying City reservoir water through this section of Chandler Street is too high for the project and first must be completely removed and replaced at a lower underground elevation.

   The DPW Director further informed me that the double roundabout project is the only reason for the water aqueduct project, which will take at least one year to complete prior to commencing the roundabout project. While some City Councilors confirmed this fact to myself and neighborhood residents for a year, starting this past summer, the City Manager's administration has put-out a false narrative that it's coincidental and is merely routine maintenance work with no relation to the double rotary project.

Regarding scheduling TIP funding for the project, it's obvious that the City's request for 2026-2027 funding, if approved by the MPO Committee, would not be used by the City in FY 2026-2027 due to the upcoming water aqueduct lowering project and would only prevent either another deserved City transportation project or other Central Massachusetts towns and cities from their deserved ability to fairly receive this scarce $10.1 million TIP funding.

5. Worcester State University students only just learned of the project for the first time in the past month with the start of the Fall semester. Yet the students are quickly organizing in opposition to the project including signing their own student on-line petition opposing the project for the same negative project safety reasons stated above. I anticipate that you will receive the petition from the students as well as hear from them regarding their opposition as your 2026-2027 TIP funding review proceeds.

6. The City Manager's administration claim accident rates in this section of Chandler Street justify the project. However, Mass DOT data available on the Mass DOT website contradicts their position. From 2002 to 2025, approximately 87 accidents have been recorded, with most not resulting in any reported injuries. Again, the low historical accident rate given the extremely high traffic volumes through the corridor doesn't justify a double-roundabout design

that will increase car-to-pedestrian and car-to-bicycle accidents.

7. District 5 City Councilor Jose Rivera has twice reported to myself and the other neighborhood project opponents that the City Manager told both Mr. Rivera and another City Councilor that he won't proceed with this project in response to the community's reasons for opposing it. First, this past January, Mr. Rivera told myself and others that the Manager agreed to stop the project, stating to us that "the project is dead."

   When we requested confirmation in writing, Mr. Rivera replied that the City Manager is concerned in the short term of possible criticism of him by the City Council that he would have wasted $1 million in City funding on the roundabout design plans and as such the written confirmation would be forthcoming as he addresses that issue.

   This past April, we learned that the project was still moving forward. When I reached-out to Councilor Morris Bergman at that time, he replied it was impossible that the project was continuing, as the Manager had also informed him months earlier that the project was dead. Yet the project continued.

   Secondly, this past summer, Councilor Rivera informed myself and other neighborhood opponents that the City Manager informed him and Councilor Bergman that he yet again agreed not to do the project

and wanted to meet with myself and other neighborhood project opponents to gain our support for a two-step process of canceling the project. In Step One, the City Manager would receive our support to allow him to ask the MPO to move the project TIP funding from the last fiscal year into this fiscal year's allocation.

In Step Two, the City Manager would request as soon as possible in this current fiscal year that the money would be reallocated to one of a few other City transportation project proposals. We were told the reason for this strategy was for the City to be able to keep the project money within the City, as opposed to the MPO Committee reallocating the funding to one or more transportation projects proposed in other Central Massachusetts communities within the MPO Committee's funding region. While we agreed to sit-down with the City Manager, Mr. Rivera and two other City Councilors for this discussion, the Manager never replied or scheduled the meeting and he has proceeded with his project management.

Finally, I wish to share with you that one of my urban planning students asked me last week why a specific urban planning study has not been conducted on the specifics of this project proposal at this location? My reply was that due to the clear and obvious negative impacts of a double rotary installation in such an extremely high volume pedestrian and bicycling area, especially as confirmed by the attached Andy Singer

research article, such a study would confirm no rationale for the project.

Again, I would respectfully request that the MPO Committee deny the City's request to fund this project. However, if you do wish to require such a study that the student asked about as you deliberate this issue, I respectfully request that given the City Administration's bias and questionable motivations for relentlessly pursuing this dangerous project, that the MPO Committee with the assistance of the excellent, professional CMRPC staff manage and administer an objective peer review study under your own management control and oversight.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this lengthy funding denial request letter. I sincerely appreciate and hope that you'll take into account the minimum 4-to-6 years of project construction-caused traffic chaos and more importantly, the serious safety decline of the roadway corridor after project completion. I implore you to protect the drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists and the overall community from the dangers of this misguided and dangerous proposed project by denying it funding.

Sincerely,

Alan Gordon
53 South Flagg Street
Worcester, Mass. 01602

Cc: Janet Pierce, CMRPC Executive Director
Robert Hassinger, CMRPC Transportation Planning Committee Chairperson
Rich Rydant, Director of MPO Activities

October 14, 2026

Richard Rydant,
CMRPC MPO Activities Director
Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, CMRPC

Dear Sir: My name is Greg Waters and I am a long time Worcester resident. I'm writing to you as part of the leadership of community and neighborhood residents who are opposed to the TIP project slated to add two roundabouts on Chandler St. in front of Worcester State University, WSU. Our opposition to the project was, and is, firmly rooted in our experience as runners and walkers. Our experience, whether it be with rotaries, like the one at Newton Square, or roundabouts, like the one adjacent to Hope Cemetery, is that they are amongst the least safe road crossings that we navigate on foot. We do not deny that circular traffic patterns may be safer to vehicular traffic, but this is certainly not the case for foot traffic.

Members of our group spent some time looking for information online to support our experience with rotaries and roundabouts. We had little trouble finding it. It appears that this type of traffic flow is known to reduce the level of comfort and convenience for pedestrians. Further, the reduction results in a general reluctance for pedestrians to use the amenities provided to cross the road in these areas. As you undoubtedly know, the area directly affected by this project includes two primary schools in addition to the university. Based on both our experience, and our findings, we decided to launch a petition to Worcester City Council requesting that they direct the City Manager to return the funding for this project to the CMRPC. It was hoped that those funds would then be used for other TIP projects, including those in Worcester that are currently unfunded.

Our experience in collecting signatures for our petition was extremely positive. Our efforts were initially focused on person-to-person interactions on the westside of the city. We canvassed outside stores and knocked on doors. We found that approximately 95% of the people we approached were happy to sign the petition in opposition to the project. We collected hundreds of signatures in short order. Later, we added a digital petition for those who preferred to express themselves online. As of the writing of this letter, we have collected the signatures of **one thousand four hundred and twenty four** Worcester residents in opposition to the project. We have excluded from this tally digital signatures obtained from people with a residence outside Worcester, or those whose identity we couldn't verify online.

We were aware of this project for quite some time, but were assured that it was dead as a result of opposition by WSU. However, in the spring of this year we were told by our City Councilor that the project was proceeding. We were able to secure a meeting with the University's President, Barry Mahoney. In that meeting, Barry assured us that WSU was steadfast in its opposition to the project. He further challenged us as to what the neighborhood was doing in opposition. At that point, we were able to share our success with the petition, which was still in its infancy.

We believe that the City of Worcester surrendered the TIP funds for this project for fiscal 2026. We anticipate that the city will attempt to reclaim the funds for fiscal 2027. We also heard that at a recent meeting of your organization, Mr. Rolle, representing Worcester's City Manager, was questioned about opposition to the project. It our understanding that Mr. Rolle's position was that there really wasn't any opposition. Rather, the citizenry simply didn't understand the project. Whether the story is true doesn't really matter. Allow me to assure you, based on our experience in gathering signatures, and just generally talking with our fellow Worcester residents, much of the citizenry does indeed oppose the project, often vociferously.

It is our intention to present the petition to the Worcester City Council in the near future in the hope that they will honor the wishes of the many residents who have signed it. However, we are hoping to attend the MPO Committee Meeting on Wednesday, October 21st, where we would be pleased to present our opposition. Further, we would like to request that the MPO Committee take the necessary action to remove this project's funding from the TIP list, and reallocate the $10.1 million to other deserving projects, ideally including any that remain unfunded in the City of Worcester.

Respectfully,



Greg Waters

69 S Lenox St.
Worcester, MA 01602
clmgjw02@gmail.com
774-701-2635 (cell)

Cc: Robert Hassinger, CMRPC Transportation Committee Chair

Eric D. Batista
City Manager

City *of* Worcester

October 21, 2026

Mr. David Mohler, Chair
CMMPO Committee
Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
One Mercantile Place
Worcester, MA 01608

Dear Mr. Mohler,

I want to address recent statements transmitted to the CMMPO Committee regarding my position on the Chandler Street and May Street TIP Project in Worcester, as well as the City's intentions moving forward.

I have consistently supported this project and continue to do so today. The City remains committed to providing safe, high-quality infrastructure for our residents, students, workers, and visitors. The Chandler Street and May Street Project is the culmination of more than a decade of planning and design aimed at upgrading intersections to better accommodate traffic movements, improving safety, and enhancing the streetscape along this important corridor, which serves two public schools, senior housing, numerous residents, and Worcester State University.

At no time have I acted, stated, or implied that it was my objective to cancel this project. On the contrary, over this part year the City has, at its own expense, advanced the project design to the 100 percent PS&E stage. I have never proposed or supported any strategy to shift project funds with the intention of ultimately canceling the project, and fully appreciate the significant time, resources, and collaboration required to bring TIP projects to fruition. I thank the CMMPO and all contributors to the project for their efforts in advancing this work.

I also recognize and value community input, and I understand that some residents have expressed concerns about certain aspects of the project. This is precisely why we requested shifting the project into the next fiscal year, allowing additional time for meaningful dialogue with abutters, residents, and Worcester State University. That process included a well-attended community meeting at Chandler Dual Magnet School last week, where attendees had the opportunity to review plans, learn more about the project, and ask questions about its purpose, anticipated outcomes, and what to expect during construction.

However, it remains essential that conversations be grounded in accurate information rather than the mischaracterizations and unfounded claims contained in some of the correspondence you have received regarding this project. I reiterate my strong support for the Chandler Street and May Street Improvements Project and will continue to ensure that it advances responsibly, transparently, and in a manner that best serves the City's long-term interests.

Respectfully,



Eric D. Batista
City Manager