



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Franklin County Transportation Planning Organization

Date:	Tuesday, February 25, 2020
Time:	12:00 PM
Location:	12 Olive Street, Greenfield, MA
Duration:	1 hour
Facilitator:	Steven Woelfel, MassDOT OTP

FCTPO Members in Attendance:

Dave Mohler, MassDOT OTP (representing MassDOT Secretary Stephanie Pollack)
Steven Woelfel, MassDOT OTP
Richard Masse, MassDOT– District 2 (representing Jonathan Gulliver, MassDOT Highway Administrator)
Steve Ellis, Central County Representative
Linda Dunlavy, FRCOG Executive Director (representing Kevin Fox, FRCOG Executive Committee)
Bill Perlman, FRCOG Regionally Elected Representative
Michael Perreault, FRTA (representing FRTA Chair Lance Fritz)
Alan Twarog, City of Greenfield (representing Mayor Roxann Wedegartner)

Guests:

Lily Wallace, Office of Representative Natalie Blais
Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP
Mark Moore, MassDOT District 1
Peter Frieri, MassDOT District 1
Laura Hanson, MassDOT – District 2
Diana Szynal, Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
Keith Bardwell, Town of Whately
Brian Domina, Town of Whately
Fred Orloski, Town of Whately
Gabriele Voelker, Town of Orange
Omar Mejia, Safe Routes to School

Staff:

Maureen Mullaney, Transportation & GIS Program Manager II
Beth Giannini, Senior Transportation Planner II
Megan Rhodes, Senior Transportation/Land Use Planner
Laurie Scarbrough, Transportation Planning Engineer
Liz Jacobson-Carroll, Assistant Planner

1 – Welcome and Introductions: Dave Mohler

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m., and was followed by a round of introductions.

2 – Review and Approval of the January 28, 2020 Meeting Minutes: Dave Mohler

L. Dunlavy moved to approve the January 28, 2020 minutes, B. Perlman seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

3 – Review of 2021–25 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Targets and potential project list: Laurie Scarbrough

L. Scarbrough reviewed and requested feedback on a draft of the 2021-25 list of fiscally constrained, federally funded transportation improvement projects slated for the region. She will release a revised document for public review and recommendations in April, then bring it back to the TPO for approval and endorsement in May, she said. Subsequently, it will be incorporated into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Further, she reviewed the target figures, noting that there is no anticipated change in 2021, and only modest increases through 2024. While the 2025 figure appears as a decrease, D. Mohler indicated that it does not represent a financial impact on existing projects, as the year has not yet been programmed.

The list of projects remains the same as on the 2020-2024 TIP; no new projects are being added for 2025. A significant scope and cost increase to the District 1 project extending the bicycle shoulders on Route 112 in Buckland further than initially planned precludes the addition of a new project in 2025. The extended shoulder will connect the high school to the recreation area, will include the crossing of a culvert, and add \$1 million to the budget.

The 2021-2025 TIP Preferred Target Project Draft includes:

FY 2021: Buckland: the reconstruction and minor widening on Conway St., South St. and Conway Rd. (yr. 1)

FY2022: Buckland: reconstruction and minor widening on Conway St., South St. and Conway Rd (yr. 2)

Buckland: construction of bicycle shoulders on Rt. 112 from MTRSD to North Street

Greenfield: intersection improvements at both Rt. 2/Colrain Rd. and Rt. 2/Big Y entrance

FY2023: Orange: reconstructing No. Main St.(School St. to Lincoln Ave., inc. Fall Hill Brook culvert)

FY2024: Greenfield: reconstruction of Wisdom Way from east of Petty Plain Rd. to Mill St.

FY2025: Whately: rehabilitation of Haydenville Rd. from Conway Rd. to the Williamsburg town line

Discussion topics included the importance of the Wisdom Way project, given safety concerns, and a project to rehabilitate Haydenville Road from Whately to Williamsburg. The latter was bumped in favor of the former last year, and was not reinstated this year; several Whately representatives spoke in favor of reinstatement on the TIP for FY2025. R. Masse confirmed that the scheduling of the Whately project needn't be coordinated with the PVPC and their contiguous project. L. Dunlavy suggested that advancing the construction of the Buckland sidewalk project over two years might be helpful. L. Scarbrough will investigate that further, keeping in mind that a cost increase to the Orange project would preclude the advancing of the Buckland project.

F. Orloski requested that a project to improve safety at the intersection of Christian Lane and Route 5 in Whately be considered for inclusion in the TIP. Geometric improvements are needed; trucks have difficulty making the turn from North and South. Pavement work is needed; if such improvements are planned, reconstruction of the intersection should be done at the same time, he suggested. While noting that it is no longer the Franklin region location with the highest accident rate, that number remains high, and its proximity to the Town's highway, police and fire department building and to Yankee Candle is significant. Culvert replacement and wetland issues need consideration, too. R. Masse said that there are no plans for

re-paving or reconstruction of the intersection at this time, but that he will review the safety issues. L. Scarborough indicated a willingness to work with the town to address concerns, acknowledged that the complicated nature of the site might necessitate a project with a wide scope, and indicated that recent low-cost improvements have reduced crash numbers.

Discussion continued regarding the impacts of changes to any given project on the status of other projects. M. Mullaney noted that they first included the Buckland 112 project in 2016, and have been working to re-instate it, including having incorporated it into the regional target program when it was a \$1.5 million project. Similarly, the Whately/Haydenville project was bumped last year in favor of the Wisdom Way project, and staff is trying to bring it back. A. Twarog reported that Greenfield is considering limiting Wisdom Way to one-way traffic this summer, as they are particularly concerned about the safety of large trucks with high centers of gravity; he stressed the importance of keeping it on the TIP for 2024.

B. Perlman suggested that the Buckland project is not as far along in the design process, nor as imperative based on safety concerns as the Whately and Greenfield projects. He recognized that some of the scheduling is reflective of fiscal year book-keeping, but would like more important projects to take priority over those that fit into a financial slot. In addition, he expressed concern that right-of-way issues may delay the project beyond the 2020 deadline, thus resulting in other projects having been bumped needlessly.

M. Mullaney pointed out that the current order of projects takes into account towns' spending on time-sensitive design services, and attempts to include projects in roughly the order they were submitted. In response to a question from F. Orloski, M. Mullaney indicated that the State has jurisdiction of what projects qualify for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding, and said she will await information from MassDOT colleagues whether anything currently on the TIP could be transferred to the CMAQ program. In response to a question from L. Dunlavy, D. Mohler indicated that the backlog of right-of-way projects is being addressed by recently hired consultants. B. Perlman suggested that FRCOG Council might be able to fund the Buckland right-of-way in order to prevent further delay.

L. Scarborough invited additional feedback in the coming weeks, and promised multiple versions of a revised TIP –with various combinations of projects – for discussion and voting at the March meeting. D. Mohler will look to see if state funding can be brought to the table, and thanked L. Scarborough for the hard work and robust discussion.

4 – Updates from MassDOT District 1 & District 2: Peter Freiri, Laura Hanson

P. Frieri reviewed the status of the following Preferred Target Projects in District 1:

- Shelburne resurfacing and related work on Route 2: Completion date June 2020
- Charlemont resurfacing and traffic calming on Route 2: J. H. Maxymillion was the low bidder; notice to proceed granted
- Colrain intersection improvements: additional funds requested for safety improvements
- Charlemont bridge replacement on West Oxbow Road: final design received; estimate 20% over TIP prog.
- Charlemont bridge replacement on Tower Road: 100% design received; 48% over TIP prog.
- Buckland reconstruction of Conway, Summer and South streets, Conway Road: public hearing scheduled for March 31, 2020

L. Hanson reviewed the status of the following projects in District 2, noting that several others are still in winter shutdown:

- Sunderland resurfacing on Route 47: expecting 100 percent design on 2/28, advertising on 9/21/20
- Greenfield bridge replacement over BMRR: Notice to proceed awarded 2/6/20, preconstruction meeting held on 2/26/2
- Orange bridge replacement on Route 2 over Route 202: bid opening scheduled for 4/28/20
- Northfield Schell Bridge: 25 percent design submitted, will soon schedule public hearing
- French King Bridge: no status change since last month

R. Masse summarized discussion at the public hearing on the Greenfield Montague General Pierce Bridge Rehabilitation Project. Comments and topics included: that MassDOT should do a full repair of the bridge rather than a 25-year rehab and a replacement further in the future; that rehab should include the painting of the upper portion of the bridge; that the bridge is currently unsafe; that the duration of the closure is unacceptable. He will meet with emergency responders this week, he said, in order to find a way to shorten the duration. MassDOT may provide an incentive to contractors to shorten the duration; further, they are looking at starting the project sooner, even if the duration remains the same. Prior to the start of the project, improvements to the Gill Montague Route 2 intersection will be made. In response to questions from S. Ellis, R. Masse said that a full replacement is not being considered, painting the upper portion is not a MassDOT priority, and that he does not know about any plans to add lighting.

R. Masse proved an update on two projects (Farley and Erving Center) on Route 2 in Erving: After hearing from consultants, MassDOT has decided to consider low-cost safety improvement in the near future, postponing full reconstruction of combined area.

5 – Updates from FRCOG: Linda Dunlavy

L. Dunlavy reported that staff is counting Valley Flyer ridership twice monthly, and that she has inquired of whether or not that should be increased. Valley Flyer marketing will begin in April. Dunlavy and M. Mullaney presented comments regarding MassDOT’s East West Passenger Rail study at the public meeting on February 12th.

6 – Updates from FRTA: Michael Perrault

M. Perrault announced that FRTA has received a workforce transportation grant that would run through 2030, and that the micro-transit program would be extended accordingly. D. Mohler noted that a TIP adjustment may be required.

7 – Updates from FRPB: Tom Miner

None.

8 – Public Comments

Omar Mejia, the new Safe Routes to School Coordinator for the region introduced himself then invited individuals to be in touch regarding schools that could use help. D. Mohler welcomed him, and noted that there is funding available for SRSC projects.

9 – Additional business not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours

None.

14 – Next Meeting / Adjourn

The next scheduled meeting of the TPO is Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at 12:00 PM.

L. Dunlavy moved to adjourn the meeting, B. Perlman seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM.

Documents Distributed / Presentations Viewed:

- Agenda
- TPO Minutes, January 28, 2020 – DRAFT
- 2021-2025 FCTPO Targets
- 2021-2025 TOP Preferred Project List
- MassDOT District 1 Report, Franklin TPO, February 25, 2020
- MassDOT Updates District 2, FRTPO Meeting, February 25, 2020