



# Franklin Regional Council of Governments

## Franklin County Transportation Planning Organization

Date:	Tuesday, March 23, 2021
Time:	12:00 PM
Location:	<a href="https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/826418421">https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/826418421</a> or +1 (877) 309-2073 or +1 (571) 317-3129 Access code: 826-418-421
Duration:	1 hour, 8 minutes
Facilitator:	Steven Woelfel, MassDOT, and Bryan Pounds, MassDOT OTP

### **FCTPO Members in Attendance:**

Steven Woelfel, MassDOT (representing MassDOT Secretary Jamey L. Tesler at the beginning of the meeting)  
Bryan Pounds, MassDOT OTP (representing Secretary Tesler beginning during agenda item #3)  
Paula Simmons, MassDOT District 2 (representing MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver)  
Kevin Fox, FRCOG Executive Committee  
Bill Perlman, FRCOG Regionally Elected Representative  
Michael Perreault, FRTA (representing FRTA Chair Bill Stathis)  
Marlo Warner II, DPW Director, City of Greenfield (representing Mayor Roxann Wedegartner)  
Heather Butler, Western County Representative  
Steve Ellis, Eastern County Representative  
Gabrielle Voelker, Eastern County Representative

### **Guests:**

Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP  
Bryan Pounds, MassDOT OTP  
Peter Frieri, MassDOT District 1  
Mark Moore, MassDOT District 1  
Laura Hanson, MassDOT District 2  
Andrew Reovan, Federal Highway  
Brian Domina, Town of Whately  
Geoff Kravitz, Town of Sunderland  
Fred Orloski, Select Board, Town of Whately  
Michelle Ho (joined at 12:35 p.m.)  
Walter Woo, Stantec consultant hired by Town of Orange

### **Staff:**

Maureen Mullaney, Transportation & GIS Program Manager II  
Beth Giannini, Senior Transportation Planner II

Megan Rhodes, Senior Transportation/Land Use Planner II  
Laurie Scarbrough, Transportation Planning Engineer  
Liz Jacobson-Carroll, Assistant Planner

### **1 – Welcome and Introductions:**

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

### **2 – Review and vote to approve the February 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes:**

*B. Perlman moved to approve the February 23, 2021 minutes, M. Warner seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.*

### **3 – Discussion of projects for FY2022-2026 TIP Development:**

**Laurie Scarbrough**

Scarbrough summarized and requested feedback on the proposed list of preferred transportation improvement projects, with fiscal constraints totaling approximately \$6.3 million, to be undertaken during FY22-26:

- FFY22: The second year of two committed to reconstructing and widening Conway St, South St, and Conway Rd in Buckland (\$7,868,506); and installing signs remaining from Franklin County bikeway project from a couple of years ago (\$200,222). These are estimated to leave \$1,125,058 un-programmed.
- FFY23: Improvements to two Route 2 intersections in Greenfield, at Colrain Road and the Big Y entrance (\$2,540,986); and installing multiple electric vehicle charging stations across the county (\$500,000). These are estimated to leave \$3,402,488 un-programmed.
- FFY24: The first of two years reconstructing a section of North Main Street, and re-locating a culvert, in Orange (\$6,527,927), estimated to require all programmed funds, and advanced construction funding in FFY25.
- FFY25: The second of two years of the North Main Street project in Orange (\$1,77,262); and the first of two years rehabilitating a section of Haydenville Road in Whately (\$4,602,269). These are estimated to require the all programmed funds, with the latter requiring advanced construction funding in FFY26.
- FFY26: The second of two years of the Haydenville Road project in Whately (\$5,551,478), leaving \$658,440 un-programmed.

Scarbrough indicated that several of these projects may encounter cost increases which will expend the un-programmed funds. If that does not occur, un-programmed funds may be used on any of several projects (on the “Universe of Target Projects” list).

Scarbrough summarized TIP Section 2A State-Prioritized Reliability Projects:

- FFY22: a bridge replacement on East Oxbow road in Charlemont; and resurfacing and related work on Route 2 in Gill and Erving totaling \$8,910,958.
- FFY23: preserving a bridge deck on Route 112 in Colrain; and replacing a bridge on North Poland Road in Conway totaling \$4,351,792.
- FFY24: replacing bridges on Birnham Road bridge in Northfield, Millers Road in Leverett, Cyrus Stage Road in Rowe, and South Street in Montague; and resurfacing and related work on Route 2 in Erving totaling \$19,428,900.
- FFY25: N/A
- FFY26: preserving an Upper Road bridge in Deerfield, and replacing bridges on Chickley Road in Charlemont and Sixth Street in Montague totaling \$21,118,252.

Regarding the FFY24-25 project on North Main Street in Orange, Mullaney explained that moving it to

FFY23-24 would enable the use of un-programmed funds while maintaining the planned construction schedule and related environmental permitting requirements. Voelker agreed, noting that the project has languished for years, and that the Town is prepared to move ahead with the aggressive goal. Woo summarized the timeline for design submissions, ROW and environmental reviews, a public hearing, and advertising in November '22. At Woelfel's request, Simmons will review the timeline with permitting boards, and then with colleagues prior to releasing the Draft TIP for public review at the April TPO meeting.

Orloski questioned the decision not to include allowances for inflation in the project cost figures; Pounds explained that, due to a calculation based on percentage of state funding, the western regions benefit by – and are held harmless in the existing formula.

Mullaney requested acknowledgement from voting members that the TIP, as presented with the innovative projects of installing e-vehicle charging stations and installing bikeway signs, aligns with TPO goals. She asked why only the innovative projects require local matching funds, thus jeopardizing their success, when these are very strongly supported by MassDOT's broad goals. Pounds explained that bike-related projects had earlier set that precedent, which he is reluctant to challenge. Perlman suggested an approach which embraces MassDOT's stated commitment to address climate change. Pounds indicated that with more detail on the e-vehicle charging station project, MassDOT might be able to prioritize that project as their own, thus preserving local funds.

Scarborough requested and received general support for the TIP as presented.

<b>4 – Discussion of the FY2022 Unified Planning Work Program Development</b>	<b>Maureen Mullaney</b>
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Mullaney summarized the UPWP under development, and explained that it is following the same format and themes as in past years. It is broken into four sections:

1. General requirements of the grant and preparation of certification documents (TIP, UPWP, Title VI, etc.)
2. Data collection and GIS
3. Regional projects that vary year-to-year
4. On-going work such as expanding rail and transit, participating in the Community Health Improvement Program (CHIP), bicycle and pedestrian planning, scenic byways, and local technical assistance.

Focusing on the third group, she described regional projects on which her staff will be working in the coming year:

- Continuing to assess town culverts, and providing maps and reports, thus enabling them to prioritize spending of limited funds. These have been much appreciated by officials in towns previously assessed.
- Continuing the development of a regional recreation plan that maps, depicts and describes local assets, and recommends improvements.
- Assessing the availability of freight truck parking/rest-stops on the major corridors in the region.
- Pursuing the innovative projects described in the TIP, such as creating bike lanes, installing bike racks, and improving traffic signals, while spending otherwise un-programmed small amounts of funding.
- Updating the report of the 50 most hazardous local intersections with recent data.
- Planning for age-friendly environments, often in collaboration with Complete Streets initiatives, on projects such as installing benches, landmark signs and amenities.

- Assessing the vulnerability of dirt roads in conjunction with land-use planners. An interactive map through which members of the public can report problem areas is planned, as are high-level GIS analyses of slope and soil.

Orloski recommended that FRCOG consider whether or not the Franklin region is reaping the benefits of an increasing number of marijuana-related businesses opening statewide. Explaining that this falls outside the transportation planning purview, Mullaney indicated that she will express this concern to the FRCOG Director of Planning and Development.

Noting that MassDOT has stated that it will continue to encourage public engagement in its work through virtual participation in its meetings and other events, Pounds encouraged FRCOG staff to include similar statements in TPO planning documents.

<b>5 – Update from MassDOT District 1</b>	<b>Peter Frieri</b>
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Regarding the FFY21 project to reconstruct and widen three streets in Buckland (606463), Frieri reported that the 100% design is anticipated in April, ROW and environmental reviews are in progress, and the current 75% estimate of \$6,720,872 is within budget.

Regarding the FFY22 project to replace the East Oxbow Road bridge in Charlemont (608858), he indicated that the 25% design received 1/27/20 was not approved, that they await a revised schedule from a new designer, and that they will be ready for 2022.

<b>6 – Update from MassDOT District 2</b>	<b>Laura Hanson</b>
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Hanson reported on FFY2021 projects:

- GREENFIELD- RECONSTRUCTION OF WISDOM WAY, FROM 480 FEET EAST OF PETTY PLAIN ROAD TO MILL STREET (0.43 MILES) (608724); ROW plans were approved for acquisition on 3/3/2021; Received Environmental Clearance on 3/22/2021; PS&E is due on 4/5/2021; the current ad date is 7/10/2021.
- NORTHFIELD – BIKE/PED BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION TO REPLACE N-22-002, SCHELL BRIDGE OVER THE CONNECTICUT RIVER (#607588) The 75% package was received on 1/27/2021; the current ad date is 8/21/2021.

And FFY2022 projects:

- LEVERETT- BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, L-09-003, MILLERS ROAD OVER ROARING BROOK (608849-Bridge Off-system, \$3.19M); VDPH will be posted to the mass.gov website and accepting comments from 4/5/2021 to 4/19/2021; Current Ad Date is 2/24/2024.

Ellis expressed his expectation for an update on the timing of the planned closure of the General Pierce Bridge between Montague and Greenfield. Hanson indicated that the traffic equipment is installed on Avenue A, and that she will be in touch with Ellis regarding next steps.

<b>7 – Updates from FRCOG</b>	<b>Maureen Mullaney</b>
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Mullaney noted FRCOG’s recent partnering with FRTA to apply for funding for a bus stop in an underserved neighborhood of Greenfield. Also, she indicated that the transportation staff has been supporting FRCOG colleagues with site planning and traffic-flow as they run COVID-19 vaccination clinics throughout the county.

<b>8 – Updates from FRTA</b>	<b>Michael Perrault</b>
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Perreault thanked Giannini for her work on the successful Complete Streets grant and project. Also, he referred to a possible project to pilot electric mini-busses, with funding via an appropriation bill from Senator McGovern’s office.

**11 – Updates from FRPB:**

None.

**12 – Public Comments**

None.

**13 – Additional business not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours**

None.

**14 – Next Meeting / Adjourn**

The next scheduled meeting of the TPO is Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at noon. Pounds indicated that meetings will continue to be conducted remotely through the current capital planning cycle, and will likely continue with a virtual component thereafter.

*B. Perlman moved to adjourn the meeting, M. Warner seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.*

**Documents Distributed / Presentations Viewed:**

- FCTPO meeting Agenda 03 23 2021
- TPO minutes 02-23-2021 DRAFT
- FCTPO 2022-2026 TIP Statewide Projects DRAFT
- DRAFT 2022-2026 Preferred Projects List FCTPO
- 2022-2026 Universe of Target Projects
- 03-23-21 Franklin TPO Update MassDOT District 1