



Franklin Regional Council of Governments Franklin County Transportation Planning Organization

Date:	Tuesday, March 22, 2022
Time:	12:00 PM
Location:	https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/826418421 or +1 (877) 309-2073 or +1 (571) 317-3129 Access code: 826-418-421
Duration:	1 hour
Facilitator:	Steven Woelfel, MassDOT OTP

FCTPO Members in Attendance:

Steven Woelfel, MassDOT (representing MassDOT Secretary Jamey L. Tesler)
Paula Simmons, MassDOT District 2 (representing MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver)
Bill Perlman, FRCOG Regionally Elected Representative
Kevin Fox, FRCOG Executive Committee
Eric Twarog, FRTA Chair
Heather Butler, Western County Representative
Steve Ellis, Central County Representative
Colin Killay, Town of Orange (representing Eastern County Representative Gabrielle Voelker)
Andrew Reovan, FHWA non-voting member
David Travers, non-voting FRPB representative

Guests:

Elena Cohen, Office of Senator Jo Comerford
Derek Krevat, MassDOT OTP
Chris Klem, MassDOT OTP
Mark Moore, MassDOT District 1
Peter Frieri, MassDOT District 1
Daryl Amaral, MassDOT District 2
Laura Hanson, MassDOT District 2
Michael Perreault, FRTA
MJ Adams, City of Greenfield
Geoff Kravitz, Town of Sunderland
Bryan Smith, Town of Erving
Elizabeth Quirk, Transportation Advisory Committee

Staff:

Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director
Laurie Scarbrough, Transportation Planning Engineer
Beth Giannini, Senior Transportation Planner II

Megan Rhodes, Senior Transportation/Land Use Planner
Liz Jacobson-Carroll, Assistant Planner

1 – Welcome and introductions

-Woelfel

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 February 22, 2022 Meeting Minutes:

B. Perlman moved to approve the February 22, 2022 minutes, E. Twarog seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously with S. Ellis abstaining.

3 – Discussion and Approval of FY 2023-2027 Preferred TIP:

-Scarborough

After referencing the current list of un-programmed roadway projects, Scarborough reviewed and sought feedback on the proposed list of preferred transportation improvement projects to be undertaken during FY23-27. Beginning with regionally-prioritized projects with a \$7,804,935 target, she focused on changes and additions to the 5-year running list. She explained the most significant change: while the FFY23 project to improve two intersections along Route 2 in Greenfield are on track, neither the project to reconstruct North Main Street in Orange, nor the advanced construction project to rehabilitate Haydenville Road in Whately will be ready to proceed in FFY24 and FFY25/25, as planned, potentially leaving over \$4.5 million in regional transportation funds unspent. Greenfield's Montague Road project will exceed that amount, and thus cannot fill the gap, she added. Scarborough then summarized the sole addition to the list: a FFY 27 Complete Streets project in Greenfield, with an estimated project cost of \$5,800,110 and \$6,728,128 total funds programmed.

Moving on to the state-prioritized list, Scarborough remarked on the prevalence of bridge projects, and again focused on changes and additions. The FFY23 bridge preservation project in Colrain has been expanded to include bridges in Lee and Stockbridge. A FFY27 project to reconstruct and improve a section of Route 2 in Erving (known as the Farley area), which has been constrained for many years but which MassDOT is now re-scoping, has been added with programmed funds totaling \$7,763,068.

Discussion emphasized the shared goal of figuring out, over the next month, how to utilize the approximately \$4.5 million currently un-programmed. Suggestions from attendees included spending on rail and transit projects, the FRTA maintenance building, the Greenfield Montague Transportation Area, off-system bridge projects, and sidewalks along Leyden Road in Greenfield. Woelfel stated that MassDOT and FRCOG will be working hard, along with towns, to figure this out, and that Scarborough will present two options in April.

Scarborough will request a vote of approval of the FY 2023-2027 Preferred TIP at the next meeting in April; following that, it will be released for public comment.

4 – Discussion of potential FY23 Unified Planning Work Program tasks:

-Rhodes

Rhodes summarized the major pieces of the FY23 UPWP:

- Updating the Long Range Regional Transportation Plan -- the biggest project on the UPWP
- Continuing to assess and map culvert resiliency for an additional 3-4 interested towns
- Creating an Outdoor Recreation Plan Inventory and Map, a comprehensive database, with GIS, of the recreation assets in Franklin County
- Assessing road safety and transportation services beyond driving for seniors and other vulnerable users, assessing signs and visibility at intersections, and producing outreach materials.

- Supporting Franklin County Forward Program’s goals of improving safety, increasing transportation options and reducing vehicle emissions, promoting sustainable transportation and preparing for climate change by identifying and developing small and innovative projects for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).
- Preparing preliminary designs for pedestrian improvements to be ready for potential construction funding opportunities; several locations will be selected for concept development.
- Continuing marketing of the Valley Flyer, and supporting the northern tier rail study
- Demonstrating the creation and implementation of the Dirt Road Toolkit by developing conceptual stormwater management plans for 3-4 pilot sites
- Mapping and indexing the bike-ability and walkability of the major bicycle and pedestrian routes in the county; these will be useful in prioritizing future infrastructure improvements

Rhodes noted that the budget is generous this year, and that additional projects can be accommodated. Ellis suggested a regional program to assist town officials in understanding and utilizing MassDOT bridge assessments. Rhodes responded favorably, and will follow-up with Ellis and Scarbrough. Woelfel suggested a multi-county training program, perhaps involving UMass.

In response to a question, Rhodes indicated that FRCOG’s new interactive on-line map of the county’s dirt/gravel roads has already received submittals of approximately two hundred data-points from the public since it went live earlier in the month. These will help town DPWs with their planning and aid Rep. Blais in advocating for state funding for related infrastructure projects.

5 – Presentation on the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

-Krevat

Krevat provided an overview of the transportation funding and programs affected by the federal bipartisan infrastructure law passed in the fall of 2021. He summarized MA’s 5-year apportionments under highway and transit formula programs, and discretionary programs.

The highway funds will increase by \$449 million the amounts already programmed in the FFY22-FFY26 STIP, and provide \$1.4 billion for new formula programs for bridges, resiliency, carbon reduction, and electric vehicle infrastructure. Krevat noted that with President Biden’s signing of the FY22 Omnibus bill last month, FY22 increases are now unlocked and available. Franklin TPO’s regional target will increase by \$1,155,456; MassDOT’s planning and highway divisions will work with partners to identify appropriate projects. The challenge will be to figure out how best to spend the increase before the end of FY22. For FY23-26, the increase in Franklin TPO target funding is \$5 million, and the TIP will be amended accordingly. Supplemental appropriations have been apportioned -- bridge funds are available, and national EV infrastructure funds will be available following federal approval of a state plan.

Transit funding will increase to \$2.8 billion statewide, with approximately \$600 million distributed among the RTAs, but no new transit programs will be established. Eighteen existing, and 10 new discretionary programs will be administered by USDOT’s federal partners; transit projects may be eligible for these. They include the Office of the Secretary’s local and regional project assistance grants, and the Safe Street and Roads for All program; FHWA’s programs promoting resiliency, charging/fueling infrastructure, and rural surface transportation; and the FTA’s low/no emission bus grants, bus facilities grants, accessibility programs, and rail vehicle replacement.

6 – Updates from MassDOT District 1

-Frieri

Frieri announced that the Notice to Proceed on the project (606463) to reconstruct and widen the four

Buckland roads leading from Shelburne Falls to the Conway town line was issued on January 12, '22, and that the project is expected to be completed in the fall of 2023. Not yet ready, the FY22 Charlemont project (608858) to replace the East Oxbow Road bridge in Charlemont will move to FY23. The FY23 bridge preservation project (608649) in Colrain has been expanded to include bridges in Lee and Stockbridge; the design submittal is anticipated in late-summer 2022.

7 – Updates from MassDOT District 2

-Amaral

Amaral announced that the project (608056) to erect screening over the French King Bridge between Erving and Gill was awarded to low-bidder Northern Construction Services. The project to resurface a portion of Route 2 between Gill and Erving will be advertised on 4/2/22. The 100% design submittal of the project to reconstruct Main Street in Orange is anticipated on 6/13/22, with an ad date of 2/11/23. The projects to update two intersections with Route 2 in Greenfield are currently scheduled to be advertised on 5/13/23.

8 -- Update from FRCOG:

-Staff

Rhodes mentioned that earmarked funds may cover software upgrades for FRTAs micro-transit program. Scarborough invited municipal officials to request traffic counting surveys, as the season when staff conducts this will begin soon. Giannini indicated that FRCOG's progress toward creating Complete Streets plans for all Franklin County towns is continuing with the addition of Colrain.

9 – Update from FRTA:

-Perrault

Perrault said that the building and electrical permits for the FRTA's maintenance facility have been submitted, and that completion of the Elm Terrace bus stop in Greenfield is expected on 6/15/22. The FRTA is expecting delivery of two types of buses by the end of March, and a third type (mini-buses) by September.

10 – Update from FRPB: None.

11 – Public Comments: None.

12 – Additional business not reasonably anticipated within 48 hours

13 – Next Meeting/Adjourn

The next scheduled meeting of the TPO is Tuesday, April 26, 2022 at noon. Woelfel encouraged all to attend, as the agenda is full.

Ellis moved to adjourn the meeting, Twarog seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at PM.

Documents Distributed / Presentations Viewed:

- Agenda
- FRPB Minutes, February 22, 2022 – DRAFT
- 2023-2027 Regional Target Project List DRAFT REVISED
- 2023-2027 FCTPO Preferred Target Project List DRAFT
- 2023-2027 Franklin Region Statewide Project List DRAFT
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law - Franklin TPO Presentation, D. Krevat
- 03-22-22 Franklin TPO Update, District 1