Appendices

2024 Regional Transportation Plan
Appendix A Public Outreach Efforts

The following is a list of collaborators that were contacted as part of the public outreach effort in the development of this Regional Transportation Plan.

- 26 Town Administrators
- 26 Town Select Boards
- Baystate Franklin Medical Center
- Communities that Care Coalition
- Community Action, Inc.
- Federal Highway Administration
- Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
- Franklin County Community Health Center
- Franklin County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee
- Franklin County Energy Committee
- Franklin County Highway Superintendents
- Franklin County North Quabbin Community Coalition
- Franklin County Opioid Task Force
- Franklin County Planning Boards
- Franklin County Regional Coordinating Council
- Franklin County Transportation Planning Organization members
- Franklin County YMCA
- Franklin Land Trust
- Franklin Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- Franklin Regional Planning Board
- Franklin Regional Transit Authority
- Greenfield Community College
- Greenfield Housing Authority
- Greenfield Planning Department
- Greening Greenfield
- LifePath
- Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Massachusetts Historical Commission
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
- Massachusetts State Representative Natalie Blais
- Massachusetts State Senator Jo Comerford
- Massachusetts State Senator Paul Mark
- MassDOT Districts 1 and 2 Headquarters
- MassDOT Office of Planning
- Montague Catholic Social Ministries
- Montague Planning Department
- Mt. Grace Land Conservation Trust
- Orange Planning Department
- Small Town Housing Work Group
- Southwest Region Planning Commission (NH)
- Stavros
- Stone Soup Café
- US Representative Jim McGovern
- Windham Regional Commission (VT)
Appendix B Survey and Interactive Map Results

An online survey and interactive map were used to gather public input during the early stage of the plan development. The survey was administered online using Survey Monkey, and a total of 292 surveys were completed. The link to the survey was posted on the FRCOG website, provided to participants at public meetings, and distributed through email. A summary of the feedback provided is included in the appendices. The interactive map was created to allow the public to add comments and share thoughts on transportation concerns and recommendations for improvements. A total of 236 comments were submitted through the map. A photo and summary of the map results are included.

Summary of Survey Responses and Interactive Map Inputs

Summary of the Survey Monkey Results (292 Comments)
The following is a summary of the input posted on the interactive online map.

- Fifty percent (50%) of respondents are from Greenfield/Montague (9% from Shelburne, 8% from Deerfield).
- Seventy percent (70%) of respondents travel 0-20 miles on a daily basis. (roughly 40% travel 0-10 miles daily).
- Thirty-three percent (33%) drive 20+ miles daily.
- Twenty-three percent (23%) of respondents indicated that their driving habits changed post pandemic. The primary reason given was working from home more frequently.
- Ninety percent (90%) of respondents indicated that a car is their primary mode of transport. (Walking was 2nd at 6%).
- Cars, walking, and biking were the three most common modes of transportation among respondents.
- Seventy percent (70%) of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with safety of Franklin County roads.
- Fifty-nine percent (59%) of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with maintenance and the condition of roadways. Forty percent (40%) were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied.
- Fifty-eight percent (58%) of respondents were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with availability and frequency of bus service. (33% had no opinion)
- Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with walking safety in their community.
Fifty-two percent (52%) of respondents were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with biking safety in their community.

Fifty percent (50%) of respondents had no opinion on availability of EV charging stations.

The most common “high priority” transportation improvement was increasing bus frequency and extending hours followed by establishing rail service between Greenfield and Boston.

The most common “low priority” transportation improvement was slowing down traffic in village centers followed by creating or extending off-road biking and walking paths.

Thirty-three percent (33%) of respondents have taken the train from Greenfield. The most common reason given was “travel to NYC” followed by “trying it out for fun”.

**Hot Spots entered on the Regional Transportation Plan Online Map (236 Comments)**

The following is a summary of the input posted on the interactive online map.

- **Turners Falls Road (Turners Falls/Greenfield)** - Need pedestrian access on Turners Falls Road to connect the Village of Turners Falls to Greenfield.
- **Intersection of Route 63 and Route 47 (Montague)** - Dangerous intersection with low visibility when turning onto Route 63 from Route 47.
- **Intersection of Route 2A (High Street) and Silver Street (Greenfield)** - Dangerous intersection that needs better pedestrian crossings.
- **Olver Transit Center (Greenfield)** - Need for buses and trains to run more frequently, specifically trains to Springfield for daily commuters and buses to the west county towns, such as Charlemont.
- **Leyden Road (Greenfield)** – Need a sidewalk on Leyden Road from Leyden Woods apartments to connect towards downtown Greenfield.
- **Intersection of Chapman Street and Pierce Street (Greenfield)** – Need for better pedestrian access such as crosswalks given lots of people walk this stretch to the High School and Fosters Supermarket.
- **Downtown South Deerfield (Deerfield)** – General need for better pedestrian access around the town common.
- **Route 2 by Shelburne Falls Coffee Roasters (Shelburne)** – Dangerous area with cars pulling in and out of businesses in this particular area. Need for better signage and/or traffic lights.
- **Intersection of State Street, Depot Street, Conway Street, and Ashfield Street (Buckland/Shelburne Falls)** – Difficult/confusing area for pedestrians to navigate. Need for better signage, street marking, and flashing lights.
- **Crittenden Hill Loop, Route 112 (Buckland/Shelburne Falls)** – Need for better pedestrian access along this portion of the loop as well and connecting to Mohawk Trail Regional School.
- **General Comment** – Need for more signage alerting drivers to EV charging stations, particularly in Greenfield and Turners Falls.
Response Type Percentages (entered on the map)
Respondents were asked to choose which transportation mode they were commenting about. Below is a summary of the results.

- Walking - 44%
- Driving - 28%
- Biking - 11%
- Infrastructure - 5%
- Bus/Transit - 5%
- Other - 4%
- Rail/Trains - 3%

Responses by Municipality (from map)
Respondents were asked to choose which town they were commenting about. Seventy percent (70%) of the responses were from Greenfield and Montague (35% of Franklin County population lives in these two municipalities). There were entries located in 12 of the 26 municipalities. Below is a summary of the results.

- Ashfield - 5 (3%)
- Buckland - 11 (7%)
- Colrain - 1 (<1%)
- Deerfield - 8 (5%)
- Erving - 4 (2%)
- Greenfield - 86 (52%)
- Hawley - 1 (<1%)
- Leverett - 1 (<1%)
- Montague - 32 (19%)
- Shelburne - 5 (3%)
- Sunderland - 1 (<1%)
- Whately - 1 (<1%)
- Franklin County - 10 (6%)
Appendix C Public Comments

Once the FRCOG staff had completed a draft of the 2024 Regional Transportation Plan, public input was sought from a variety of stakeholders, as well as those required by BIL Act, during a 21-day public review and comment period between May 27, 2023 and June 16, 2023. Two public meetings were held on July 15, 2019 – one at 2:00 PM and the second at 5:30 PM – to directly obtain public input regarding the draft RTP. Both meetings were held virtually via Zoom.

As part of this outreach, the FRCOG received comments on the draft RTP. Those comments that were received were reviewed and incorporated, as appropriate, into the RTP. The following are the comments received during the public comment period.

Comments Received during the Final Public Meetings
The following comments were received during the June 15th, 2023 public meetings. Two online meetings were held.

- Explore bike route improvements on Route 5/10 to connect Greenfield and Deerfield.
- Eliminate fares on the FRTA.
- Improve Turners Falls Road for bicyclists and pedestrians. In the short term add signs and pavement markings. Lower the speed limit to 30.
- Greenfield and Historic Deerfield Bike bypass. Explore the alternatives. It is a regional issue. A path would get more people riding.
- Improve bike/pedestrian facilities on Route 5/10 in Bernardston.
- Rumble strips should be considered to improve safety for bicycles to alert drivers when they are leaving the travel lane.
- Consider Ebikes in future bicycle and transportation planning.

**Comments Received during the Public Comment Period**

The following written comments were received via email during the 21-day public comment period. The Franklin County Transportation Planning Organization (FCTPO) released the draft Regional Transportation Plan for a public comment period from May 27th to June 16th, 2023.

- As part of public comment on FRCOG's 2024 draft regional transportation plan, I would like to stay strongly support the recommended improvements for bicycle & pedestrian access and safety along both Turners Falls Rd (Greenfield into Montague) and along Leyden Rd. (Greenfield).

  Both of these corridors are essential for pedestrian and bike access and are already regularly used, though not safely. I live right near the end of Turners Falls Rd. in Greenfield and travel to Turners Falls regularly. I always do so by car because the road is so unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians, and I am always afraid for those many people who walk and bike the road every day. I look forward to advocating strongly with Greenfield city government to remediate this hazardous roadway as soon as possible.

  Regards, Jon Magee

- Hello, I am a Greenfield resident and downtown business owner, and I had some comments on the Regional Transportation Plan, particularly Chapter 9, as we address local bus service. I appreciate all the points made in this chapter, and I had some additional observations based upon my own experiences and comments from my customers, a number of whom are elderly, disabled, and/or low-income.

  1) There needs to be expanded access to bus passes – online ordering/mail order/additional regional availability. Maybe people lacking transit options cannot get to the offices/JWO.

  2) On-demand via "app" does not work for older people or people who cannot afford a smartphone and most of that demographic is the core of who needs transportation. Also there's a lot of confusion and dissatisfaction, from what I've observed, with the availability of on-demand service to date.
3) Why is it that I live a half block from the Middle School and Federal Street, and, after 9:50 am (weekdays only of course), cannot access downtown via public transit unless I ride the entire way out to Big Y first, a nearly 45 minute trip? Greenfield needs a regular, TWO-WAY downtown bus loop.

4) Transit schedules and process remain difficult to understand and access, and when I visited the FRTA offices to ask questions with my father, who is a senior citizen, they seemed unprepared to have anyone from the public show up.

Marketing isn't going to solve these problems, but I do hope that any outside agency doesn't just look at "branding" but at clarity and availability of information, and customer service. There is great demand for public transit here and I hope, sometime during my lifetime, that it can be adequately supported.

Thanks for your work on this project.

Hillary Hoffman, Greenfield

• Hi – thanks for the work you're doing with FRCOG on the new transportation plan. I'm a resident of Turners Falls, and since I mostly get around on foot and by bike, I wanted to lend my voice to concerns about traveling between Greenfield and Turners.

I saw that Turners Falls Road is mentioned in the draft plan. I'd love that to be a top priority. I find it very difficult to get to Greenfield from my home, which I need to do to access healthcare. If I walk or bike, I feel like I'm risking my life. If I'm able to get a car and drive, I fear that I'm endangering the lives of pedestrians and cyclists. If we do nothing, we all know someone is going to be killed on that road. I'd hate for us to have to wait for that before we act.

I don't have strong opinions about whether a sidewalk is created for that road or a different route is created, except that it needs to be the most direct route possible between downtown Turners and downtown Greenfield, or the problem will remain.

Thanks for the work you're doing. Improving pedestrian paths is one of the cheapest and most efficient ways to fight climate change and pollution, encourage health and wellness, and enhance local culture.

All the best, Kate Savage, Turners Falls

• To all concerned:

We are in favor of creating a safe intersection where Rtes. 63 meets North Leveret Road. It has been a danger for decades. Best wishes on making this a safer place to drive.

Margaret Ricks, Montague

• Hi - I am writing to add to others’ comments that the Rt. 63 - Rt. 47 intersection in Montague is very dangerous. The sight lines are very bad. If one is on 47, crossing over 63, toward Leverett, it is almost impossible to see what is coming. A speeding car coming from the left on 63 can be a real danger. Please fix it!

Thanks, Patricia Fiero, Leverett
• I have personally witnessed two serious accidents at this intersection while waiting to cross. The sight lines to the north from 47 and North Leverett Road are blocked by the height of the bridge over the Sawmill River. With cars coming south on 63 at 45-50 mph, there is very little room for error if you pull into the intersection when you cannot see vehicles approaching from the north. Thanks for helping to make the intersection safer.

  David Dempsey, Montague

• Hi,

As a cyclist, I wanted to comment on two related sections of the Transportation Plan: Montague City Road Resurfacing and Sidewalk Extension and General Pierce Bridge replacement. I'm happy to hear improvements will be made to better accommodate pedestrians in this area, and I hope that cycling will be considered in planning the bridge replacement. Without shoulders or bike lanes, cyclists crossing the bridge must currently choose between hugging the edge, taking the lane, or walking the sidewalk. Although I'm in good shape and ride an electric-assist bike, I can't travel in lane on the Pierce without holding up traffic, and there's not enough room for drivers to pass at a safe distance of four feet unless there's absolutely no oncoming traffic. I think anyone traveling by car or bike over the General Pierce can appreciate the importance of bike lanes on any newly constructed replacement bridge, so I hope they are considered.

  Thank you,
  Otis Wheeler, Greenfield

• I am following up on my concern about the above intersection. I live in Leverett and traveled to Turners Falls for 20 years five days a week. In both directions due to the angular nature of the intersection it was always worrisome who would turn where or when as I went north. As I returned from Turners it was very hard to see if there were cars coming from the north and I worried I pulled it too far into 63 to see! I still sometimes drive that route with the same worries. I hope a plan to increase safety there will be possible!

  Thanks,
  Judi Fonsh, Leverett

• I try to avoid the Rte. 63/47 intersection at N. Leverett Road because the sight lines aren't safe. I especially avoid approaching that intersection on Rte. 47. I live on N. Leverett Rd so am stuck using that intersection a lot. It doesn't seem very problematic if you approach Rte. 63 from N. Lev. Road because you can see everyone on the road, but from Rte. 47, it's very difficult. And drivers approaching that intersection on Rte. 63, from both north and south, are confused about when to turn or even how - who do I wait for? What does oncoming traffic expect me to do? Yikes, what should I do?!

  Louise Minks, N. Leverett Road

• I am submitting my comments with regard to the 2024 Franklin County Regional Transportation Plan. I wish to specifically comment on the plans for improvements to Turners Falls Road (Greenfield). In Chapter 10, you correctly identify this as a priority future project due to its use by pedestrians and cyclists with no safe lane or sidewalk. However, the actions recommended, basically “study and
design”, will not address the current situation for many, many years, if ever. My concern is that every day there is a high risk of a pedestrian or cyclist being injured or killed because of the current situation, a very narrow roadway with significant high-speed traffic passing very close to pedestrians and cyclists.

Approximately 20 years ago, Greenfield repaved this road, which was very uneven, rough, and had no clear roadway edge. One advantage of the roadway being in poor condition was normal traffic speed was reduced and there was a bit of space between the side edge of the roadway and the gravel / grass for pedestrians to walk. Given the “car centric” mindset of the time, the “improvements” included installing a curb on the west side of the roadway and expanding the guardrails on the east side along the entire length of the roadway. Also, the roadway speed limit was increased to 40 mph. The end result was less space available for pedestrians and cyclists, along with cars whizzing past at a high rate of speed.

Neglect over the years by the Greenfield DPW has significantly worsened the situation. Bushes, trees, tall grass and other weeds, have significantly narrowed what little remained of a walkway. Additionally, the edges are filled with sand, gravel, debris that is very rarely swept up, preventing its use by cyclists. What I would like to see the FRCOG include in the Transportation Plan is an immediate mitigation to address the risk in the short term, while working aggressively on a longer term solution.

Mitigation could include;

- Aggressive clearing of overgrowth away from the edge of the roadway on both sides, at least 5 feet where possible.
- Regular maintenance of the roadway, sweeping the debris and cutting back overgrowth.
- Add warning signs to look out for pedestrians and cyclists at either end of the roadway.
- Reduce the posted speed to 30 mph.

Will these steps eliminate the risks? No, but it should help reduce it.

Will the cleaning of the overgrowth provide a clear walkway? No, there are sections that will continue to be narrow because of rock outcroppings, but a significant amount of the total length will be effectively wider. Does it have to be that action is not taken until after a tragedy? Can’t we be just a little proactive to hopefully prevent such an incident? Don’t we owe the people that walk and cycle this stretch of road to take some action to show we care? I have biked this section many times and I can tell you it is very stressful, both going up the hill and down. I cannot imagine how stressful it is for pedestrians.

Given the amount of overgrowth, it is likely the road would need to be closed 2-3 days (daytime only) to clear it out. Regular maintenance, primarily May – October would likely be one half day each month. Overall, while inconvenient for the large amount of motor traffic this road sees each day, isn’t it really a small investment to potentially save lives?

I hope that you will consider adding a recommendation for short term mitigation to the Transportation Plan.

Sincerely,

Mike Szteliga, Turners Falls.
• I'm glad to see our input on the accessibility of Turners Falls Road making into the transportation plan. My only concern is that at this point we seem pretty far away from a solution and I worry that in the meantime a pedestrian or cyclist could get hurt. Maybe there are some options for improvement in the meantime, like a speed limit reduction. I feel similarly around Leyden Road and the lack of a sidewalk there. The folks who need a safe way to get from here to there without a car should be some of our highest priorities and if there is a way to fast-track those projects, I would support that.

Thanks, Ona Magee

• This letter is written in support of modifying the intersection of Routes 47, 63, and N Leverett Rd so as to reduce the risk of accidents.

  1. One danger here is poor visibility for drivers of vehicles coming down N Leverett Rd wishing to make a left onto Rt 63 or to cross 63 to enter 47. A slight rise in Rt 63 just north of the intersection makes it almost impossible to see oncoming vehicles speeding south on Rt 63 until the last, frightening, moment.

  2. For vehicles coming from Rt 47 to the junction of 63, the acute angle of sight to north, coupled with the slight rise in elevation, make it difficult to see vehicles speeding south in time to safely execute a turn or crossing. Entry to Rt 63 -- to cross or turn -- is fraught with danger.

  3. To avoid the stress of judging if it is safe to cross Rt 63 or execute a turn, many drivers coming down N Leverett Rd choose to take a left onto Gunn Rd to access 63 or 47, placing an added burden on road crews to maintain this narrow side road.

  4. N Leverett Rd is not only busy with more commuter traffic (we have watched it pass by for 40 years), but certain drivers have found it to be a convenient hypotenuse connecting Rt 2 West to I91 South.

Thank you for taking seriously the real and present dangers at this intersection.

Peter Reich MPH, Leverett

• Good morning,

  I am writing to provide my feedback on the 2024 Franklin County Regional Transportation Plan, specifically focusing on the proposed improvements for Turners Falls Road in Greenfield. Chapter 10 acknowledges that Turners Falls Road requires attention as a priority future project due to its heavy use by pedestrians and cyclists without a designated safe lane or sidewalk. However, the recommended actions of "study and design" fail to address the current situation effectively, and it is likely that many years will pass before any action may be taken. This raises a significant concern as there is a daily high risk of pedestrians and cyclists being injured or even killed due to the current conditions - a narrow roadway where high-speed traffic passes dangerously close to them. The new state law enacted on April 1st to protect "vulnerable road users" includes making speed limits safer and posting signs about safe passing. Hopefully, quick changes are in the works.

I hope that you will consider adding a recommendation for short (keeping the road and sides clean and clear) & long term mitigation to the Transportation Plan.

Heather Katsoulis, Turners Falls
• Please prioritize making Turners Falls Road in Greenfield safe for pedestrians and cyclist. I use the road often, but it always feels perilous. The FRCOG and Greenfield should put the lives of vulnerable travelers first. Reduce speeds, create shoulders for safety.

Please take these key actions.

Karl Meyer, Greenfield, MA

• I would like to share a several thoughts on Chapter 10, as a resident of one of the hilltowns, and also I wanted to pass along what I’ve heard as I’ve worked on the Shelburne and Bernardston Open Space and Recreation Plans this year, related to community needs for bikes. I didn’t notice any action items for bikes specifically for Bernardston, yet I think the community survey reflected a real need for more biking opportunities and safe roadways for bikes. I’m kind of mixing personal comments here along with observations from the work on the OSRP; perhaps this is a bit unusual/unconventional. I’ve been a bicycle commuter much of my life, so it’s something I care about (I tried, but can’t really do it from Buckland to Greenfield sadly – too hilly or too dangerous).

The chapter on bicycling should perhaps express the difference in cycling for exercise and cycling for transportation. These two uses will use often different routes. Also, with more and more electric bikes on the road, the plan should reflect the urgent need to accommodate more bikes on the roads for transportation and to reduce our collective carbon footprint. I did a text search for electric bike and e-bike, and did not find a mention of it. Perhaps we have reached the point that it’s appropriate to mention this newer form of transportation in the plan?

One thing I have noticed living in Franklin County is that, though people may not want to ride on state highways, there are often no choices but to include a state road in a bicycle route – that’s because there are not that many roads in rural areas, and the alternatives are often incredibly hilly or a much longer and time consuming way.

My sense is that all state roads should be converted as soon as possible to roads that can accommodate bicyclists, and keep cyclists safe from cars and trucks veering off the road. Almost all the state highways near me have been updated in the last 15 years, and other than painting a bike in the breakdown lane on Route 112 in Ashfield, nothing noticeable has been done to accommodate bicycles on rural state roads. The MA Bike Lane Design guide is not designed for rural roads. FRCOG could be the impetus to advance ideas found elsewhere in the country or in Canada. Routes 5, 10, 112, 8A, 116, 63, and 47 should all have bike accommodations through the entire length of these roadways through Franklin County, as soon as possible. Route 2 is complicated, but really from West County it’s the most viable way to get into Shelburne Falls from Charlemont and to Greenfield from points west on bike. I see more and more bikes on Route 2 in West County. With cars going 60 mph, this is very dangerous to the cyclist.

My primary comment is to make the bullet items on page 25 of Chapter 10 more urgent and more specific – how and when will you do improve roads for bicycles and pedestrians? I would also recommend that all roads within 0-5 miles (or some threshold) of a FRTA stop be updated to include bikers and walkers who may not have a car to get to the bus stop.

Specific location comments (Buckland)

• Charlemont Road in Buckland is on a bikeway route. Though Buckland got funding to re-do Charlemont Road from Upper Street to the culvert just past Avery Road, the rest of this road is in horrible condition, and is not great to drive a car on, let alone bike on. Delete this road from the bike way?
The plan mentions the need for sidewalks between North Street and Buckland Recreation Area – this is very true. But there is also a need for accommodating bikers and runners for the entire length of Route 112 in Buckland. People who live in Buckland Center, on Lower Street, and feeder roads to Route 112 all want to bike, run, and walk, and their routes often include some section of Route 112. In the fall, I always see the Mohawk Trail x-country team out on Route 112 – as the days get shorter each fall, I am worried when I see little 7th graders out there at dusk running on Route 112 as I drive home from work. Something REALLY needs to be done.

Thanks! Andrea Donlon, Buckland

I'm writing in support of making Turners Falls - Greenfield Road a safer passage for pedestrians and bikers traveling between communities. I live in Turners and travel that road very frequently and there are always people biking and walking that road, as it is the quickest way to travel from downtown Turners to Greenfield.

This is a treacherous road to walk or bike as there is no shoulder and barely enough width for 2 cars at once let alone anyone else. I have had near misses while driving, especially at night as the lack of lighting makes it nearly impossible to see people in the road. And the fact that it is a winding road makes it hard to plan your path. There is no room for even small lapses in attention if someone is in the road.

I would like strategizing on this issue to be a top priority.

Thanks for your consideration.

Lisa Davol, Turners Falls

I've reviewed the 2024 draft Transportation Plan. I appreciate the four main goals that helped guide the plan, and would like to follow up with my concerns regarding Turners Falls Road.

I used to be an avid cyclist and rode on Turners Falls Road a few times. Being a resident of Turners Falls, I never felt that road was safe enough to ride into Greenfield. With the speed limit being 40 mph, and not having a proper lane for cycling (or walking), my top concern on that road is safety.

Having been hit by a bus while riding my bike (many years ago) on a sunny day and a straight road, I wouldn’t wish that sort of trauma and pain on anyone. Frankly, I think it is miraculous that no one has been injured on Turners Falls Road, that I’m aware of, but it is bound to happen eventually if something isn’t done very soon.

As you know, Turners Falls Road is the most direct link between Greenfield and downtown Turners Falls. It is essential that the road be widened to accommodate all users safely. The road is unsafe for everyone, including vehicles.

I was glad to see Turners Falls Road listed as a priority in the draft plan under the pedestrian and bicycling section. I hope there is a way to push this proposed improvement to the top of the overall priorities to address it as soon as possible.

I am also hoping that FRCOG can be instrumental in pushing for the implementation of more immediate actions to help with safety, such as the installation of safe passing signs that are now required under DOT’s new Vulnerable Road Users Law, reduction of the speed limit (please!), and maintaining the edges of the road to allow for more room for pedestrians.

Thank you, Sita Lang, Turners Falls
• I have reviewed the 2024 draft Transportation Plan, and I appreciate the four main goals that helped guide the plan.

My immediate concern as a resident of Turners Falls is the safety and accessibility of Turners Falls Road. As you know, Turners Falls is on a peninsula, and this road is the most direct link between Greenfield and downtown Turners Falls. It is essential that the road be widened to accommodate all users safely. The road is unsafe for everyone when pedestrians and cyclists are using it along with vehicles. This problem has many facets to it: economic justice, environment, and safety, to name a few.

I was glad to see TF Road listed as a priority in the draft plan under the pedestrian and bicycling section. I hope there is a way to push this proposed improvement to the top of the overall priorities to address it as soon as possible. I am also hoping that FRCOG can be instrumental in pushing for the implementation of more immediate actions to help with safety, such as the installation of safe passing signs that are now required under DOT’s new Vulnerable Road Users Law, reduction of the speed limit, and maintaining the edges of the road to allow for more room for pedestrians.

Thank you.

Anne Jemas, Turners Falls

• It was suggested to me that I make a comment on the FRCOG 2024 Regional Transportation Plan. I wanted to underline the need for improved pedestrian and bike infrastructure around Mountain Road and Montague City Road in Greenfield where they meet the General Pierce Bridge. I wrote an article that was published in the Montague Reporter about my experience as a pedestrian in April 2023 and I’m including an excerpt below.

Getting to the end of Mountain Road, I found myself in an uncomfortable position. There was no crosswalk, and if I wanted to make it to the bright new sidewalk I could see on the bridge, I was going to have to cross the road. It was up to me to figure out how.

Coming from my left, and going past me at full speed of around 30 miles per hour, was a long line of vehicles. The line of sight was short: I couldn’t see the cars until they were only a second or two away.

Coming from my right was traffic from Montague City Road feeding onto the bridge. Hesitant to engage with drivers who may or may not see me, I turned my face and engaged with my phone until I thought there might be a break. It took what felt like a couple of minutes before I neither saw nor heard cars approaching, so I dashed across the road to the sidewalk.

I guess I didn’t mind endangering myself, but I wouldn’t do that with a kid.

Thank you for taking my comment.

Respectfully,

Sarah Brown-Anson

• I’m joining the chorus about the significant danger to pedestrians walking up and down Turners Falls Road from and to Greenfield and Turners. As I know you are aware, there is no safe passageway for pedestrians. I am aware you are looking into the matter. A solution (including at the very least lowering the speed limit from 40 to 30) is vital.

Best,

Christopher
• As promised, I'm writing as an affected resident of Wendell who now cannot travel the main road in or out of Wendell. My car has experienced significant wear and tear I cannot afford, and I now have some undiagnosed issues to deal with in part due to the deteriorating conditions of this road. The state of Wendell Rd. gets worse BY THE DAY. Until it gets dealt with, it's not a safe road for anyone to travel on. The dangers are many, and I'm happy to describe them to you.

I would have contacted you sooner, but I was awaiting replies (that never came) from the road people of Montague/Millers, and I was out of town. Also, I unfortunately assumed no town would ever let any road get this bad. I figured someone was on it, especially as I saw workers finally filling some potholes recently, but frankly, that work did very little to improve conditions. All it suggests to me is that we will have to wait even longer, as the town likely considers that work has recently been done to improve Wendell Rd. Fact is, it is not possible to safely travel on that road as things stand today, so I have to avoid it for the foreseeable future.

Please see for yourself one day by driving up to Wendell from Montague on Wendell Road to the state forest center, then turn around and drive back down. If you really want to feel what it's like, don't use a new car or massive truck, just a regular vehicle with a few years on it (what most people drive). It's the worst road I've ever driven, and I've lived in New York driving 20 year old vehicles.

It looks from this section 2024 RTP Chapter 5 Road and Bridge (4.2 MB) that Wendell Rd. is not part of discussions, is that the case?

My position currently is that Wendell Rd. is a relative emergency in terms of road maintenance. Someone is going to get hurt. Precious vehicles are already getting hurt, which hurts people's lives and wallets, but soon, someone will be directly physically harmed by attempting to drive that roadway.

Please advise what we can do to get this road prioritized, help secure funds (Chapter 90?), whatever will work.

Thank you,
Katherine Kendall

• Comments were submitted by Heckscher from “Trains In The Valley” regarding the Freight and Passenger Rail chapters which were addressed within the chapters.
Appendix D Social Equity Analysis

The following section describes the social equity analysis conducted for the FY24 UPWP and FY2024-2028 TIP.

Geographic and Social Distribution of FY 2024 UPWP Studies

It is important to the FCTPO that UPWP studies are equitably distributed in Franklin County – both on a geographic basis and a social equity basis. To ensure an equitable distribution, the FRCOG staff have examined the past five years of UPWP-funded studies and prepared the following tables, which show the geographic distribution of studies by municipality and by location within FCTPO-identified Environmental Justice Target Areas/Title VI areas. In addition, the Appendix contains a map of all UPWP projects during this study period and their distribution across the region.

Table 1: Geographic Distribution of UPWP Projects (FY2019-FY2024) by Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Towns</th>
<th>Total # of Projects</th>
<th>% of Tasks</th>
<th>Median Town Household Income</th>
<th>Limited English Proficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashfield</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$72,944</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernardston</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$70,750</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckland</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$66,681</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlemont</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$51,797</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colrain</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$63,750</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conway</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$82,470</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deerfield</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$90,638</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erving</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$66,319</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gill</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$72,500</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>$52,211</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawley</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$70,625</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towns</td>
<td>Total # of Projects</td>
<td>% of Tasks</td>
<td>Median Town Household Income</td>
<td>Limited English Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$97,704</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leverett</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$97,188</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leyden</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$97,625</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$26,458</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montague</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$65,925</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Salem</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$71,221</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northfield</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$83,750</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$53,448</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowe</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$70,179</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelburne</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$72,236</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shutesbury</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$86,339</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$58,750</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$75,179</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendell</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$61,182</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whately</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>$88,533</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The examination of proposed, current, and past UPWP projects shows that the FCTPO has equitably distributed projects across the region and across to Environmental Justice and Title VI areas. Specifically, Table 1 shows that each town in the region has received approximately 4% of the projects that have occurred in the study period (34-39 projects per town). Many of these projects are region-wide studies that benefit all Franklin County towns, such as the Update of the Franklin County Bike Plan and the Safety Action Plan for Franklin County.

In terms of Environmental Justice (which looks at both income and race) and Title VI (which for the purposes of this report, looks at only race), the FCTPO has distributed a quarter of the funding (24%) for projects to EJ/Title VI areas. This is a decrease from previous years, but it is because new census data has shown a decrease in the number of communities that are low income in Franklin County.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Justice / Title VI Area (blockgroup)</th>
<th>Environmental Justice Area</th>
<th>Title VI Area</th>
<th>Total # of Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buckland, Shelburne Falls</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlemont, eastern &amp; southern portion/Hawley</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deerfield, southern portion</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield, Cheapside area</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield, town center and surrounding areas</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield, west of I-91/Leyden Woods</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montague, Turners Falls &amp; Montague City</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange, town center and surrounding areas</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelburne, Shelburne Falls</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland, entire town</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Geographic and Social Distribution of FY 2024-2028 TIP

This TIP includes a chart and map showing the distribution of regional TIP target projects from the past five fiscal years through the last year of this TIP. The number of target projects programmed in each town in Franklin County from FFY 2019 through FFY 2028, along with the total cost of all projects by town, is presented in Table 10; the accompanying figure shows the geographic distribution of these same projects within Environmental Justice and Title VI areas in Franklin County.

The criteria for determining an Environmental Justice/Title VI Area in Franklin County are:

- Racial minorities comprise at least 8.8% of the block group’s total population.
  - Minorities are defined as all Non-Whites and Hispanics.
  - The 8.8% threshold differs from past Environmental Justice Analyses, which used 7%. The new threshold was chosen to be consistent with MassDOT’s equity analysis, which set its criteria as the percentage of Title VI minority
population that is above the statewide average. The average Franklin County minority population is 8.8%.

- Any block group that met this criteria is also defined as a Title VI minority area for this report.

- Households earning a median income at or below 65% of the Massachusetts average median household income.

- The average median household income for Massachusetts used in this report was $89,026.

Note that because of low population numbers in Franklin County towns, census data is not available at the block group level for specific languages; therefore languages are not included as a criteria for EJ/Title VI areas in Franklin County.

As shown in Table 10, the 14 regional target projects programmed on the Franklin Region TIP from 2019 through 2028 are distributed across 9 Franklin County towns, comprising a total of $69,177,559 invested in the region. As Figure 8 and Table 11 show, 9 of the 14 regional target projects programmed between 2019 and 2028 are in Environmental Justice/Title VI areas. This represents 64% of the number of target projects programmed and 74% of the funding allocated to the region.

**Table 10. Geographic Distribution of TIP Target Projects, 2019-2028**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Total # of Projects</th>
<th>Total Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashfield</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernardston</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckland</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$13,694,116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlemont</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$7,860,350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colrain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$1,917,473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conway</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deerfield</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erving</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$2,135,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$15,972,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leverett</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leyden</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area (blockgroup)</td>
<td>Environmental Justice Area</td>
<td>Title VI Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montague</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Salem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northfield</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelburne</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shutesbury</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wendell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whately</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 11. Environmental Justice & Title IV Distribution of TIP Target Projects, 2019-2028**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelburne, Shelburne Falls</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>$3,240,634.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland, entire town</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Percentage of all projects in Franklin County | 64% | 74% |

**Figure 8: Geographic Distribution of TIP Target Projects in Environmental Justice and Title VI Areas, 2019-2028**

Source: Block Group Data from the 2017-2021 ACS, U.S. Census. Town boundary provided by MassGIS
Appendix E Glossary of Acronyms

AASHTO: American Assoc. of State Highway & Transportation Officials
ABP: Accelerated Bridge Program
ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act
ADT: Average Daily Traffic
AFC: Automated Fare Collection
AICP: American Institute of Certified Planners
ANR: Approval Not Required
ATR: Automatic Traffic Recorder
BMS: Bridge Management System
CAAA: Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990
CDBG: Community Development Block Grant
CFR: Code of Federal Regulations
CIP: Capital Improvement Program
CMAQ: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality
CMP: Congestion Management Process
CO: Carbon Monoxide
COA: Council On Aging
CPS: Corridor Planning Study
CSS: Context Sensitive Solutions
DCR: Department of Conservation and Recreation
DDS: Department of Developmental Services
DEP: Department of Environmental Protection
DHCD: Department of Housing & Community Development
DLTA: District Local Technical Assistance
DOT: Department of Transportation
DPH: Department of Public Health
DTA: Division of Transitional Assistance
EDA: Economic Development Administration
EIR: Environmental Impact Report
EIS: Environmental Impact Statement
EJ: Environmental Justice
ENF: Environmental Notification Form
EOEEA: Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
EOT: Executive Office of Transportation
EPA: Environmental Protection Agency
EPDO: Equivalent Property Damage Only
ESS: Elder Shopper Service
FAA: Federal Aviation Administration
FAST Act: Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act
FCTPO: Franklin County Regional Transportation Planning Organization
FHWA: Federal Highway Administration
FO: Functionally Obsolete
FRCOG: Franklin Regional Council of Governments
FRA: Federal Railroad Administration
FTA: Federal Transit Administration
GIS: Geographic Information System
GPS: Global Positioning System
HAZMAT: Hazardous Material
HCM: Highway Capacity Manual
HOV: High Occupancy Vehicle
HPMS: Highway Performance Monitoring System
HPP: High Priority Project
HSIP: Highway Safety Improvement Program
I&M: Inspection & Maintenance
IM: Interstate Maintenance
ITE: Institute of Transportation Engineers
ITS: Intelligent Transportation Systems
ISTEA: Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991
JARC: Job Access Reverse Commute
LOS: Level of Service
LPA: Local Planning Assistance
LPMS: Local Pavement Management System
MAC: Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission
MARPA: Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies
MARTA: Massachusetts Association of Regional Transit Authorities
MassDOT: Massachusetts Department of Transportation
MassGIS: Massachusetts Geographic Information System
MBTA: Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
MEMA: Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency
MEPA: Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act
MHC: Massachusetts Historical Commission
MIS: Major Investment Study
MISER: Massachusetts Institute for Social and Environmental Research
MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTA: Massachusetts Turnpike Authority
MUTCD: Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
MWRA: Massachusetts Water Resources Authority
NAAQS: National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA: National Environmental Policy Act
NFA: Non Federal-Aid
NHS: National Highway System
NOx: Any of the Oxides of Nitrogen
NTD: National Transit Database
NTS: National Transportation System
NTSB: National Transportation Safety Board
OCI: Overall Condition Index (used with pavement)
OEDP: Overall Economic Development Program
OTP: Office of Transportation Planning
PCI: Pavement Condition Index
PL: Metropolitan Planning funds
(federal)
PMS: Pavement Management System
PMUG: Pavement Management User’s Group
POP: Public Outreach Program
PPP: Public / Private Partnership
PRC: Project Review Committee
PRWORA: Personal Responsibility & Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act
PUD: Planned Unit Development
PWED: Public Works/Economic Development
RIF: Roadway Inventory Files
RFP: Request For Proposal
RFQ: Request For Qualifications
ROW: Right Of Way
RPA: Regional Planning Agency
RSA: Roadway Safety Audit