



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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MINUTES OF THE Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Meeting Held Via Zoom Video Communications

Meeting Materials: <https://berkshireplanning.org/event/berkshire-mpo-meeting-3/>

MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

Stephen Woelfel	MassDOT (Representing Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt)
Francisca Heming	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Gulliver)
Malcolm Fick	BRPC
Shelia Irvin	BRTA
Ricardo Morales	City of Pittsfield
John Boyle	North Central Subregion Delegate
Christine Hoyt	North Subregion Delegate
Gordon Bailey	Southeast Subregion Delegate

Others Present:

Tom Matuszko	BRPC
Clete Kus	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Nick Russo	BRPC
Chris Klem	MassDOT
Mark Moore	MassDOT
Peter Frieri	MassDOT
Tyler Shedd	City of Pittsfield
Kirstie Hostetter	Federal Transit Authority

I. Call to Order – Introductions

Mr. Woelfel called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. Meeting attendees introduced themselves via a roll call conducted by Mr. Kus.

II. Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 26, 2024

ACTION: Mr. Boyle introduced a motion, seconded by Mr. Bailey, to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2024 MPO meeting.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Woelfel:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Irvin:	Yea
Mr. Morales:	Yea
Ms. Hoyt:	Yea
Mr. Boyle:	Yea
Mr. Bailey:	Yea

IV. Discussion on the development of the 2025 – 2029 Transportation Improvement Program and authorize a 21-day public comment period

Ms. Koirala began by reviewing the actions taken at the previous meeting, and then moved to list all upcoming infrastructure projects that are being funded through STIP year-by-year. There were no questions regarding the projects, so Ms. Koirala moved to detail transportation projects for BRTA that are also funded through STIP. After reviewing the format and funding formulas of the project list, Ms. Hostetter asked if listed funding was already approved or only applied for. Ms. Koirala stated she did not have that information, and advised BRTA would be able to answer her request. Ms. Hostetter advised that FTA is recommending that funding illustrations show where funds have been received from, and unawarded grants and applications be listed elsewhere. In response, Mr. Woelfel suggested Ms. Hostetter personally meet with BRPC and BRTA staff to review these changes to their formulas, which Ms. Koirala agreed with, and both agreed to discuss more following the meeting.

ACTION: Mr. Bailey introduced a motion, seconded by Mr. Boyle, to approve authorize a 21-day public comment period for the 2025 – 2029 Transportation Improvement Program.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Woelfel:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Irvin:	Yea
Mr. Morales	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea
Mr. Bailey	Yea

V. Receive a presentation on Massachusetts 2050 transportation plan, Beyond Mobility

Mr. Krevat gave a presentation on Massachusetts 2050 Statewide Transportation Plan ‘Beyond Mobility.’ After reviewing the background of the plan, Mr. Krevat stated the comment period will conclude on May 31st and invited people to provide their comments. MassDOT’s 15th anniversary is November 1, 2024, and to commemorate it MassDOT will be focused on three policy and strategy efforts, in addition to ‘Beyond Mobility’ will also include a strategic business plan, and a transportation funding task force. Mr. Krevat stated while this comprehensive planning is being done by the state, new programs and initiatives will be implemented in coordination with municipalities and MPOs.

Mr. Krevat revealed that over 18 months of public outreach and thousands of public comments influenced the direction of the ‘Beyond Mobility’ plan – creating a set of priority areas, including: safety, reliability, supporting clean transportation, destination connectivity, resiliency, and travel experience. After reviewing each priority areas highlighted problem and prioritized action to remedy it, Mr. Krevat encouraged people to review the whole plan and share it for public comments which end on May 31.

VI. Discussion on the 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Kus began by discussing the background, purpose, and requirements of an annual Unified Planning Work Program. After reviewing how BRPC utilizes each task area and the type of work being done, Mr. Kus detailed focus areas for the 2025 UPWP and their upcoming projects and grants awarded to do this work, including Complete Streets, Safe Streets and Roads For All, and the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program.

Mr. Kus detailed the importance of promoting bicycle usage, including local support for the Adventure Trail from Williamstown to North Adams which is being funded through a RAISE Grant. After briefly

detailing staff's involvement in bicycling events and efforts in the region, Mr. Kus stated BRPC was seeking funds from MassDOT to establish a microtransit system.

Mr. Kus listed upcoming special studies including a First Street Corridor study in Pittsfield and potential applications for hydrogen fuel for transit fleets, followed by proposed safety initiatives, such as Safe Streets for All, Safe Routes To School initiatives, and a Bicycle And Pedestrian Safety Action Plan. Mr. Kus briefly touched on current and upcoming projects for the remaining areas of Climate Change, Title VI, Freight Planning, and Expansion of Rail Service.

Mr. Boyle requested if the MPO could receive regular updates on the Berkshire Flyer, as it had been a few years, he stated, since it was last brought up, which Mr. Kus agreed to do. Mr. Bailey asked Mr. Kus if the Housatonic Rail Line actually ended in Sandisfield – or Sheffield. Mr. Kus corrected himself, stating it did terminate in Sheffield.

VII. Status reports from Member Agencies

Mr. Moore gave a brief update on upcoming District One projects and their anticipated completion dates.

Ms. Irving announced that BRTA would be introducing their new hybrid busses this upcoming Monday to the public – and that they are wrapped in their vintage designs from the 70s, 80s, and 90s.

Mr. Kus commented that BRPC is having a 'Fifth Thursday' event on May 30th to further discuss microtransit for the region, which will provide updates on the Tri-Town Connector and efforts being undertaken to improve accessibility. As well, MassDOT announced Berkshire Flyer service will be returning this year from June 21st to Labor Day. After restating that BRPC had applied for funding to launch a microtransit service, Mr. Kus touched on Safe Streets for All and that the hired consultant had recently submitted their evaluation of roadway collisions in their High Injury Network. Likely next month, the consultant will attend the meeting to provide a presentation on their work.

VIII. Other Business

There was no other business.

IX. Next Meeting date – May 28th, 2024

The next MPO meeting is scheduled to be held on May 28th, 2024.

ACTION: Mr. Boyle motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Morales. Mr. Woelfel adjourned the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

Materials Distributed:

- [Agenda](#)
- [BMPO March 26, 2024 Meeting Minutes Draft](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2025-2029 TIP](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2025-2029 Transit TIP](#)
- [Berkshire MPO DRAFT FFY 2025-2029 TIP Document](#)
- [BMPO FY 2025-2029 TIP Schedule](#)
- [2025 UPWP Focus Areas and Budget](#)
- [MassDOT District 1 TIP Projects Update](#)