



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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MINUTES OF THE Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Tuesday, June 25, 2024

Meeting Held Via Zoom Video Communications

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

MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

David Mohler	MassDOT (Representing Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt)
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Gulliver)
Malcolm Fick	BRPC
Sarah Vallieres	BRTA
Ricardo Morales	City of Pittsfield
Tim Lescarbeau	City of North Adams
Christine Hoyt	North Subregion Delegate
John Boyle	North Central Subregion Delegate
Gordon Bailey	Southeast Subregion Delegate

Others Present:

Tom Matuszko	BRPC
Clete Kus	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Nick Russo	BRPC
Ryan Griffis	BRPC
Chris Klem	MassDOT
Peter Frieri	MassDOT
Derek Shooster	MassDOT
Joshua Barber	FHWA

I. Call to Order – Introductions

Mr. Mohler called the meeting to order at 4:04 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 May 28, 2024

ACTION: Mr. Boyle introduced a motion, seconded by Mr. Fick, to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2024 MPO meeting.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Mohler:	Yea
Mr. Moore:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Morales	Abstain
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea

Mr. Bailey Yea

IV. Approval of an amendment (3rd amendment) to the 2024-2028 TIP to add funding (\$940,720) for the N Adams Route 2 Overpass Study and authorize the Chairman to sign the certification documents on behalf of the MPO members

Ms. Koirala stated that the third amendment to the highway site was released by the MPO on May 28, amounting to \$940,720 for an overpass study of Royte 2 in North Adams. No comments were received during the public comment period.

ACTION: Ms. Boyle introduced a motion, seconded by Ms. Vallieres, to approve an amendment (3rd amendment) to the 2024-2028 TIP to add funding (\$940,720) for the N Adams Route 2 Overpass Study and authorize the Chairman to sign the certification documents on behalf of the MPO members.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Mohler:	Yea
Mr. Moore:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Morales	Yea
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea
Mr. Bailey	Yea

V. Consideration of an amendment (4th amendment) to the 2024-2028 TIP

HIGHWAY: 1) Increase funding for Project 609078 New Marlborough Keyes Hill Road bridge and change funding source. 2) Remove Lee, Meadow Street bridge replacement project (607597) and reprogram in FFY 2025, increase cost to \$3,653,679 with On-System non-NHS NGBP funds.

TRANSIT: 1) Add 5311 Operating Assistance funds (BRTA011862), 2) add 5310 funds (BRTA011844) and local funds for vehicle purchase, 3) add \$364,104 GOBOND funding for 3 Type E2A Vans in FFY 2025 and 4) add \$970,611 GOBOND funding in FFY 2026 for 5 low floor vans (BRTA011845). Authorize a 21-day comment period.

Ms. Koirala proposed a fourth amendment for highway and transit. For highway, the cost of bridge replacement in New Marlborough cost had increased to \$5,395,160; and for bridge replacement in Lee is required to be moved from 2024 to 2025, and increased costs amount to \$3,653,679. Mr. Klem asked the reason for the cost increase and delay for the project, which Mr. Moore explained a new requirement in type of construction items and materials was behind the cost increase for the New Marlborough bridge. For the Lee bridge replacement, he was informed MassDOT determined it would not be able to deliver in its originally given timeframe for a multitude of reasons and would need to return to the design process before moving forward.

Ms. Koirala moved onto the transit amendment: for 2024 BRTA received funding for operations from state and local funds, totaling \$448,646 each. The town of Great Barrington received funds from the state and

is using local funds to purchase an electric vehicle, totaling \$87,941 and \$21,985 respectively. BRTA is receiving funding from GOBOND for the purchase of three E2A vans with total value of \$364,104 to be included in the 2025 TIP. In 2026, BRTA will use vehicle replacement GOBOND funds to purchase five low-floor vans totaling \$970,611.

ACTION: Mr. Bailey introduced a motion, seconded by Mr. Lescarbeau, to approve the amendment to the 2024-2028 TIP and authorize a 21-day public comment period.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Mohler:	Yea
Mr. Moore:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Morales	Yea
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea
Mr. Bailey	Yea

VI. Approval of the 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and authorize the Chairman to sign the certification document on behalf of the MPO members

Mr. Kus indicated that following the MPOs authorization to proceed with a 21 day comment period at the previous MPO meeting, the steps outlined in the organizations public participation plan were followed including advertisement in the Berkshire Eagle. The only comments received were from MassDOT. A request to reference the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was requested and has been addressed. In the document MPO membership has been updated, as well as the addition of links to similar documents referenced in the plan, and a narrative linking to UPWP plan to the RTP.

ACTION: Mr. Boyle introduced a motion, seconded by Ms. Vallieres, to approve the 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and authorize the Chairman to sign the certification documents on behalf of the MPO members.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Mohler:	Yea
Mr. Moore:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Morales	Yea
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea
Mr. Bailey	Yea

VII. Receive an update on SS4A activities

Mr. Russo gave an update on recent actions taken, including that the public-input meetings were recently held and were partly led by BETA Group as presenters, and that a public survey was released and has currently received approximately 200 responses. The survey, which is available in English and Spanish, will remain open for the summer and public participation will continue to be encouraged. Mr. Russo provided a expedited version of the presentation given to attendees of the recent public meetings for the SS4A program. Mr. Russo took time to note how all of Massachusetts has been provided SS4A funding in some form or another. After providing some background into why this effort is being undertaken and what the SS4A programs intends to accomplish, Mr. Russo gave details on the risk-based high injury networks, key findings, interactive dashboard, and possible countermeasures being drafted as part of the program.

Mr. Russo concluded his presentation by providing next steps being taken.

VIII. Status reports from Member Agencies

Mr. Frieri provided an update on District 1 improvements currently scheduled. The bridge replacement in Alford is currently being advertised, and the final design on East Street (Route 9) in Pittsfield is due by the end of the month – however the cost is approximately over-budget by three million and will need to be addressed. The final design for a bridge replacement in New Marlborough has been submitted on June 14 and is under review by MassDOT. Mr. Frieri anticipates the project will be available for advertising later this year.

Ms. Vallieres noted that BRTA is celebrating its 50th anniversary of operation, and thanks to a grant from MassDOT, is now temporarily offering fare-free for fixed route and ADA customers for June and July, and then Thanksgiving until the New Year. Ms. Vallieres notes that BRTA has seen a major increase in customers since implementation and expects to have served at least half a million customers this year soon.

Mr. Kus noted that BRPC is currently preparing contract documents with MassDOT for traffic counts in the region. Member communities interested in utilizing this service should have staff reach out to Mr. Kus or Ms. Koirala if funds are available – and seek funds elsewhere if not. This Thursday Ms. Koirala and Mr. Frieri will be attending a seminar for supervisors on the MassDOT TIP process. North Adams Reconnecting Communities grant program has completed its RFP process and received eleven proposals from consultants; the design and review committee will be evaluating submission before providing a recommendation to the mayor in the near future.

IX. Other Business

There was no other business.

X. Next Meeting date – July 23rd, 2024

The next MPO meeting is scheduled to be held on July 23rd, 2024.

ACTION: Mr. Boyle motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Bailey. Mr. Mohler adjourned the meeting at 4:42 p.m.

Documents and Exhibits Used:

- [Agenda](#)
- [BMPO May 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes – DRAFT](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2024-2028 Highway TIP 4th Amendment](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2024-2028 Transit TIP 4th Amendment](#)
- [FFY 25 UPWP Final Document](#)
- [MassDOT District 1 TIP Projects Update](#)