



# BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

1 Fenn Street, Suite 201  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
T: (413) 442-1521 · F: (413) 442-1523  
TTY: 771 or (800) 439-2370  
berkshireplanning.org

## MINUTES OF THE Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Tuesday, May 28, 2024

*Meeting Held Via Zoom Video Communications*

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

### MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

Derek Krevat	MassDOT (Representing Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt)
Francisca Heming	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Gulliver)
Malcolm Fick	BRPC
Sarah Vallieres	BRTA
Tim Lescarbeau	City of North Adams
Christine Hoyt	North Subregion Delegate
John Boyle	North Central Subregion Delegate

### Others Present:

Tom Matuszko	BRPC
Clete Kus	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Nick Russo	BRPC
Ryan Griffis	BRPC
Jeff Maxtutis	BETA Group
Issac Almy	BETA Group
Austin Pszenny	BETA Group
Chris Klem	MassDOT
Peter Frieri	MassDOT
Kirstie Hostetter	Federal Transit Authority

### **I. Call to Order – Introductions**

Mr. Krevat 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 April 23, 2024**

**ACTION:** Mr. Fick introduced a motion, seconded by Mr. Boyle, to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2024 MPO meeting.

#### Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Krevat:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea

**IV. Approval of an administrative adjustment to the 2024-2028 TIP (Transit) for vehicle replacement purchases**

Ms. Koirala detailed the minor adjustments to the TIP for vehicle replacement purchases, which include an increase of \$202 for the purchase of a <30ft vehicle, an increase \$3,044 for replacing a <30ft vehicle used for a fixed-route, and a decrease of \$246 for replacing a 35ft vehicle. Mr. Klem asked for clarification on the price adjustments, considering the irregularly low amount. Ms. Vallieres clarified that the costs were higher than originally anticipated, and with the requested STIP funds being utilized only a minor correction is needed.

**ACTION:** Ms. Hoyt introduced a motion, seconded by Mr. Fick, to approve an administrative adjustment to the 2024-2028 TIP (Transit) for vehicle replacement purchases.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Krevat:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea

**V. Consideration 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 a 21-day public comment period**

Ms. Koirala explained that a new project has been added to the TIP to study the Route 2 overpass in North Adams, adding \$940,720 to the 2024-2028 budget. Mr. Krevat commented that MassDOT has been working on this to ensure funds would be available.

**ACTION:** Mr. Fick introduced a motion, seconded by Ms. Hoyt, to approve amendment to the 2024-2028 TIP to add funding for the N Adams Route 2 Overpass Study and authorize a 21-day public comment period.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Krevat:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea

**VI. Approval of the 2025 – 2029 Transportation Improvement Program and authorize the Chairman to sign the certification documents on behalf of the MPO members**

Ms. Koirala began the presentation stating that at the previous meeting a 21-day public comment period was initiated, however no comments from the public have been received, except for one by MassDOT in combination with the FHWA. However, these comments were related to formatting and minor changes to costs. Mr. Boyle asked whether these changes would impact upcoming roadway improvements in Dalton, which Ms. Koirala said they would not.

**ACTION:** Mr. Boyle introduced a motion, seconded by Ms. Hoyt, to approve the 2025 – 2029 Transportation Improvement Program and authorize the Chairman to sign the certification documents on

behalf of the MPO members.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Krevat:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea

Mr. Krevat congratulated the group on finalizing the lengthy and comprehensive TIP process, and asked whether a vote on certification was needed. Although initially dismissed as unnecessary, it was decided to further research if certification is needed. Ms. Koirala began reviewing the certification requirements with support from members. It was eventually decided to vote to endorse the self-certification and global warming solutions act statements.

**ACTION:** Mr. Lescarbeau introduced a motion, seconded by Mr. Boyle, to endorse the self-certification statement and global warming solutions act statement.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Krevat:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea

**VII. Discussion on the FFY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and authorize a 21-day public comment period**

Mr. Kus provided a high-level overview of planned programs for the 2025 Unified Planning Work Program and how they would improve upon existing efforts and focus on regional issues not currently addressed. Mr. Kus there were no significant changes from past discussions or the previous UPWP, which will include management & certification, planning studies, technical support, and other activities including: transportation and land use planning, local technical assistance, scenic byways, expansion of transit and rail service, and outreach & intergovernmental coordination. In addition, Mr. Kus pointed to additional funds awarded for various programs, including \$8,000 for traffic counts, \$125,000 for a micro-transit study, \$30,000 for a sidewalk/trail feasibility study, and \$13,734 for miscellaneous.

**ACTION:** Mr. Boyle introduced a motion, seconded by Ms. Hoyt, to approve the FFY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and authorize a 21-day public comment period.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Krevat:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. Fick:	Yea
Ms. Vallieres:	Yea
Mr. Lescarbeau	Yea
Ms. Hoyt	Yea
Mr. Boyle	Yea

**VIII. Receive a presentation on the SS4A High Injury Network and Risk Based Analysis**

Mr. Russo began the presentation by familiarizing members with the SS4A programs and actions taken up until this point. Explaining that this high-injury network and risk-based analyses will provide essential information on where investments and improvements should be made to regional roadways, Mr. Russo then turned over the discussion to Mr. Maxtutis of BETA Group. Explaining their overarching goal of achieving zero major accidents and fatalities on roadways, he continued to explain the plan objectives and their incorporation of trend-based and risk-based analyses as part of their research. Mr. Almy of BETA Group provided a detailed explanation of their trend-based analysis and how factors such as being an environmental justice community (EJC) were taken into account. After providing details on the region's most dangerous intersections by this measure, Mr. Almy turned over the discussion to Mr. Pszenny to detail their work in risk-based analysis. Describing their predictive, risk-based processing, Mr. Pszenny shared a graphic highlighting roads and intersections in Pittsfield with heightened z-score ratings, as well as key findings from collisions in the regions between 2018-2022.

Ms. Vallieres asked about the definition of 'vulnerable users' – which Mr. Pszenny and Mr. Maxtutis agreed were pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-automobile road users. Providing additional facts by town and collisions region-wide, Mr. Pszenny went on to list possible countermeasures to reduce risk severity and likelihood, including pedestrian-hybrid beacons (PHB or HAWK), raised pedestrian crosswalks, and converting traditional bike lanes to separated bike lanes with flexi-posts. To conclude his presentation, Mr. Pszenny showcased their dashboard currently in development which will detail geographic and visual details for previous collisions and their high injury network and risk-based analysis.

Mr. Maxtutis stating that they had more safety evaluations to finalize before completion, identified their next steps in the process, including stakeholder and public engagement, coordinating with the steering committee, developing countermeasures, and finalizing a draft and final safety action plan. Mr. Russo went into greater detail about how outreach and what members may expect moving forward.

Mr. Krevat asked when the dashboard would be available for public use, which Mr. Maxtutis explained they were still verifying the data, and wanted users to be able to upload their notes – so it would likely be online within a month. Mr. Krevat asked if current projects would be incorporated into the project, as an asset for municipal leaders planning future projects, which Mr. Maxtutis responded they were working to add this data.

## **IX. 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 EPA approval for stormwater design on Rote 9 of Pittsfield has been secured. The bid for a bridge replacement in Cheshire has begun, and bridge replacements for Lee and New Marlborough are both at 75% complete in the design phase.

Ms. Vallieres noted that BRTA as well as other regional transit agencies were awarded grant funding for innovative service by connecting commuter service between North Adams to Greenfield and Springfield with Northampton multiple times daily.

Mr. Kus reminded members that Berkshire Flyer service would resume on June 21<sup>st</sup> through Labor Day, and that the comment period for MassDOT's Beyond Mobility proposal is ending on May 31<sup>st</sup> so comments should be submitted before then.

## **X. Other Business**

Mr. Krevat reminded members that the upcoming Capital Investment Plan public meeting is scheduled for June 25<sup>th</sup> – which is the same date as upcoming MPO meeting.

Mr. Russo asked when inter-regional service at BRTA would begin, to which Ms. Vallieres responded that the date was still to be determined.

## **XI. Next Meeting date – June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

The next MPO meeting is scheduled to be held on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**ACTION:** Mr. Boyle motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Hoyt. Mr. Krevat adjourned the meeting at 4:59 p.m.

**Documents and Exhibits Used:**

- [Agenda](#)
- [BMPO April 23 Meeting Minutes – Draft](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2024-2028 TIP Highway 3rd Amendment](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2024-2028 TIP Highway 3rd Amendment](#)
- [Berkshire MPO FFY 2025-2029 TIP Document](#)
- [FFY 25 UPWP DRAFT DOC](#)
- [MassDOT District 1 TIP Projects Update](#)
- [Comprehensive Safety Action Plan MPO Meeting 5.28.2024 V2](#)