

## Minutes of the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Tuesday, November 28, 2017 4:00 PM

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) Office

1 Fenn St., Suite 201, Pittsfield, MA

### MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

David Mohler, Chair	MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning (Representing Secretary Pollack)
Larysa Bernstein	City of North Adams (Representing Mayor Alcombright)
Kyle Hanlon	BRPC
Andy Hogeland	Northern Berkshire Towns Representative
Francisca Heming	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Tinlin)
Jim Huebner	Southeast Berkshire Towns Representative
Jim Lovejoy	Southwest Berkshire Towns Representative
Laurel Scialabba	North Central Berkshire Towns Representative
David Turocy	City of Pittsfield (Representing Mayor Linda Tyer)

### Others Present:

Eammon Coughlin	BRPC
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1
Justin Gilmore	BRPC
Nat Karns	BRPC
Clete Kus	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Andy McKeever	iBerkshires
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1
Gabriel Sherman	MassDOT

### **1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. Mohler called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

### **2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

### **3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 24, 2017**

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Huebner, seconded by Mr. Lovejoy and others, to approve the meeting minutes for the October 24, 2017 meeting of the Berkshire MPO, with one correction. The title of "*Northeast*" Berkshire Towns Representative was corrected to read "*North Central*" Berkshire Towns Representative.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

### **4. APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT (1<sup>ST</sup> AMENDMENT) TO THE 2018 - 2022 TIP**

Mr. Koirala stated the 1<sup>st</sup> amendment to the 2018-2022 TIP had gone through the 21-day comment period and that no public comments had been received. The amendment increases funding for paratransit vehicles and travel training.

#### Transit Amendments

- Add the acquisition six (6) para-transit vehicles (RTD0006522) \$321,000

- Add funding for Travel Training (RTD0006528) \$6,000

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Lovejoy, seconded by Mr. Huebner, to approve Amendment #1 of the FFY 2018-2022 TIP.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carries unanimously.

**5. CONSIDERATION OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2018-2022 TIP (SECOND AMENDMENT) AND INITIATE A 21 DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.**

Mrs. Koirala outlined potential amendments to the 2018-2022 TIP. This amendment would reallocate \$625,000 statewide CMAQ to FFY 2018.

- Highway – 607254 – NORTH ADAMS/WILLIAMSTOWN- MOHAWK BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN TRAIL, add funding for final design to FFY 2018; \$625,000 Statewide CMAQ

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Hanlon, seconded by Mr. Huebner and others, to approve Amendment #2 of the FFY 2018-2022 TIP and release it for a 21-day comment period.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carries unanimously.

**6. CONSIDERATION OF AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2018 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM TO INCREASE SECTION 5303 FUNDS FOR MULTI MODAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ACTIVITIES TO \$40,174.00 AND INITIATE A 21 DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.**

Mr. Kus explained that additional planning monies were made available to MPOs across the state. The funding for this planning activity is proposed to be increased by approximately \$1700.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Huebner, seconded by Mr. Hanlon, to approve the amendment to the 2018 UPWP and release it for a 21-day comment period.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carries unanimously.

**7. RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE STATE'S FREIGHT PLAN**

Mr. Sherman updated the MPO on the status of the statewide Freight Plan. The draft plan is now available for public comment. Comments are due by Dec. 6, 2017. Once the draft is finalized, it must be approved at the federal level. The draft plan can be reviewed at <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/freight-plan>

**8. RECEIVE AN OVERVIEW OF MASSMOVES FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mr. Kus updated the MPO on MassMoves findings and recommendations. Over the past year, the Massachusetts State Senate convened nine transportation-focused workshops held across the Commonwealth. The purpose was to gather input from residents on transportation issues to gain a 21<sup>st</sup> century vision for our transportation system. Some key findings from the MassMoves report are that participants were dissatisfied with the current state of the transportation system and urged elected officials to make transportation improvements a higher priority than they already are. One transportation area that participants wanted to see expanded was public transportation.

**9. DISCUSSION ON SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES AND CRASH CLUSTERS**

Mr. Sherman presented information on statewide safety performance measures and targets. Under federal FAST Act legislation, MPOs are required to adopt performance measures in four categories

including transit, safety, pavement and bridges, and system performance. After MassDOT adopts targets for each performance measure category, an MPO has 180 days to either adopt MassDOT's targets or develop their own. If the MPO chooses to adopt MassDOT's safety measure targets, there are no quantitative requirements for reporting for the region. However, if MPOs choose to set their own targets, they will need to quantitatively identify all five measures for their region, and coordinate reporting of these with MassDOT. As statewide targets for the safety category of performance measures were adopted some time ago, the Berkshire MPO has until Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to adopt the safety performance measures.

Mr. Sherman went into greater detail about the 5 safety performance measures and their targets. The targets were created by developing a trendline from 5-year averages starting with '07-'11 to '11-'15. The trendline was projected forward to a target of '14-'18. The performance measures and their statewide targets (in parentheses) include:

- Total number of fatalities (average of 352 fatalities in '14-'18, declining by 0.8% per year over the next three years)
- Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) (rate of 0.61, declining by .8% per year over the next three years)
- Total number of serious Injuries (2896, declining by 3.65% per year over the next three years)
- Rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT (5.01, declining by 4.42% per year over the next three years)
- Total number of combined serious injuries and fatalities for non-motorized modes (as this measure has been increasing statewide, the target set by MassDOT was no increase in injuries and fatalities from '11-'15 over the next three years, or 540)

Mr. Coughlin then presented on these trends specific to the Berkshire MPO region. For each of the performance measures, the Berkshire region is seeing improvements, and at faster rates than statewide. However, rates of injuries and fatalities (per 100 m VMT) are higher for our region. Additionally, while the state has seen worsening performance in the last performance measure area, trends for the Berkshire region indicates that it is anticipated to see improvements and fewer combined non-motorist injuries and fatalities.

Mr. Lovejoy expressed some concern that the rate of injuries and fatalities will always be higher for the Berkshire region due to the lower VMT. Mr. Karns explained that rural areas tend to experience higher numbers of accidents, the question is what to do about it and how to determine ways to improve safety.

After some discussion, Mr. Coughlin reviewed the latest Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) crash cluster data for the Berkshire region. The HSIP clusters are those in the top 5% for each MPO region. Across the Berkshires there are over 1000 clusters. The HSIP clusters represent the "worst" areas for traffic accidents and crashes in the region. They are scored and ranked by grouping accidents that occur within a relatively small area and assigning each accident a score based on whether a fatality, injury, or only property damage occurred during the accident. In Berkshire county, there are 2 HSIP bicycle crash cluster areas (out of 38 total bicycle clusters in the region), and 3 HSIP pedestrian crash cluster areas (out of 56 total pedestrian clusters in the region). All of the HSIP eligible clusters are found within downtown Pittsfield. Throughout the county, there are 60 additional HSIP eligible automobile accident clusters (out of 1160 total automobile clusters in the region). These are found in eight municipalities including, North Adams, Adams, Dalton, Pittsfield, Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge, and Great Barrington.

## **10. STATUS REPORTS FROM MEMBER AGENCIES**

Mr. Frieri updated the MPO on District 1 Projects. Mr. Karns and Mr. Kus spoke briefly about talks related to the Berkshire Flyer. One option being discussed is a potential pilot project that would bring an Amtrak passenger train to Pittsfield from New York City, stopping first in Albany. The train would arrive on Friday night, and another train would depart from Pittsfield sometime on Sunday.

## **11. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business brought forward.

## **12. Next Meeting Date**

The next MPO meeting will be on January 23, 2018. Mr. Mohler adjourned the meeting at 5:03 PM.

### Materials Distributed:

- Agenda
- FY 2018-2022 TIP Transit Amendments
- Potential 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment to the 2018-2022 TIP
- MassDOT District 1 Project Status Report
- MassDOT Safety Performance Measures Presentation
- Berkshire Region Safety Performance Measures Presentation
- HSIP Crash Clusters Table
- HSIP and Safety Performance Measures Final Rule Handout