

Minutes of the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Tuesday, February 25, 2020 4:00 PM

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) Office

1 Fenn St., Suite 201, Pittsfield, MA

MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

David Mohler	MassDOT (Representing Secretary Stephanie Pollack)
John Boyle	North Central Towns Representative
John Duval	North Towns Representative
Zac Feury	City of North Adams
Francesca Hemming	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Gulliver)
Jim Huebner	Southeast Towns Representative
Jim Lovejoy	Southwest Towns Representative
Bob Malnati	BRTA
Ricardo Morales	City of Pittsfield

Others Present:

Bill Cooke	Town of Great Barrington
Sean Van Deusen	Town of Great Barrington
Eammon Coughlin	BRPC
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1
Justin Gilmore	BRPC
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Derek Krevat	MassDOT OTP
Clete Kus	BRPC

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Mohler called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM. Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM JANUARY 28, 2020 (ACTION ITEM)

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Huebner, seconded by Mr. Boyle to approve the meeting minutes from the January 28th, 2020 MPO meeting.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously. Jim Lovejoy abstained from voting.

4. APPROVAL OF AN AMENDMENT (2ND AMENDMENT) TO THE 2020-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TRANSIT) AND AUTHORIZE THE CHAIRMAN TO SIGN THE CERTIFICATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE MPO MEMBERS (ACTION ITEM)

Ms. Koirala proceeded to explain the MPO had previously released the 2nd amendment to the 2020 – 2024 TIP for public comment. No comments were received. Ms. Koirala proceeded to explain the 2nd

amendment, which includes projects awards to BRTA through 5310 funding. Ms. Koirala proceeded to review the funding awards, outlined in the Berkshire MPO FFY 2020 – 2024 TIP 2nd Amendment Transit handout.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Huebner, seconded by Mr. Lovejoy to approve the 2nd amendment to the 2020 – 2024 TIP and authorize the chairman to sign the certifications on behalf of the MPO members.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

5. DISCUSSION ON THE PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE 2021 – 2025 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Ms. Koirala proceeded to explain that the 2021 – 2025 TIP development process has been initiated. Ms. Koirala proceeded to review the FFY 2021 – 2025 TIP tentative schedule, mentioning that TIP project solicitation letters had been sent out to Berkshire municipalities on January 6th, 2020 with a due date of January 31st, 2020. TIP forms were received and BRPC staff, MassDOT District One staff and MassDOT OTP staff conducted project evaluations on February 6th, 2020. Ms. Koirala mentioned that the District has received regional targets for the 2021 – 2025 TIP. Scenarios will be developed for the upcoming 2021 – 2025 and the MPO will have an opportunity to review those scenarios on multiple occasions prior to formalization of the 2021 – 2025 TIP.

Ms. Koirala proceeded to review the Berkshire TIP Project Evaluation handouts to reviewing scoring criteria and to outline how each project scored. Ms. Koirala mentioned that this material was presented to the TAC at the February TAC meeting. The TAC made a recommendation that the MPO only consider prioritizing scenarios for programming projects that received a score of 4 or above for the 2021 – 2025 Berkshire TIP.

Mr. Lovejoy asked for an explanation of how the new standards impacts pavement projects.

Mr. Moore responded by stating that there has been more clarification issued through an engineering directive, on design exemption that better quantifies the complete streets policies, more road classification metrics related to speed, related to area, as far as what might be required for complete streets accommodations. For example, village centers are now being recognized as eligible pedestrian accommodations, which they weren't before.

Mr. Krevat asked what the PASER rating was.

Ms. Koirala responded by stating that the PASER rating is BRPC's pavement management/rating systems used to assess the conditions of different roadways – with the lower numbers (scale of 1-10) representing poorer conditions. At the next MPO meeting, Ms. Koirala will present a few different scenarios in March.

Mr. Mohler made a key point of clarification – while the TAC has recommended the MPO consider developing TIP 2021 – 2025 scenarios for projects that received a score of 4 or above, members of the MPO can still advocate for programming projects that received a lower score – and will need to make a good case to the MPO – in order for the MPO to decide which projects are eventually programmed in the 2021 – 2025 TIP.

ACTION: Motion by Mr. Morales, seconded by Mr. Duval to authorize Anuja to consider scenario planning for the 2021 – 2025 TIP development for projects that received a score of 4 and above by the Project Review Committee (PRC).

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

6. UPDATE ON EAST-WEST RAIL STUDY

Mr. Kus provided a description to members of the MPO on East-West passenger rail study updates.

7. STATUS REPORTS FROM MEMBER AGENCIES

Mr. Frieri proceed to update MPO members on District 1 projects outlined in the MassDOT District One Project Update handout.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE – MARCH 24, 2020

The next MPO meeting will be on March 24th, 2020.

ACTION: Mr. Lovejoy motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Boyle. Mr. Mohler adjourned the meeting at 5:11 PM.

Materials Distributed:

- Meeting Agenda
- Berkshire MPO FFY 2020 – 2024 TIP 2nd Amendment Transit
- FFY 2021 – 2025 TIP Schedule
- 2021 – 2025 Berkshire TIP Evaluation: Results of the MPO Staff Evaluation of Highway Projects, February 7th, 2020, sorted by Total Project Score
- 2021 – 2025 Berkshire TIP Project Evaluation: Results of MPO Staff Evaluation of Highway Projects, February 7th, 2020, sorted by Total Project Score
- FFY 2021 – 2025 Berkshire MPO TIP Development
- Project Description Sheet
- Berkshire MPO 2/25/2020 – MassDOT District One Project Update