



BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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MINUTES OF THE Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Tuesday, October 25, 2022

Meeting Held Via Zoom Video Communications

Meeting Materials: <https://berkshireplanning.org/event/berkshire-mpo-virtual-meeting-2/>

MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

Derek Krevat	MassDOT (Representing Secretary Jamey Tesler)
Gordon Bailey	Southeast Subregion Representative
John Boyle	North Central Subregion Representative
Randal Fippinger	North Subregion Alternate
Francisca Heming	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Gulliver)
Christine Hoyt	North Subregion Representative
Sheila Irvin	Chair of BRTA
Tim Lescarbeau	City of North Adams

Others Present:

Miranda Briseño	MassDOT OTP
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1
Justin Gilmore	BRPC
Chris Klem	MassDOT OTP
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Clete Kus	BRPC
Tom Matuszko	BRPC
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1
Andrew Reovan	FHWA
Nick Russo	BRPC
Sarah Vallieres	BRTA
Andrew Wang	MassDOT OTP

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 August 23rd, 2022 (Action Item)

ACTION: Motion by Ms. Irvin, seconded by Ms. Hoyt to approve the meeting minutes from the August 23rd, 2022, MPO meeting.

Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Derek Krevat – Yea
Francisca Heming – Yea
Sheila Irvin – Yes
Tim Lescarbeau – Abstain

Christine Hoyt – Abstain
John Boyle – Yea
Gordon Bailey – Abstain

VOICE VOTE: Mr. Lescarbeau, Ms. Hoyt, and Mr. Bailey all abstained from voting. Motion carried.

IV. Safe Routes to School Grant Opportunities Presentation

Ms. Briseño, the new Safe Routes to School program coordinator, proceeded to give an overview of the updated Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) program. There are two grant programs under SRTS – Signs and Lines Grants, which is a smaller, quick-build type program, and the SRTS Infrastructure grant. The infrastructure grant allocates awards ranging between \$200,000 and \$2 million to fund projects that improve safety, access, and mobility for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade, while also encouraging more students to walk and bicycle to work. To date, 39 projects have been completed and 33 projects are currently in progress. MassDOT expects to award 8-10 individual awards this time around.

This year, high school's have become eligible for SRTS funding. However, as part of this requirement, schools need to be a partner with MassDOT through the SRTS program for at least six months in order to be eligible for project funding.

Ms. Briseño proceeded to review eligible project types, such as sidewalk improvements, traffic calming, crossing improvements, and bicycle facilities. Design and construction are paid for through SRTS infrastructure grant program. Proposed infrastructure projects will have to meet the objectives of the SRTS program. Applications are due Friday, November 18th. Applicants should hear about awards in January.

V. Regional Transportation Plan – Overview and Public Outreach

Mr. Russo proceeded to inform MPO members of BRPC's [Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\) update](#). Mr. Russo proceeded with a brief overview of the RTP, mentioning that this document is updated once every four years, provides the basis for TIP programming and UPWP activities, and helps set the direction for various transportation investments over the long term. Mr. Russo proceeded to review the proposed structure of the RTP update, with key emphasis areas including maintenance, accessibility, economic development, transit, safety, active transportation, and sustainability. Mr. Russo then reviewed the proposed RTP timeline, outlining major milestones, with the final RTP to be endorsed and published by October 2023. The community transportation survey is now available, and we encourage MPO members to [take the survey](#) and to share it with their constituents. Mr. Russo briefly reviewed the types of outreach activities planned – including three upcoming public information sessions that will be open to the public.

VI. Status Reports from Member Agencies

Mr. Frieri proceeded to review [District 1 Project Updates](#).

Ms. Irvin mentioned that use of the BRTA buses has been increasing month over month and ridership numbers appear to be trending in the direction of pre-pandemic levels.

Mr. Kus mentioned that the City of North Adams and MassMoCA recently worked together to prepare a grant application for the Reconnecting Communities initiative. Mr. Kus briefly reviewed the intent of the Reconnecting Communities grant program.

Mr. Kus also mentioned, with the approaching holiday season, **the next MPO meeting** will be held on the 5th Tuesday of next month, which would be **November 29th, 2022, at 4 p.m.** A meeting in December is also being considered and would be tentatively scheduled for December 20th.

Lastly, Mr. Kus mentioned that there hasn't been much occurring with respect to passenger rail planning activities. We anticipate an upcoming meeting to discuss the Northern Tier Rail Study, however, no meeting has been scheduled to date. The Berkshire Flyer pilot service did conclude on Labor Day weekend. We are waiting to receive more information from Amtrak on final ridership numbers and cost of operation. There was some legislation pertaining to the East-West rail study, which required an authority be created. Other than that legislation being passed some time ago, not much else has occurred. We'd like to see this initiative move forward and continue to participate in it.

Mr. Krevat mentioned that the Moving Together conference is still on for November 1st, as a reminder. Also, MassDOT's Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan, called Beyond Mobility, is being updated. Public input is being solicited to update this plan, and the survey will be available until November 4th.

VII. Other Business

There was no other business.

VIII. Next Meeting date – November 29th, 2022

The next MPO meeting will be held on November 29th, 2022.

IX. Next Meeting date – November 29th, 2022

ACTION: Mr. Boyle motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Hoyt. Mr. Krevat adjourned the meeting at 4:33 p.m.

Materials Distributed:

- [Meeting Agenda](#)
- [Draft BMPO August 23rd, 2022 Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Safe Routes to Schools Grant Opportunities](#)
- [MassDOT District 1 TIP Project Updates](#)