



MINUTES OF THE Berkshire Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Meeting Held Via Zoom Video Communications

Meeting Materials: <https://berkshireplanning.org/event/transportation-advisory-committee/>

TAC Representatives/Alternates:

Sam Haupt, Chair	Town of Peru		
Peter Frieri	MassDOT D1	Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Chris Klem	MassDOT	Nick Russo	BRPC
George McGurn	Egremont	Sarah Vallieres	BRTA
Lenny Tisdale	Lee	William Elovirta	Becket

I. Call to Order

Mr. Haupt called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

II. Introductions

Meeting attendees introduced themselves.

III. Approval of the Minutes from the July 18, 2023 TAC meeting

Mr. Haupt moved to table approval of the minutes until the next meeting.

IV. Discussion on the development of the 2025 – 2029 Transportation Improvement Program and project evaluation scores

Ms. Koirala began by reminding attendees that the TIP is an annual process which looks towards the next five years of project implementation. Mentioning that the 2025-2029 TIP process began in earnest on January 5, 2024, with project solicitation/update letters sent around to each Berkshire community. On February 15th, MassDOT OTP, MassDOT District 1 staff along with BRPC staff went through the process of scoring and ranking the TIP projects that have been approved by PRC.

Ms. Koirala explained that of the 17 highway projects approved by the PRC, 15 are considered old or ongoing and only 2 are new to the TIP process. Ms. Koirala outlined the TIP Project Evaluation handout, describing the eight metrics or criteria used to score TIP projects. The criteria used to score projects include road condition, mobility, regional connectivity, goods movement, safety, environment, GHG emissions, and livability. Ms. Koirala reviewed the score each project received, along with project cost, design status, anticipated program date, and the buckets of funding each project pulls from.

Ms. Koirala mentioned that most projects previously endorsed had not changed considerably since their initial approval. The first project for East Street in Pittsfield is expected to be pushed back to a later date for completion due to environmental concerns. Future site remediation will likely need to address drainage issues. The expected timeline for this project will be determined once further information from the EPA is received, likely within the coming weeks. Mr. Haupt asked if there were any issues with the Dalton Division Road project as it will abut Pittsfield land – however, it was clarified Dalton does own the property and will not present an issue.

Ms. Koirala brought up the project for Merrill Road, which Mr. Frieri expanded on, explaining that the project greatly increased in scope from its original conception. A future meeting with the Navy is planned, and any action

for this project will not take place until 2027. The inclusion of a shared use/bike path and the potential impact on pavement was an issue of contention that will be to be further researched. Route 20 in Lee will need public input but was favorably received from the board of selectmen. Local leaders are excited about upcoming work in Great Barrington. Mt. Washington Road in Egremont is moving forward with acquisition for their project and will soon complete the final design.

Of the two new projects, the first is the reconstruction of Route 8 (Howland Ave) in Adams, which will implement a proposed road diet. Although only 2 miles in length, there are significant prospective benefits including shared path and road calming, reducing speeds in downtown Adams. The second new project is also for Route 8 – but in Sandisfield. Ms. Koirala mentioned that this project may be approved for 2024 if another is removed due to external factors.

Next, Ms. Koirala proceeded to review the Regional Targets handout. The first table at the top shows the amount of funding (target) for each FFY of the 2023-2027 TIP. The total cost of all the projects for a given TIP year cannot exceed the regional target (funding amount) for that specified year. Ms. Koirala proceeded to review the regional targets for each year. The larger table at the bottom shows the cost of each project for each TIP year, the score the project received, the current design status of the project, the funding source utilized, as well as predicted price increases over four years with 4% inflation per year. Ms. Koirala noted that the project for South Main Street (Route 7) in Great Barrington is a town-owned project, and town leaders are currently mulling whether to move forward with it.

Ms. Koirala noted that no vote was needed, but asked if one to affirm the results would be beneficial, which Mr. Haupt noted he did not feel was necessary. Questions or comments about the handout can be directed to Ms. Koirala at akoirala@berkshireplanning.org.

V. Member Items for Discussion

Ms. Vallieres of BRTA noted that the BRTA recently received its three hybrid buses and is expecting delivery of two more shortly.

Ms. Koirala mentioned that BRPC will be reaching out to municipalities in the near future to discuss why they are not taking advantage of the TIP process.

VI. Next Meeting Date – March 19, 2024

The next Berkshire TAC meeting date is scheduled for March 19, 2024.

ACTION: Mr. Elovirta motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. McGurn. Mr. Haupt adjourned the meeting at 4:28 pm.

Materials Distributed:

- [Agenda](#)
- [TAC July 18, 2023 Meeting Minutes DRAFT](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2025-2029 TIP Project Evaluation](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2025-2029 TIP Project Evaluation Description Sheet](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2025-2029 TIP Development](#)
- [BMPO FFY 2025-2029 TIP Schedule](#)