



# BRPC

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission

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

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

*Meeting Held Via Zoom Video Communications*

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

### MPO Representatives/Alternates Present:

Stephen Woelfel	MassDOT (Representing Secretary Monica Tibbits-Nutt)
Francisca Heming	MassDOT District 1 (Representing Highway Administrator Gulliver)
Douglas McNally	BRTA
William Shanahan	City of North Adams
Jay Meczywor	North Subregion
Ron DeAngelis	North Central Subregion
Frank Abbott	Southeast Subregion
Dottie Bonbrake	South Subregion

### Others Present:

Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1
Mark Moore	MassDOT District 1
Lily Wallace	MassDOT OTP
Chris Klem	MassDOT
Clete Kus	BRPC
Anuja Koirala	BRPC
Jessica Klion	Foursquare ITP
Brittany Ebeling	BEAT

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

Mr. Woelfel called the meeting to order. 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 of June 24, 2025**

Prior to approval, Ms. Bonbrake requested changes to minutes; these changes were acknowledged by the Chair.

**ACTION:** Ms. Bonbrake introduced a motion, seconded by Mr. Abbott, to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2025, MPO meeting with the noted changes.

### Mr. Kus conducted a roll call:

Mr. Woelfel:	Yea
Ms. Heming:	Yea
Mr. McNally:	Abstain
Mr. Shanahan	Yea
Mr. Meczywor	Abstain
Mr. DeAngelis	Abstain

Mr. Abbott  
Ms. Bonbrake

Abstain  
Abstain

#### **IV. Receive a presentation on MassDOT's Local Early-stage Actionable Planning (LEAP) Program**

Ms. Wallace began by introducing themselves and giving background into MassDOT's Municipal Planning and Support group which is currently procuring consultant support different projects around the state. Ms. Wallace noted that of the 45 applications received for technical assistance, 8 are from the Berkshires. After going into detail on how the program will work and what municipal applicants can expect, Ms. Wallace explained what activities were eligible for support. With an initial deadline of September 30, LEAP will have a rolling deadline with quarterly meetings to review applications. The program will evaluate applications based on community designation, needs, project momentum, and availability of alternative funding. Ms. Koirala asked about funding consultant work, which Ms. Wallace said the program would utilize its own consultant.

#### **V. Receive a presentation on the Berkshire County Micro-transit Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan by Foursquare ITP and provide direction to staff**

Ms. Koirala introduced Ms. Klion, who gave a detailed history of the microtransit feasibility and implementation study and recommendations. After detailing the project overview and an introduction to microtransit, the needs assessment for the region was summarized, as well as key takeaway and input gathered through stakeholder engagement. While explaining the considerations for establishing the service, Ms. Klion provided essential information on how to determine governance and funding, management organization, and potential service models, such as direct operation, turnkey, and hybrid systems, and their respective pros and cons. From this, Ms. Klion detailed how BRTA would be the best choice to operate this service, and how they would approach launching this through service design steps. Using a phased approach, the service would start in central county and would gradually expand to most of Berkshire County. After going over cost drivers and the implementation process, Ms. Klion discussed future considerations in regards to future expansion and service integration.

Mr. Woelfel asked Mr. Kus and Ms. Koirala what they fore saw as the next steps in this process, which Ms. Koirala explained there are currently few transportation funding grants for microtransit available at this time, with two having a deadline in November and one in late September. BRPC is confident BRTA will apply for these grants, which BRPC will support.

Ms. Ebling noted that staffing challenges identified in the news would likely be a foundational step to achieving success – and should be a priority in securing funding to shore up staffing issues. Ms. Koirala responded that the primary issue is that bus drivers need DCL licenses to operate a bus – but is not required for microtransit drivers, eliminating the issue. Mr. McNally mentioned that their oncoming administrator has experience in microtransit and will have a 3 month period of onboard which will support development of the program.

#### **VI. Status reports from Member Agencies**

Mr. Frieri gave an update on the status of FY25 TIP projects. Most recently advertising was approved for a bridge replacement in Lee, as well as a road reconstruction in Egremont, with bid opening for these projects scheduled for October. For FY26, there are over \$100 million in projects scheduled, with approximately 60% at an advanced design.

Mr. McNally stated BRTA had hired a new administrator, and fixed route service will continue to be fare free, and is exploring making ADA service free as well if funding can be secured.

Mr. Kus stated that BRPC is approaching the end of the fiscal year and is wrapping up work on the First Street corridor study, with a presentation to the MPO scheduled for the next meeting. As well, North Adams is

conducting a study for its Route 2 overpass, which will be shared at the next meeting as well. As well, BRPC's annual meeting is scheduled for October, and members are invited to attend.

Mr. Klem is leaving the MassDOT office within the week, but will continue to work with the MPO on other projects in his new role.

## **VII. Other Business**

Mr. Woelfel noted that October is the date of MassDOT's moving together conference, and the upcoming MPO meeting will be moved to the day after to avoid any timing conflicts.

## **VIII. Next Meeting date – October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

The next MPO meeting is scheduled to be held on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

**ACTION:** Ms. Bonbrake motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Shanahan. Mr. Woelfel adjourned the meeting.

## **Documents and Exhibits Used:**

- [\*Agenda\*](#)
- [\*BMPO June 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes Draft\*](#)
- [\*Berkshire Microtransit Study Recommendations\*](#)
- [\*MassDOT District 1 TIP Projects Update\*](#)