

MEETING MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN MIDDLESEX METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION JUNE 22, 2022

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

In light of the COVID-19 emergency executive order authorizing virtual public meetings, the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO) meeting was called to order at 2:00 P.M. via videoconference headquartered at the office of the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), 40 Church Street, Suite 200, Lowell, MA. Attendees included:

Voting Members in Attendance:

- Stephen Woelfel, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Office of Transportation Planning (Representing MassDOT Secretary Jamey Tesler)
- Frank Suszynski, MassDOT District 4 (Representing MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver)
- Andrew Deslaurier, Billerica Select Board, NMCOG Chair
- Pat Wojtas, Chelmsford Select Board, NMCOG NMMPO Representative

Stakeholders and Other Attendees:

- Andrew Reovan, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Brian Fallon, MassDOT District 4
- Derek Shooster, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, MPO Liaison
- Derek Krevat, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
- Josh Levin, MassDOT District 4 Planning
- Timothy Paris, MassDOT District 4
- Sarah Bradbury, MassDOT District 3
- Michelle Ho, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning
- Ali Bent, Lowell Regional Transit Authority
- Meaghan O'Brien, Lowell Regional Transit Authority
- Erika Oliver Jerram, Town of Billerica, Director of Planning & Community Development

NMMPO Staff:

- Justin Howard, Chris Curry, David Tilton, Shravanthi Gopalan Narayanan, and Katrina Garavanian Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

2. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 25, 2022 NMMPO MEETING MINUTES

NMMPO members were provided with copies of the May 25, 2022 NMMPO minutes prior to the meeting. Based on a motion by Pat Wojtas and seconded by Andrew Deslaurier, the May 25, 2022 NMMPO meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

3. STATUS REPORT ON TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) PROJECTS UNDER DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Tim Paris updated the NMMPO regarding project information changes since the May 25, 2022 meeting:

- **Burlington – Billerica - Resurfacing And Related Work On Route 3A** – The project is at 100% design with an advertisement date of November 5, 2022. Cost estimates have been updated.
- **Lowell – Tewksbury – Route 38 Intersection Improvements** – The project has a new advertisement date of December 31, 2022.
- **Westford – Bridge Rehabilitation Beaver Brook Road Over Beaver Brook** – The project has a new construction cost estimate.
- **Tewksbury – Intersection Improvements at Main Street, Salem Road and South Street** – Construction is now 93% complete.

4. OPEN FORUM – OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENTS FROM MPO MEMBERS, COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS, AND THE PUBLIC

There were no comments.

5. FFY 2022-2026 TIP UPDATES

- a. **Draft TIP Amendment 3:** Justin Howard presented a summary of draft amendment 3 of the FFY 2022-2026 Northern Middlesex Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Amendment 3 involves programming a new project to purchase 3 replacement vans by the LRTA at a cost of \$190,300 using FTA section 5310 funds, and matched by State Mobility Assistance Program funds. He requested the MPO vote to release the amendment for a twenty-one day public review and comment period.

Based on a motion by Andrew Deslaurier and seconded by Pat Wojtas, the NMMPO voted to release Draft FFY 2022-2026 TIP Amendment 3 for a twenty-one day public review and comment period.

- b. **Draft TIP Adjustment 1:** Justin Howard provided a summary of an adjustment made to FFY 2022 and 2023 of the FFY 2022-2026 Northern Middlesex Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Adjustment 1 involves updating several LRTA projects in the first two years of the TIP to properly reflect their current costs. He gave a brief presentation detailing projects that have been updated within the TIP as part of this adjustment, including the purchase of automated passenger counters and replacement of fixed route cutaway vans. Funding for both projects are moving from FFY 2022 to FFY 2023. There were cost decreases in four projects:
 - LRTA replacement of fixed route lifts;
 - S&B fare collection updates;
 - rehab commuter/ADA access at Gallagher terminal; and,
 - stairway reinforcing.

There was also an increase in the total cost for purchasing of LRTA equipment spare parts, which is now reflected as 100% state funded. There was no increase/decrease in total programmed funding

with Draft TIP Adjustment 1, just a reallocation of programmed funds between all projects presented.

6. FFY 2023 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) DEVELOPMENT

Justin Howard reminded the NMMPO that at the May meeting, members voted to release the draft FFY 2023 UPWP for a twenty-one day public comment period which ended on June 20, 2022. Justin stated that two sets of comments were received and he summarized the comments, which included one set from Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Administration noting a slight wording change, the removal of previous comment tracking, and an acknowledgement of inclusion of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law additions. The second set of comments was a checklist from MassDOT identifying no issues in the draft document.

Based on a motion by Andrew Deslaurier and seconded by Pat Wojtas, the NMMPO voted to endorse the FFY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program as presented.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Based on a motion made by Pat Wojtas and seconded by Andrew Deslaurier, the MPO voted unanimously to adjourn at 2:17 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 27, 2022 at 2:00 PM.