

## ENDORSEMENT OF AMENDMENT 4 TO THE FFY 2024 – 2028 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE NORTHERN MIDDLESEX REGION

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### FFY 2024-2028 Northern Middlesex Transportation Program Air Quality Endorsement Statement

This document certifies that the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization hereby endorses Amendment #4 to the FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program for the Northern Middlesex Region. This TIP amendment is being endorsed in accordance with the 3C Transportation Planning Process and complies with the requirements in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law” (BIL).

### Air Quality Conformity

Whereas, the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) require Metropolitan Planning Organizations within non-attainment areas and/or attainment areas with maintenance plans to perform air quality conformity determinations prior to the approval of transportation plans and transportation improvement programs, and at such other times as required by regulation;

Whereas, the air quality conformity analysis prepared for the FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program also demonstrates air quality conformity of the Northern Middlesex Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and that all regionally significant transportation projects in the FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program are contained in the Regional Transportation Plan, and that all regionally significant projects in the 2020 to 2040 timeframe of the Regional Transportation Plan are modeled in the FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program's air quality conformity analyses;

Whereas, the NMMPO has completed its review in accordance with Section 176(c) (4) of the Clean Air Act as amended in 1990 [42 U.S.C. 7251 (a)], and hereby certifies that Amendment 4 to the FFY 2024-2028 TIP is financially constrained and that the implementation of the RTP satisfies the conformity criteria specified in both 40 CFR Part 51 and 93 (8/15/1997) and 310 CMR 60.03 (12/30/1994). Based on the results of the conformity analyses, the RTP and FFY 2024-2028 TIP is consistent with the air quality goals of, and in conformity with, the Massachusetts State Implementation Plan;

Therefore, in accordance with 23 CFR Part 450.326 (Development and content of the Transportation Improvement Program) and the Northern Middlesex MPO Regional Public Participation Plan (23 CFR 450.316), the MPO hereby endorses the FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program.



for \_\_\_\_\_

Monica Tibbits-Nutt, Secretary and CEO  
Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT);  
Chair, Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO)

July 24, 2023

Date

## Summary Narrative of Amendment 4 to the FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program for the Northern Middlesex Region

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### Introduction and Overview

The following table summarizes a draft amendment to Fiscal Year 2025 of the FFY 2024-2028 Northern Middlesex Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). **Amendment 4** involves two items described below. The first proposes a cost increase for Project #607887, which involves the replacement of the Rourke Bridge in Lowell, programmed for FFY 2024. The second moves Project #608227, the Yankee Doodle Bike Path, from the current year (FFY2024) to the year it is programmed in the FFY2025-2029 TIP to preserve funding for its advertisement in the next fiscal year. The amendment package was released for public comment period at the June 26, 2024 NMMPO meeting. A virtual public comment meeting was held on July 10, 2024 from 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM via zoom. The public was invited to comment on this amendment package by email to [publiccomments@nmcog.org](mailto:publiccomments@nmcog.org) or by mail to NMCOG, 672 Suffolk Street, Suite 100, Lowell, MA 01854. Following the public comment period, the NMMPO met again on July 24, 2024 and voted to endorse the amendment with comments received.

Previous Total Federal Participating Cost = \$198,000,000  
 Current Total Federal Participating Cost = \$243,545,439  
 Current Programmed STIP cost = \$169,000,000  
 Variance from the STIP: \$74,545,439 (44.1%)

**Table of Changes FFY 2024 Project #607887 – “Replacement of Rourke Bridge in Lowell”**

Project Funding	Former Value	New Value	Variance
State: HIP-BR	\$198,000,000	\$221,735,317	+\$23,735,317
State: HIP-BRR	\$0	\$21,810,122	+\$21,810,122
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 198,000,000</b>	<b>\$ 243,545,439</b>	<b>+\$74,545,439</b>

### TIP Program Description

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a critical federally mandated document that directs the allocation of federal transportation funding within the NMMPO region. The TIP outlines a five-year capital plan, featuring a diverse array of projects anticipated to receive federal and state aid. The most [recent TIP](#) is available on the NMCOG website as well as TIPs from [recent years](#). Our TIP is bifurcated into two principal components: one focusing on transit projects through the Lowell Regional Transit Authority’s (LRTA) and the other on regional transportation infrastructure enhancements. The Program of Projects forms the core of the TIP. Proposed changes to the TIP, referred to as “amendments”, are presented to the NMMPO Board for comprehensive review and consideration for inclusion in the regional plan.

## Invitation for Public Comment

The NMMPO invited the public to provide their input on this TIP amendment package. A 21-day comment period was established to ensure sufficient opportunity for community feedback. This process satisfies the MPO's public participation requirements for the Program of Projects. The public was invited to refer comments by email to [publiccomments@nmcog.org](mailto:publiccomments@nmcog.org) or by mail to NMCOG, 672 Suffolk Street, Suite 100, Lowell, MA 01854.

- **21-Day Public Comment Period: June 26, 2024 – July 17, 2024**  
The NMMPO received no comments on the proposed amendment.
- **Virtual Public Meeting: July 10, 2024 at 5:30pm via Zoom**  
NMCOG staff Kelly Lynema and Blake Acton hosted a virtual public meeting on Zoom. No members of the public attended the meeting, so no comments were recorded.

## Detailed List of Proposed Changes

### 1. **607887 – Replacement of Rourke Bridge in Lowell:**

The project aims to reconstruct the Rourke Bridge, extending Wood Street over CSX and MBTA rail rights-of-way and the Merrimack River. This extensive reconstruction will replace an existing bridge which was built in 1983 as a temporary bridge, connecting Lowell on either side of the river. While the project remains the same, this amendment relates to an updated project description and updated project cost.

The original project description was, "LOWELL- ROURKE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, L-15-088, WOOD STREET EXTENSION OVER BOSTON AND MAINE RAILROAD AND MERRIMACK RIVER," while the updated project description is, "LOWELL- ROURKE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, L-15-088, WOOD STREET EXTENSION OVER MBTA AND CSX RAILROAD AND MERRIMACK RIVER."

With a current programmed STIP cost of \$169 million, and a Total Federal Participating Cost of \$198 million, the total cost has now increased to about \$243.5 million, reflecting an increase of \$75 million. MassDOT has identified funding availability in FFY 2025 to fund the increase; however, the funds need to be amended into the NMMPO FFY 2024-2028 TIP before the project can advertise for construction.

The cost increase for this project is primarily attributed to the following factors: The Designer-Engineer evaluated the current Weighted Average Bid Prices and increased the unit prices of bid items to better match the current industry trends. The recently released MassDOT Bridge Manual modifies the use to 5,000 PSI Concrete; this change is causing a cost increase by 15-20% premium per CY. Additionally, utility agreements have been finalized and are higher than anticipated in the previous submission.

### 2. **608227 – Billerica – Yankee Doodle Bike Path Construction (Phase I)**

This project is programmed in FFY2025, as endorsed by the NMMPO in the TIP FFY 25-29, and will not be moving forward during the current year, FFY2024. Moving this project to FFY2025 and out of FFY2024 will ensure that the project remains active and ready to advertise to proceed.