



TO: Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization
FROM: Blake Acton, Transportation Planner II
 Kelly Lynema, Deputy Director and Transportation Program Manager
DATE: February 18, 2026
RE: Summary Narrative of Amendment 2 to the FFY 2026–2030 Transportation Improvement Program for the Northern Middlesex Region

Introduction and Overview

The following tables summarize **Amendment #2** to Fiscal Year 2026 of the statewide and Northern Middlesex MPO FFY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP). Proposed highway changes in Amendment #2 involve a net increase of \$7,197,117 to the statewide FFY 2026-2030 TIP while the transit portion involves an increase of \$2,080,277 to the NMMPO FFY 2026-2030 TIP.

The NMMPO voted to release this amendment for a 21-day public comment period at their January 28, 2026 meeting. A public comment period was held from January 29 through February 19, with no written comments received. A virtual public hearing will be held during the beginning of the February 25 NMMPO meeting at 2:00pm. Following the hearing the MPO will be presented with the option to endorse the amendment package with comments received.

Summary Table of Amendment #2 Highway Changes to the Statewide FFY 2026–2030 TIP

Project ID	Description	Former Value	New Value	Variance	Former FFY	New FFY
608227	BILLERICA- YANKEE DOODLE BIKE PATH CONSTRUCTION (PHASE 1)	\$17,103,055	\$24,473,754	+\$7,370,699	2026	2026
613876	BILLERICA- YANKEE DOODLE BIKE PATH CONSTRUCTION (PHASE 2)	\$11,780,902	\$11,252,116	-\$528,786	2027	2028
609510	DRACUT- IMPROVEMENTS AT GEORGE ENGLSBY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (SRTS)	\$4,465,215	\$4,820,419	+\$355,204	2029	2028
	TOTAL			+\$7,197,117		

Summary Table of Amendment #2 Transit Changes to the NMMPO FFY 2026–2030 TIP

Project ID	Description	Former Value	New Value	Variance	Former FFY	New FFY
RTD0011235	LRTA - REVENUE VEHICLE REPLACEMENT - 35' Hybrids (18)	\$20,121,759	\$22,202,036	+\$2,080,277	2027 - 2029	2026 - 2029

Detailed List of Proposed Changes

Project 608227: Yankee Doodle Bike Path Construction (Phase 1)

The cost increases for the Yankee Doodle Bike Path Phase 1 (Project ID 608227) are listed as follows:

1. Additional traffic management plans along Route 3 were added to this project; the plans include permanent work zone setups and removal and resetting of the existing noise wall and guardrail. Additional permanent work zones were added for construction access along Eliot Street/Orchard Road. Due to the permanent work zone setups on Route 3 and Eliot/Orchard Street, restoration plans were added, which included mill and overlay, striping, and rumble strips on Route 3. The total paving shown on Route 3 is approximately 4,900 ft. In total, the added work zone staging and resulting pavement restoration work for Route 3 increased the total project costs by approximately \$1,800,000.
2. Design development of the bridge structures added significant cost increases based on comments from MassDOT. Specifically, the ramp truss structure at Eliot Street/Orchard Road (B-12-027) increased by approximately \$5 million.

Additional smaller cost increases also include the following:

- a. General price escalation in unit prices from the previous estimate.
- b. The intersection of the proposed bike path spur from the Middlesex Street parking lot has been revised after coordination with MassDOT Complete Streets engineer. The revised intersection landscape plantings for restoration of impacted areas for construction access.
- c. The estimate was updated to meet current MassDOT requirements for the removal and disposal of excess soils generated from excavation. All excess soil excavated now requires testing and proper disposal at offsite facilities.

Project 613876: Yankee Doodle Bike Path Construction (Phase 2)

The consultant (VHB) and the Town of Billerica are still in negotiation for a scope and work hour estimate to advance the design. A new contract and schedule have yet to be submitted. Additionally, the path redesign around the archeological site still needs to be resolved. For these reasons, we propose moving this project to 2028.

Project 609510: Improvements at George Englesby Elementary School (SRTS)

Project 609510 is being accelerated from FFY 2029 to FFY 2028. The project is currently ahead of its projected design schedule, and the combined 75–100% plan set is expected to be finalized within the next three to four months. The cost increase of \$355,204 (from \$4,465,215 to \$4,820,419) reflects a revision to the original cost estimates as the project approaches final design.

Project RTD0011235: LRTA – Revenue Vehicle Replacement - 35' Hybrids (18)

Project ID RTD0011235 is being modified in the NMMPO FFY 2026–2030 TIP to reflect the Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA) receipt of a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Low-No Emission and Bus and Bus Facilities grant award (5339D) totaling \$7,158,564 with a match of \$1,431,713 in Toll Credits (TDC) programmed for FFY 2026. These changes will replace \$5,208,000 of 5307 funds with a match of \$1,302,000 of RTACAP funds programmed for FFY 2027. This funding will support LRTA's procurement of six (6) new 35-foot hybrid fixed-route buses, with delivery anticipated in FFY27 and the buses expected to enter revenue service in Spring 2027.

The higher cost amount is due to the prior amount being an estimate and funds are being programmed for an earlier fiscal year so LRTA can obligate these funds in time for buses to enter service in Spring 2027. LRTA is not changing the total number of buses planned for purchase or the planned timing of those purchases. This amendment primarily reflects a change in the funding mechanism used to procure the buses. Once these six buses enter service 15 out of 54 (28%) of LRTA's fixed-route fleet will be low-emission hybrid vehicles.

TIP Program Description

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a 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 comprised of two principal programs of projects: one focusing on transit projects through the Lowell Regional Transit Authority and the other on regional transportation infrastructure enhancements. The programs of projects form 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.