

**Listing of Federal
Obligations for Transportation Projects in the
Merrimack Valley Region**

**Federal Fiscal Year 2015
(October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015)**

Prepared by the

**Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
160 Main Street, Haverhill MA 01830**

on behalf of the

Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization

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Introduction

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act, A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) that was enacted by Congress in August 2005 was the first federal transportation funding authorization legislation that contained a provision requiring that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) publish:

“...an Annual Listing of projects, including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year shall be published or otherwise made available by the cooperative effort of the State, transit operator, and metropolitan planning organization for public review. The listing shall be consistent with the funding categories identified in each metropolitan transportation improvement program (TIP).”

This provision in federal law has appeared in subsequent federal transportation funding authorization acts, including the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act that was signed into law on December 4, 2015. It is intended to increase the transparency of government spending on transportation projects and strategies in metropolitan areas to state and local officials, and to the general public.

Transportation Planning in the Merrimack Valley Region

The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) is the transportation planning staff for the Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO). In this capacity, MVPC provides technical support and assistance to the MVMPO in fulfilling its transportation planning responsibilities as defined by federal regulations, to have a Continuing, Comprehensive and Coordinated (“3C”) transportation planning process that considers all transportation modes and supports metropolitan community development and social goals. Key responsibilities of the MPO include the preparation of regional transportation plans and programs of projects for the 15 cities and towns that comprise the Merrimack Valley region.

These are:

Amesbury	Haverhill	Newburyport
Andover	Lawrence	North Andover
Boxford	Merrimac	Rowley
Georgetown	Methuen	Salisbury
Groveland	Newbury	West Newbury

Summary of Federally Funded Projects in the Merrimack Valley Region

The term *obligation* refers to the United States Department of Transportation’s (USDOT) legal commitment to pay the federal share of a project’s cost and an obligated project is one that has received such a commitment. It should be noted that

projects for which funds have been obligated are not necessarily initiated or completed in the program year. For FHWA projects, obligation takes place when a project agreement is executed and the state/grantee requests that the funds be obligated.

Just over \$44.6 million in federal transportation funds were obligated for roadway, bridge and related projects in the Merrimack Valley during FFY 2015 (see attached table).

The Annual Listing of Federally Funded Projects in the MVPC Region

The following table shows FHWA funding obligation activities in the region.

The most significant federal obligations of funding in the Merrimack Valley in FFY 2015 were for three projects on the region's interstate roadways. Resurfacing/maintenance projects for a section of Interstate 495 in Lawrence and North Andover (Project #607985; \$6,591,822.09) and a section of Interstate 95 in Georgetown, Newbury, West Newbury and Newburyport (Project #606549; \$19,669,881.60), along with a project to rebuild the bridges that carry I-495 over the Powow Riverwalk in Amesbury (Project #603682; \$7,771,584.88) accounted for over 76% of all the funding obligated for roadway and bridge projects in the region. Construction work on all three of these projects is anticipated to begin in 2016.

Two projects programmed in the MVMPO's FFYs 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program to use what are known as MPO Target funds also had funding obligated to them. These are the rehabilitation of a section of Route 97 in Groveland (Project #605114; \$4,853,509.71) and the reconstruction of the intersection of Park Street and Lawrence Street in the City of Lawrence (Project #608075; \$994,976.34).

It should be noted that the FFY 2015 funding obligated for the Route 97 rehabilitation work in Groveland represents the first of two payments for this project. \$2,040,502 in MVMPO Target funds are expected to be obligated to this project in FFY 2016 through the use of the Advance Construction (AC) project programming process. *Advance Construction* is a method of programming and funding larger scale roadway and bridge projects using a combination of federal and state funds. Under this method, MassDOT uses state transportation funds to pay for the entire cost of a federal aid eligible project. Then, over time, federal transportation funds are programmed in a region's TIP and the STIP to "repay" the state for its up front expenditure. To be eligible for this method, a project must take more than one year to complete and its construction cost must be greater than the region's combined STP/HSIP/ CMAQ/TAP funding target.

Statewide CMAQ funds were obligated for the construction of the Clipper City Rail Trail – Phase II in Newburyport (Project #606503; \$3,591,538.48) while Statewide Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds were obligated for the Safe Routes to School project near the North Andover Middle School (Project #607775; \$1,161,257.60).

Obligation of Federal Fiscal Year 2015 Transportation Funds for Road and Bridge Projects in Merrimack Valley MPO Region

MassDOT PROJECT NUMBER	LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	OBLIGATION DATE	AMOUNT
607985	LAWRENCE/ NORTH ANDOVER	INTERSTATE MAINTENANCE & RELATED WORK ON I-495	12/4/2014	\$6,591,822.09
606549	GEORGETOWN/ NEWBURY/ WEST NEWBURY/ NEWBURYPORT	INTERSTATE MAINTENANCE & RELATED WORK ON I-95	1/7/2015	\$19,669,881.60
605114	GROVELAND	REHABILITATION OF ROUTE 97 (SCHOOL STREET & SALEM STREET)	8/19/2015	\$4,853,509.71
603682	AMESBURY	BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, A-07-026, ROUTE I-495 (NB & SB) OVER THE POWOW RIVERWALK (ABANDONED B&M RR LINE)	9/4/2015	\$7,771,584.88
607776	NORTH ANDOVER	SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (NORTH ANDOVER MIDDLE SCHOOL)	9/9/2015	\$1,161,257.60
606503	NEWBURY/ NEWBURYPORT	CONSTRUCTION OF CLIPPER CITY RAIL TRAIL ALONG THE OLD CITY BRANCH RR (PHASE II)	9/23/2015	\$3,591,538.48
608075	LAWRENCE	INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS AT LAWRENCE STREET AND PARK STREET	9/23/2015	\$994,976.34
	GRAND TOTAL			\$44,634,570.70

Advance Construction Project - Year 1 of 2