

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

**Federal Fiscal Year 2016  
(October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016)**

Prepared by the

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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 \$30.7 million in federal transportation funds were obligated for roadway, bridge and related projects in the Merrimack Valley during FFY 2016 (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 obligation of funding in the Merrimack Valley in FFY 2016 was for the resurfacing/ maintenance project for a section of Interstate 495 in Andover, Lawrence and North Andover (Project #606574; \$15,138,141.79), which accounted for almost half of the total amount of federal funds obligated in the region. The second largest obligation of funding was \$9,680,522.55 for resurfacing and related work on Route 213 in Methuen (Project #607476).

Two projects programmed in the MVMPO's FFYs 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program that use what are known as MPO Target funds also had funding obligated to them. These are the improvements to Main Street (Route 125) in Haverhill (Project #606161; \$3,015,098.56) and traffic signal and ADA improvements on Common Street and Lowell Street in the City of Lawrence (Project #608407; \$2,526,341.22).

It should be noted that the FFY 2016 funding obligated for the Route 97 rehabilitation work in Groveland represents the second of two payments for this project. \$4,853,509.71 in MVMPO Target funds were obligated to this project in FFY 2015 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 Surface Transportation Program (STP)/Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)/ Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ)/Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding target.

## Obligation of Federal Fiscal Year 2016 Transportation Funds for Road and Bridge Projects in Merrimack Valley MPO Region

MassDOT PROJECT NUMBER	LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	OBLIGATION DATE	AMOUNT
606574	ANDOVER/ LAWRENCE/ NORTH ANDOVER	INTERSTATE MAINTENANCE & RELATED WORK ON I-495	2/10/2016	\$15,138,141.79
<b>605114</b>	<b>GROVELAND</b>	<b>REHABILITATION OF ROUTE 97 (SCHOOL STREET &amp; SALEM STREET)</b>	<b>3/15/2016</b>	<b>\$345,069.49</b>
607476	METHUEN	RESURFACING & RELATED WORK ON ROUTE 213 INCLUDING DECK REPLACEMENT, BRIDGES M-17-024 & M-17-025, ROUTE 213 (EB & WB) OVER SPICKET RIVER & SUBSTRUCTURE REPAIRS, BRIDGE M-17-033, I-495 (NB & SB) OVER ROUTE 213	8/5/2016	\$9,680,522.55
608407	LAWRENCE	TRAFFIC SIGNAL AND ADA IMPROVEMENTS ON COMMON STREET AND LOWELL STREET	9/15/2016	\$2,526,341.22
606161	HAVERTHILL	IMPROVEMENTS ON MAIN STREET (ROUTE 125)	9/15/2015	\$3,015,098.56
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>\$30,705,173.61</b>

*Advance Construction Project - Year 2 of 2*