

Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization Docket June 26, 2024

Item 4 – FFY24-28 TIP Amendment #7: MeVa Updates

Context: The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a five-year capital plan of projects located within the region that are anticipated to receive federal aid. TIP projects for the region are separated into two elements based on type of federal aid: Highway and Transit. Many TIP projects are derived from the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority's Program of Projects, which are submitted to MassDOT for approval on use of state match through the statewide Capital Improvement Program. Changes to the CIP/TIP are submitted to the MassDOT Rail & Transit Division for approval before being presented to the MVMPO Board for review and inclusion.

Discussion: At its July meeting, MVMPO released a TIP amendment for MeVa book-keeping, including the reallocation of state funding to fulfill the 20 percent match requirement for the transfer of federal highway funds. MVPC held a comment period following release, as well as a public hearing on August 8, 2024. The public hearing was attended by one individual who did not have any comments on the proposed amendment.

Action: Approve proposed FFY24-28 TIP Amendment #7: MeVa Updates.

Item 5 – Merrimack Valley Vision Zero Plan

Context: Since 2017, 140 people have been killed and 1,080 people have sustained life-changing injuries in transportation-related crashes in the Merrimack Valley. All can agree that this is unacceptable and requires intervention. Vision Zero is a transportation planning policy approach that aims to eliminate roadway severe injuries and fatalities. Embracing Vision Zero requires all roadway users, managers, and designers to adhere to a safe systems approach—and approach that acknowledges that all humans are vulnerable, make mistakes, and share responsibility in preventing severe and fatal injuries. To do this, roadway managers and designers must be proactive in addressing unsafe roadway conditions and behaviors, and must also look to create multiple, redundant safety mechanisms to protect users if/when a particular other intervention fails.

Discussion: Over the past year, MVPC transportation program staff have worked with stakeholders, including municipal officials, members of the public, advocates, public safety officers, and state engineers to learn about safety perspectives and needs throughout the region, as well as provide education on the Vision Zero approach. This work was complemented by technical work, including the development of a crowd-sourced safety challenges map, a trends-based high injury network, and predictive risk-based network. Engagement and technical work informed MVPC's draft Vision Zero Plan, which was funded through the Safe Streets and Roads for all federal aid discretionary program. During the MVMPO meeting, staff will provide an overview of the plan. Should it be the board's pleasure, the board will take a vote to release the draft plan for public review.

Action: Release the draft Merrimack Valley Vision Zero Plan for public comment.

Attachments: Merrimack Valley Vision Zero Plan

Item 6 – UPWP Adjustment #1

Context: The Unified Planning Work Program establishes the tasks and deliverables that the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission's (MVPC) staff will undertake on behalf of the Merrimack Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MVMPO). The work program may be amended and adjusted throughout the year as needs and staffing change. Early in the federal fiscal year, MVMPO amended its contract (Amendment #1) to add carryover funding from previous years to advance particular tasks. In May, MVMPO approved Amendment #2, which included book-keeping items, including the closing and reallocation of remainders from completed tasks to tasks requiring ongoing support. As the end of FFY24 approaches, staff propose Adjustment #1, which entertains further book-keeping to close the year. Because the proposed changes do not represent a change more than 25% of previous task totals, the changes may be handled as an adjustment.

Discussion: Adjustment #1 proposes the following actions:

- Move \$74,235.80 from Subtask 2.2 (Asset Management and Program Development) to Subtask 2.1 (Supportive Field Services)
- Move \$10,000 from Subtask 2.3 (Supportive GIS and Information Technology) to Subtask 1.2 (Public Participation).
- Move \$5,773.18 from Subtask 2.3 (Supportive GIS and Information Technology) to Subtask 1.3 (Unified Planning Work Program)
- Move \$9,164.54 from Subtask 2.3 (Supportive GIS and Information Technology) to Subtask 1.4 (Transportation Improvement Program)
- Move \$1,426.78 to from Subtask 2.3 (Supportive GIS and Information Technology) to Subtask 4.1 (County and State Planning Support)
- Move \$26,623.18 from Subtask 3.5 (Network Sustainability and Resilience) to Subtask 2.1 (Supportive Field Services).

This action will close out the following subtasks (i.e. staff will have no further billing to these efforts in FFY24):

- Subtask 1.3 (Unified Planning Work Program)
- Subtask 1.4 (Transportation Improvement Program)

- Subtask 2.2 (Asset Management and Program Development)
- Subtask 3.5 (Network Sustainability and Resilience)
- Subtask 4.1 (State and County Planning Support)

Action: Approve proposed FFY24 Unified Planning Work Program Adjustment #1.

Attachments: Proposed Adjustment #1 Financial Table

Item 7 – Technical Assistance Menu

Context: Capacity allowing, MVPC staff perform local technical assistance for member communities. Local technical assistance is funded through difference avenues. Each community is allowed a Commission-wide technical assistance budget of 35 hours of work. In addition, MVPC programs LTA into its UPWP to support communities when their projects/efforts have a regional benefit, including projects and efforts that may be demonstrative for other member communities. In cases where communities have expended their Commission-wide LTA and projects/efforts do not have a clear regional benefit, MVPC enters into small contracts with its member communities to advance one-off projects.

Discussion: Staff have developed a technical assistance menu to inform communities of the types of LTA available, their associated hours, and costs when contracts are required. This adds certainty and efficiency for communities interested in engaging MVPC's transportation staff for support.

Action: Receive the presentation on the technical assistance menu.

Attachments: Technical Assistance Menu