

MERRIMACK VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION

Monthly Meeting of April 16, 2020

Virtual Go To Meeting

Time: 11:00 am

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of February and March Meeting Minutes
4. Warrant for February and March
5. Chairman's Comments
6. Director's Report
7. Contracts
8. Local and Regional Issues
9. Other
10. Adjourn

MINUTES

Thursday – February 20, 2020

1. **Call to Order** – Chairman Snow called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.
2. **Roll Call** – Secretary Colwell called the roll and declared a quorum present. The following Commissioners and Staff were in attendance:

Commissioners

Amesbury	Robert Laplante
Andover	Lisa Schwarz
Boxford	Jim Barnes, Treasurer
Georgetown	John Cashell
Haverhill	April Der Boghosian
Lawrence	Vilma Martinez-Dominguez
Methuen	Kathleen Bradley Colwell, Secretary
Newbury	Martha Taylor
Newburyport	Rick Taintor
Rowley	Robert Snow, Chairman
West Newbury	Brian Murphey

Staff

Tony Komornick, Acting Executive Director/Transportation Program Manager
Jenifer Dunlap, Finance Administrator
Nancy Lavallee, Office Administrator
Jerrard Whitten, GIS-IT Program Manager
Betsy Goodrich, Senior Transportation Planner
Nate Robertson, Community & Economic Development Planner
Jennifer Hughes, Environmental Program Manager
Jim Terlizzi, Transportation Engineer

3. **Adoption of January Meeting Minutes**

Secretary Colwell reviewed the January minutes and recommended the Commission’s authorization for adoption.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Murphey and seconded by Commissioner Taylor to approve the January meeting minutes. Commissioner Barnes abstained. The January minutes were approved.

4. **Warrant for January**

Treasurer Barnes reported on the January Warrant and recommended the Commission’s authorization for adoption.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Schwarz and seconded by Commissioner Colwell to approve the January Warrant. The January warrant was approved.

5. Chairman's Comments

Chairman Snow welcomed the commissioners. He reported that the 2019 MVPC annual report is published and a copy is in their packet. He noted that the staff went with a more economical and streamlined version this year and congratulated all involved on a job well done!

Chairman Snow added that the focus of the meeting will be the annual reporting of the Finance Committee including discussion and adoption of the Budgets and FY21 Assessment rates. Under the discussion of "contracts" we will also be hearing from MVPC's Community and Economic Development Planner, Nate Robertson, who will make a brief presentation on our newest contract opportunity in his program area – **Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF) funding for the "Targeted Economic Development Strategy – (TEDS)"**.

Mr. Snow announced that MVPC's new Executive Director, Theresa Park, will start on Monday, February 24th. He thanked Tony Komornick for filling in for the last two months, adding that given Tony's long history and knowledge of MVPC, the agency did not miss a beat during this interim period.

6. Executive Director's Report

Acting Executive Director, Tony Komornick, highlighted the Executive Director's activities since the last meeting in January.

He reported that he and MVPC's Sr. Transportation Engineer, Mary Kay Beninati, participated in the annual "TIP Readiness Days" conference call with MassDOT staff to identify the status of projects that should be considered by the MPO in developing the MVMPO's FFY's 2021-2025 TIP.

He attended the joint MARPA/MassDOT Annual Meeting to discuss funding assumptions to be used in developing the FFYs 2021-2025 TIP and FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program, and other transportation issues.

Mr. Komornick added that he is working with a consultant to fulfill MVPC's role as arbitrator to appeals of decisions made by local Historic District Commissions as called for under Chapter 40C. The review is for an appeal to a decision made by the Fruit Street Historic District Commission in Newburyport. The deadline for this review is 3/7/2020.

He participated in the Merrimack Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) planning workshops that were held on January 28th and February 11th.

He attended the Merrimack River Watershed District Commission meeting in Newburyport on February 6th.

Mr. Komornick updated the Commissioners on the status of the State Pension issue discussed at the recent MARPA meeting and included the following:

Legislation (H.48) was filed in 2019 regarding the pension system. The Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) sent written testimony contesting the legislation. (see below)

H. 48 would allow the Massachusetts State Retirement System to collect "employee normal costs" from "non-governmental units" on an ongoing basis and, further, to collect outstanding payments from 2016, 2017 and 2018. The RPAs are not "non-governmental units" and as such, should not be subject to this legislation. If the RPs were affected by this legislation, the ongoing costs for each RPA would be significant, and the payment costs would be so prohibitively expensive, that most of the Commonwealth's RPAs would be forced to close.

H. 48 was submitted by the Treasurer's office unilaterally after meetings of a group convened by the Secretary of Administration and Finance to discuss and resolve this issue slowed down before a compromise was reached. The working committee included AAANF, MARPA representation and the

Massachusetts State Employee's Retirement System Executive Director. At these meetings, MARPA explained that the RPAs are not "non-governmental units" but are "special state districts" bound by all applicable state and federal laws.

In January 2020, the legislation was reported favorably out of Committee. Although MARPA is confident of their position with regard to this issue, they are going to contract with a lobbyist to help monitor the legislation on the Hill and if necessary, assist us with conversations with the Treasurer's office and next steps.

7. Contracts

The following Grant/Local Community contracts were presented for authorization by the Commission.

• Groveland

- **\$2,000** (No match required) - Development of an open space application
- **\$7,000** (No match required) - Data collection for pavement management

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Colwell to authorize the above-mentioned contracts and seconded by Commissioner Taylor. The contracts were unanimously approved.

• Newburyport - \$2,500 (No match required) - Water System Inspector (mobile application)

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Barnes to authorize the above-mentioned contract and seconded by Commissioner Martinez-Dominguez. The contract was unanimously approved.

• North Andover – \$35,000 (No match required)- **Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning Process and All-Hazards Mitigation Plan Update**

MVPC to receive funding from North Andover to provide MVP planning assistance and to update their all-hazards mitigation plan. Funds to be expended by June 2020.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Laplante to authorize the above-mentioned contract and seconded by Commissioner Murphey. The contract was unanimously approved.

• **Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF) Resiliency and Innovation Fund - \$150,000** (No match required) – **Targeted Economic Development Strategy (TEDS)**

MVPC's Community and Economic Development Planner Nate Robertson gave a presentation on TEDS (Targeted Economic Development Strategy) in support of the \$150,000 in funding MVPC received from the Resiliency and Innovation Fund for Merrimack Valley Businesses and the Essex County Community Foundation. The grant will be used to support a new staff person in the Economic Development Department and implement the Targeted Economic Development Strategy (TEDS).

The TEDS was developed by the Lawrence Partnership, MVPC, ECCF, Lawrence, Andover, North Andover, and Mt. Auburn Associates in the wake of the Columbia Gas Disaster. The coalition concluded that it is not enough to focus entirely on short-term economic recovery programs. If we want to make ourselves more resilient it is critical to ensure that the region is positioned for long-term economic growth. Thus, the Targeted Economic Development Strategy was born.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Schwarz to authorize the above-mentioned contract and seconded by Commissioner Cashell. The contract was unanimously approved.

- **Economic Development Administration (EDA) - \$37,500** (\$37,500 in matching funds from DHCD DLTA) - **Data Portal Project**

MVPC to receive funding from EDA to develop the Merrimack Valley Data Portal with the assistance of a consultant specializing in GIS software application development. The Merrimack Valley Data Portal will be a public tool capable of instantly accessing the most robust available data for this region, including demographic, employment, industry, income, education, commuting, rental, real estate, and housing data. This innovative tool will make accessing essential planning and economic development-related data easier, faster, and more streamlined. We aim to make this tool an essential part of all our planning processes both in-house and throughout the region.

Vote: There was a motion by Commissioner Taintor to authorize the above-mentioned contract and seconded by Commissioner Taylor. The contract was unanimously approved.

8. Finance Committee Report

Treasurer Barnes gave a summary report of the finance committee meeting held on February 14, 2020. In attendance were members Perry and Schwarz.

- **FY'19 Audit** – Treasurer Barnes reported that the FY19 audit has been completed and that there are no findings. The operating Fund Balance at June 30, 2019 is \$294k.
- **Adoption of Updated FY'20 Budget #2** - Treasurer Barnes reported on the revised Budget #2 for FY20. Budget #2 was updated to include new projects realized and delayed/canceled projects since Budget #1 was adopted one year ago. Budget #2 in the amount of \$3.54 million is higher than Budget #1 in revenue and expenses by \$1.26 million. Treasurer Barnes directed the commissioners' attention to the blue columns on the Budget #2 spreadsheet identifying new revenue sources such as, Dept. of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) – 2020 DLTA, Economic Development Admin (EDA) - Data Portal, Essex County Comm. Fund (ECCF) - Cultural Asset Mapping and Targeted Econ. Dev. Strategy, Pictometry, National Wildlife Federation (NWF) - Sandy #2 Funds, Dept of Marine Fisheries (DMF) - Great Marsh Restoration and Revitalization, DOER-REPA - Green Communities, Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) – Merrimack River Basin Decision Framework, Green Community T/A – Lawrence & Merrimac, E.O. Energy & Environment Affairs (EOEEA) – Flagging Program in Newburyport, Stormwater Management Plan MS4 T/A– Boxford, Rowley and West Newbury, West Newbury Millpond Management Plan, West Newbury Conservation Commission Agent/Open Space assistance and Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) plans – Merrimac, North Andover, and Rowley. The Finance Administrator noted that most of the new project revenues do not require a cash match and that corresponding direct and indirect expenses were also updated as appropriate.

Treasurer Barnes reported that the Finance Committee recommends adoption of the FY20 Budget #2 to the commission.

Vote: Commissioner Taintor made a motion to authorize and approve the above-mentioned FY20 Budget #2 as presented. Commissioner Cashell seconded the motion. The FY20 Budget #2 was unanimously approved.

- **Adoption of FY21 Assessment Rate** - Treasurer Barnes reported on the proposed assessment rate increase for FY21. Various examples were shown, but the maximum increase allowed of 2.5% or \$0.39275 per capita totaling \$131,079 in revenue was used as an example in budget #1 FY21. Treasurer Barnes reported that the Finance Committee recommended adoption of the maximum increase allowed of \$0.39275 per capita to minimize the contributions from the fund balance to meet contract match requirements.

Vote: Commissioner Laplante made a motion to authorize and approve the above-mentioned FY21 Assessments as presented. Commissioner Cashell seconded the motion. The FY21 Assessments was unanimously approved.

- **Adoption of FY21 Budget #1** - MVPC's Finance Administrator, Jen Dunlap, reported on Budget #1 for FY21 totaling \$2.67 million saying it is a very strong start.

Treasurer Barnes reported that the Finance Committee recommends adoption of the FY21 Budget #1 to the commission as presented.

Vote: Commissioner Taintor made a motion to authorize and approve the above-mentioned FY21 Budget #1 as presented. Commissioner Murphey seconded the motion. The FY21 Budget #1 was unanimously approved.

- **Adoption of New IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate** - Treasurer Barnes reported that the Finance Committee recommended adoption of the new IRS mileage reimbursement rate of 57.5 cents per mile as is the commission's usual practice, effective January 1, 2020.

Vote: Commissioner Laplante made a motion to authorize and approve the adoption of the new IRS mileage reimbursement rate of 57.5 cents per mile. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. The new IRS mileage rate of 57.5 cents was unanimously approved.

9. Local and Regional Issues

Georgetown's Commissioner Cashell updated the group on the Mellow Transfer Station move. He said best practices are being followed. The town is going through site plan review to get site plan approval. He noted that the reason for the move is that the amount of trash capacity could be increased from 30 tons to 300 tons, which is currently not allowed by the Town. With concerns of an increase in truck traffic, a drone is monitoring the current impact of truck volume.

10. Other

Tony Komornick thanked the MVPC staff for helping him to operate the agency seamlessly during his interim appointment as Acting Executive Director.

11. Adjourn

There was a motion by Commissioner Laplante and second by Commissioner Colwell to adjourn the meeting at 8:30pm

I hereby certify that these minutes are an accurate account of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission meeting held on February 20, 2020.

Kathleen Bradley Colwell
Secretary



MERRIMACK VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 2020
MONTHLY WARRANT # 8
 March 19, 2020

Check #	Amount	Vendor	Description
16738	\$ 7,457.00	A.I.M. MUTUAL	ANNUAL WORKERS COMP.INSURANCE RENEWAL
16739	\$ 4,053.05	BANK OF AMERICA PAYMENTS	CREDIT CARD CHARGES-FEB'20
16740	\$ 167.72	BANK OF AMERICA-BANK FEES	SERVICE CHARGES
16741	\$ 960.00	BOWDITCH & DEWEY, LLP	EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK REVISIONS & POLICY DISCUSSION
16742	\$ 153.22	BURKE AND SONS PLUMBING & HEATING INC.	HEATING REPAIRS
16743	\$ 507.88	COMCAST	PHONE/INTERNET SVC.-FEB'20
16744	\$ 1,081.00	COMMONWEALTH OF MASS./GIC	EMPLOYER INSURANCE ADMINISTRATION FEE 2019
16745	\$ 286.59	KAREN S. CONARD	EXPENSE REIMB.-DEC.MVMMC MTG.LUNCH
16746	\$ 784.00	COSTAR REALTY INFO. INC.	DIRECT(DHCD)-REAL ESTATE DATA CHARGES-FEB&MAR'20
16747	\$ 8,559.79	CREDERE ASSOCIATES, LLC	DIRECT(EPA)-BROWNFIELDS CONSULTANT
16748	\$ 31.99	CRYSTAL ROCK LLC	WATER/COOLER RENTAL - FEB'20
16749	\$ 249.00	CTS LANGUAGE LINK	DIRECT(MADOT)-DOC TRANSLATION SVCS.&ANNUAL INTERPRETER SVCS.
16750	\$ 31.09	FEDERAL EXPRESS	EXPRESS POSTAGE
16751	\$ 250.00	GRANTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	ACCOUNTING SOFTWR/LIC.FEES-FEB'20
16752	\$ 95.99	JENNIFER HUGHES	DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-FEB'20
16753	\$ 1,748.00	INTERNATIONAL SPECIAL RISKS	ADMIN./DIRECT(NWF/DMF)-ANNUAL BOAT INSURANCE
16754	\$ 116.84	JENIFER D. DUNLAP - PETTY CASH	PETTY CASH REIMBURSEMENT
16755	\$ 250.00	KIA MOTORS FINANCE	MVPC VEHICLE LEASE-FEB'20
16756	\$ 184.33	ANTHONY KOMORNICK	DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-JAN&FEB'20
16757	\$ 460.00	ELLEN KUHL	CLEANERS-FEB'20
16758	\$ 225.00	LAPLUME & SONS PRINTING INC.	ANNUAL REPORT CREATIVE SVCS./PRINTING
16759	\$ 311.10	MERR.VALLEY ECON. D.C.	RENT UNIT G - MAY'20
16760	\$ 3,348.96	MVPC REGIONAL RES.C.	RENT UNITS A-H,F - MAY'20
16761	\$ 776.76	NATIONAL GRID (GAS CHARGES)	GAS CHARGES - FEB'20
16762	\$ 330.46	NATIONAL GRID	ELECTRICITY - FEB'20
16763	\$ 1,188.00	NE COPY SPECIALISTS, INC.	ANNUAL COPIER MAINTENANCE BASE CHARGE
16764	\$ 4,240.00	NORFOLK & DEDHAM MUTUAL INS CO	ANNUAL INSURANCE RENEWAL - BUSINESS OWNER POLICY
16765	\$ 850.00	NORFOLK & DEDHAM MUTUAL INS CO	ANNUAL INSURANCE RENEWAL-UMBRELLA POLICY
16766	\$ 2,146.16	NORTH OF BOSTON MEDIA GROUP	DIRECT(MADOT)-LEGAL NOTICES
16767	\$ 220.81	PETER PHIPPEN	DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-FEB'20
16768	\$ 242.74	QUADIENT FINANCE USA, INC.	POSTAGE METER SUPPLIES
16769	\$ 38.36	NATHANIEL ROBERTSON	DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-FEB'20
16770	\$ 3,350.00	SEASIDE SUSTAINABILITY, INC.	DIRECT(DMF)-MACROPLASTIC MAPPING & CLEANUP IN G.MARSH
16771	\$ 425.13	STAPLES CREDIT PLAN	OFFICE SUPPLIES
16772	\$ 23.00	JAMES TERLIZZI	DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-JAN'20
16773	\$ 159.96	VERIZON WIRELESS	IPAD DATA CHARGES (4) - FEB'20
16774	\$ 913.94	VERIZON CONNECT NWF,INC.	ADMIN/DIRECT(NBPT)-GPS VEHICLE TRACKING SVC.-FEB'20
	\$ 46,217.87		

Warrant Paid Items:
 NONE

TOTAL WARRANT	\$ 46,217.87	**TOTAL PASS THRU TO DIRECT PROJECTS = \$ 11K
		***TOTAL PASS THRU NWF/DMF GREAT MARSH RESTORATION = \$ 5K
		****ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS OF NOTE - INSURANCE POLICY RENEWALS

APPROVED BY: _____
 ROBERT SNOW, ACTING CHAIRMAN

 Date



MERRIMACK VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 2020
MONTHLY WARRANT # 9
 April 16, 2020

<u>Check #</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>
16776	\$ 7,485.82	BANK OF AMERICA PAYMENTS	DIRECT(DMF) -CREDIT CARD CHARGES-MAR'20 (INCLUDES DMF SUPPLIES \$4K)
16777	\$ 194.33	BANK OF AMERICA-BANK FEES	SERVICE CHARGES-MAR'20
16778	\$ 22,332.26	BOSTON UNIVERSITY GRANTS RECEIVABLE	DIRECT(DMF)-RESTORING THE GREAT MARSH PARTNER/CONSULTANT
16779	\$ 300.00	LARISSA V. BROWN	HONORARIUM - ARBITRATOR DISTRICT COMM.APPEAL
16780	\$ 4,399.05	BROWN AND CALDWELL	DIRECT(DEP)-MERRIMACK RIVER DECISION FRAMEWORK CONSULT.
16781	\$ 166,067.66	CITY OF NEWBURYPORT	DIRECT(EPA RLF)-CLIPPER CITY RAIL TRAIL GRANT BAL.
16782	\$ 466.61	COMCAST	PHONE/INTERNET SVCS.-MAR'20
16783	\$ 45,471.88	COMMONWEALTH OF MASS./GIC	EMPLOYER INSURANCE PREMIUMS - Q1-20
16784	\$ 342.00	COSTAR REALTY INFO. INC.	DIRECT(DHCD)-REAL ESTATE DATA SUBSCRIPTION-MAR'20
16785	\$ 3,820.01	CREDERE ASSOCIATES, LLC	DIRECT(EPA)-BROWNFIELDS CONSULTANT
16786	\$ 38.22	CRYSTAL ROCK LLC	WATER/COOLER RENTAL-MAR'20
16787	\$ 133.14	CTS LANGUAGE LINK	DIRECT(MADOT)-DOCUMENT TRANSLATION
16788	\$ 242.86	DELL MARKETING LP	COMPUTER MONITOR
16789	\$ 14,850.00	GIS PLANNING INC.	DIRECT(EDA)-DATA PORTAL APPLICATION - DOWN PMT.
16790	\$ 250.00	GRANTS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS	ACCTG.SOFTWARE LIC./MAINT.-MAR'20
16791	\$ 250.00	KIA MOTORS FINANCE	MVPC VEHICLE LEASE PMT-MAR'20
16792	\$ 660.00	ELLEN KUHL	OFFICE CLEANING X3-MAR'20
16793	\$ 311.10	MERR.VALLEY ECON. D.C.	RENT UNIT G - JUN'20
16794	\$ 3,348.96	MVPC REGIONAL RES.C.	RENT UNITS A-H,F - JUN'20
16795	\$ 624.45	NATIONAL GRID (GAS CHARGES)	GAS CHARGES-MAR'20
16796	\$ 364.08	NATIONAL GRID	ELECTRICITY - MAR'20
16797	\$ 1,720.00	NORFOLK & DEDHAM MUTUAL INS CO	AUTO INSURANCE POLICY RENEWAL
16798	\$ 217.94	PETER PHIPPEN	DIRECT EXPENSE REIMB.-MAR'20
16799	\$ 313.26	QUADIENT FINANCE USA, INC.	POSTAGE METER LEASE/MAINT.- 2ND QTR.
16800	\$ 818.79	STAPLES CREDIT PLAN	OFFICE SUPPLIES
16801	\$ 1,441.86	VERIZON WIRELESS	IPAD DATA CHARGES (5)-MAR'20 & IPAD PRO PURCHASE - ED
16802	\$ 840.42	VERIZON CONNECT NWF,INC.	ADMIN./DIRECT(NBPT)-FLEET GPS MONITORING-MAR'20
\$ 277,304.70			

Warrant Paid Items:

NONE

TOTAL WARRANT	\$ 277,304.70	**TOTAL PASS THRU TO DIRECT PROJECTS = \$ 189K
		***TOTAL PASS THRU NWF/DMF GREAT MARSH RESTORATION = \$ 30K
		****ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS OF NOTE - INSURANCE POLICY RENEWALS

APPROVED BY:

ROBERT SNOW, ACTING CHAIRMAN

Date

Monthly Commission Meeting

Chairman's Report

April 16, 2020

- We are living through an unprecedented period. COVID-19 has thrown the planet off its axis as front line health care workers face the challenge of their lifetime. While public safety is of utmost concern, MVPC staff have made adjustments to continue operating as productively as possible – they are continuing to enter into new contracts for its services, as well as making progress with existing initiatives, including the launching of the Merrimack River District Commission work.
- It's unclear when life will resume some level of normalcy. Until Governor Baker gives the green light for people to resume their work and home life, we will plan to conduct our meetings virtually.
- I will be establishing a Nominating Committee for next year's slate of officers. If you are interested in serving on the Committee, please let me know by the end of next week, April 24th. If you are interested in serving as an officer, also let me know of your interest. A slate of officers will be provided at the May meeting for your vote.
- It came as a shock when we learned that a fellow Commissioner, John Cashell, had been admitted to a hospital after having tested positive for COVID-19. Let's all wish him well on his road to recovery. And may all of you continue to maintain your good health.

MONTHLY COMMISSION MEETING

Executive Director's Report

April 16, 2020

Entering into week eight with the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, I have gotten a good sense of the breadth and range of work that's occurring within the organization. Any expectations of what I hope to accomplish were quickly derailed by COVID-19 but there's a lot still which has been accomplished and that we can be proud of – our current workload in key program areas are detailed below. In addition to supporting the work of the program managers, I personally have:

- Attended and participated in MVPC-led meetings pertaining to CEDS, MPO, MVP, Green Communities, TEDS, and MRDC
- Attended the Lawrence Partnership Board meeting as ex-officio
- Attended Governor Baker's Announcement Relative to Economic Development in the Commonwealth
- Provided input to the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development on proposed changes to their MassWorks program
- Met with U.S. Senator Markey's District Director
- Served as judge at an EforAll's final pitch contest
- Met with Town Managers from North Andover and Salisbury; other scheduled meetings with community leaders were postponed
- Connected with Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance regarding changes to their organization
- Consolidated and provided information on COVID-19 to Mayors, Managers and Administrators
- Participate in several weekly calls with the Lt. Governor, mayors and managers in the greater Boston area, and the MMA with regard to COVID-19 efforts underway.

Meetings/Activities of Note

Transportation Program updates:

The Merrimack Valley MPO held a Virtual Meeting on March 25th. Key items for discussion were:

Identification of roadway/bridge/trail/transit projects to be included in the MPO's Draft FFYs 2021-2025 TIP.

Release of Draft Amendment #6 to the MPO's FFYs 2020-2024 TIP. This amendment reflects the increased cost of the Bradford Rail Trail – Phase II project;

Release of Draft Amendment #1 to the MPO's FFY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program. This amendment will facilitate upgrading of the MVPC's Pavement Management Software.

The next Virtual Meeting of the MVMPO will be held on April 22nd.

Updating of the Draft Park St. to Park St. Pedestrian Study of Route 28 in Methuen and Lawrence. Presented findings of the draft study at a Methuen Arlington Neighborhood, Inc. community meeting and received additional comments.

First Active Transportation Plan Advisory Working Group meeting held on March 10th.

Mapping of the Complete Streets projects in the region, which will be incorporated into a story map and included in the Active Transportation Plan.

Met with school staff from the Haverhill and Methuen High Schools to discuss transportation needs for their special needs populations.

Preparing the MVMPO's FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program.

Preparing the MPO's Draft FFYs 2021-2025 TIP. This work includes preparing the required Greenhouse Gas analyses and the Amendment #6 to the region's FFYs 2020-2024 TIP that was released for public review and comment and overseeing the agency's outreach efforts as contained in the MVMPO's Public Participation Plan.

Assisting MVRTA personnel in collecting passenger miles traveled data on the Authority's fixed route bus system under FTA's National Transit Database reporting requirements.

Working with CarteGraph to develop a new licensing to provide access to a newer, more powerful version of its Pavement Management software.

Prepared and submitted ADA reviews of MVRTA on-demand services and finalized the MVRTA route marker data set.

Updating the Master Traffic Count Database file. This effort includes incorporation of some historical count data that goes back to the late 1970s.

Working with local DPW Directors and our Joint Purchasing consultant to improve the effectiveness of MVPC's Joint Procurement Services.

Analyzing MVRTA's Boston Commuter Bus Service to identify scheduling changes that could be made to increase ridership.

Completed development of the latest background growth rates in traffic both regionwide and locally to respond to consultants' inquiries of the most appropriate background growth rate for their planning studies for projects within the Merrimack Valley Region.

Gathering and analyzing crash data, plotting crash locations, setting up the capacity analyses, and writing document text in preparation for future gathering of traffic volume data for Road Safety Audits at these locations:

- Haverhill: Main Street (Route 125) in vicinity of Primrose Street and Marsh Avenue;
- Haverhill: Lowell Avenue, between River Street and the northerly corner
- Lawrence: Haverhill Street (Route 110) at Lawrence Street.

Provided assistance to the Town of Georgetown in implementing 20 MPH Safety Zones.

Environmental Program updates:

Municipal Vulnerability Program

- Merrimac – A draft Summary of Findings is complete; looking to schedule a virtual Listening Session.
- North Andover – Virtual Core Team meeting was held. Stakeholder invites have gone out as well as an online survey to determine the town's top Natural Hazard Threats. Work started to update the Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Rowley – Working with Rowley to set up a virtual Core Team meeting.

Brownfields Program

- Merrimac – Coastal Metals seeking additional funding and have provided a scope of work, cost estimate and schedule. RLF subgrant drafted for +/- \$1550k and a Loan of \$75K MVPC legal counsel is reviewing the loan document prior to submitting to EPA.
- Methuen – provided assessment funding to complete EPA project eligibility work and then conduct cleanup planning to support Methuen's efforts to demolish a portion of their Highway Department Building containing asbestos. Final bid documents were received this week.
- Newburyport – MVPC has received an additional request for cleanup funding for contaminated land adjacent to the Clipper City Rail Trail site. This request is being reviewed.
- Haverhill – A meeting with the owner of the Housing Support site as well as Mass Development and our consultant was held to further cleanup at the site now that assessment complete.
- Other site work and assessment is ongoing in Amesbury and Lawrence.

Stormwater Collaborative/MS4 Support

- Completed work on O&M procedures for open space and other municipal sites in Rowley and Boxford to meet MS4 permit requirements. These O&M procedures are in draft format to be reviewed with the municipalities.
- April 4th Stormwater Collaborative meeting was held virtually and included a PowerPoint presentation of an IDDE training that can be customized to be used in any municipality. The training was provided to MVPC by NMCOG. It was edited to contain Merrimack Valley regional information and sent to all communities.
- Attended a virtual webinar on Coastal Remediation Grant funding. All MV communities are eligible to apply. There is an opportunity for towns to apply for Stormwater Bylaw development. Both Salisbury and West Newbury do not have Stormwater Bylaws at this time. Assist with grant applications in hopes of getting bylaws approved in both towns with the grant funding.

Green Communities

- MVPC has the opportunity to add municipalities to its REPA grant. Signed MOUs have been received from Newburyport and Haverhill. Awaiting MOUs from Lawrence and Merrimac before submitting. New MOUs are due May 1.
- Final grant reporting was submitted for Lawrence and we are waiting to hear back from Green Communities regarding how the outstanding grant funds can be spent.
- Rowley was to hold a meeting on the stretch code later this month but had to delay that meeting due to the virus outbreak. A tentative new date has been set for May 13.

Merrimack Valley Regional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan

- MVPC did not reapply for Hazard Mitigation grant funding to update the regional plan. Some communities, i.e. Georgetown and North Andover, received MVP funding for combined HMP/MVP plans. The remaining 12 communities that were part of the Hazard Mitigation plan will be informed that the plan expires in 2021. MVPC will reach out and offer assistance in applying for grant funding.

Open Space

- Assisting West Newbury with Conservation Restriction monitoring. This has been put on hold until site visits can be conducted.

Affordable Access to Regional Coordination (AARC)

- Preparing a PowerPoint to present to municipalities, housing authorities and others to educate them on Energy Efficiency Assistance available for low-income homeowners and renters. In process of revising our list of deliverables due to delays presented by the virus outbreak.

Merrimack River District Commission

- Work on the MRDC framework is in full swing with meetings of the Steering Committee and smaller work groups set up for the week of April 13th. A follow up meeting to occur the following week.
- Work has also begun on the early alert system. MVPC participated in a white board session held by Brown and Caldwell this week.
- Looking into 319 funding to continue MVPCs work on the Merrimack River beyond the fiscal year. Opportunity to serve as a non-point source regional coordinator through FY23.

GIS Program updates:

Contracts and Grant Opportunities

- Enrolled Groveland Municipal Light Department in GIS Program (mobile & desktop applications)
- Provided Newburyport annual renewal contracts for GPS tracking, added Fire Department vehicles.

Coordinate Pictometry flight, municipal access and training.

- Scheduled for 4/15 start with imagery delivery/availability in July and training in August/September.

IT Hardware and Software

- Developed mailing list process for centralized mailing list management.

- Ongoing dialogue with Cartegraph for upgrade to new OMS system for Transportation program.

Community Initiatives

- Andover – updated MIMAP with new print template (implemented for all communities)
- Amesbury – completed draft of tri-town hydrant access mobile application
- Boxford – working with DPW to enhance Stormwater Inspector mobile app
- Georgetown – updated OS layer per request, FY2021 parcel update underway soon
- Groveland – provided draft open space/trails mobile application, executed contract with GMLD
- Newburyport – participated in virtual meeting for ViewPermit implementation per AP request
- Rowley – working with RMLP to update system maps (underway)
- Salisbury – developing proposal for water system data aggregation

Community and Economic Development updates:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

- CEDS Meeting held on 2/27 at the New England Die Cutting manufacturing facility in Methuen. Around 30 stakeholders throughout the region attended. Topics covered: data portal, priorities for years 2/3, tour of facility.
- Merrimack Valley Cultural Asset Mapping Project. Working with the Essex County Community Foundation to engage and catalyze the arts and culture community. We have been working diligently since the COVID-19 pandemic to retool the project in a way that still accomplishes our goals but keeps people safe.

Data Portal

- Building out a regional data portal to synthesize, update, and present a wide myriad of data for our region including demographics, available real estate, and businesses. MVPC released an RFR, selected the preferred vendor, and are currently working with them on the final product.

Economic Adjustment Assistance (EAA) Grant

- Working with one of its CEDS Committee members on applying for a \$420K EAA grant from EDA.

Targeted Economic Development Strategy (TEDS)

- Posted a job description for the position on our website, LinkedIn, state-wide listserv, and posted to MMA.org. The deadline was extended in light of COVID-19.
- The TEDS Advisory Committee (Lawrence, Lawrence Partnership Andover, North Andover, WIB, and ECCF) has met three times to identify project specific tasks where we

can align our vision and resources on. This has resulted in some tangible project priorities to help the new employee get started on.

We Are MV . com

- Updated the available property inventory on the property search section.
- Built a COVID-19 Resources Page – which compiles information and resources for small businesses who have been impacted by COVID-19.

Housing

- Produced a Regional Housing Developers Database, a compilation of housing developers who have done projects in the region. This database serves to help communities be more proactive about what housing products they wish to see in their communities (i.e. single family home cluster development, mixed use affordable housing, dense residential market rate etc)
- Produced a database of all current Subsidized Housing Units in the Merrimack Valley, including their expiration dates to help communities be more proactive about preserving those units. Also mapped those units (when applicable) so it is an available GIS layer that can be used for planning purposes.
- Working internally and with community input to develop a Priority Housing Development Site Analysis Scope of Work. The goal will be to help identify (the most) developable parcels in a given community and identify potential constraints (i.e. water, sewer, zoning) so communities can work on remediating them.

Contracts
April 16, 2020

The following Contracts require the authorization of the Commission.

Grants/Local Community Contracts

- **Amesbury - \$4,500 (No match required) – Annual Parcel Mapping Contract**
- **Georgetown - \$1,500 (+21 hrs. LTA) – Annual Parcel Mapping Contract**
- **Groveland Municipal Light Dept.- \$3,500 (No match required) – Development of Mobile & Desktop Applications Electric Utility**
- **Rowley - \$ 4,400 (No match required) – Annual Parcel Mapping / MIMAP Contract**

MVPC to receive funding from Amesbury, Georgetown, Groveland and Rowley to provide the above GIS products and updates.

- **Rowley – \$15,000 (No match required)- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning**

MVPC to receive funding from Rowley to provide MVP planning assistance. Funds to be expended by June 2020.

Consultants and Subgrant Agreements / Loans

- **Town of Merrimac - Costal Metals EPA Brownfields Site – TOTAL +/- \$230,000 (30% Loan, 70% Grant)**

MVPC to pay the Town of Merrimac directly from the EPA Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund +/- \$155,000 in a grant and \$75,000 in a loan. The Town of Merrimac will use the loan/subgrant to remove and remediate contamination to prepare the site for an affordable housing developer. The Town will provide the 20% match of +/- \$46,000.

- **Brown and Caldwell – Consultant, EOEEA Newburyport Flagging Project - \$90,000**

Consultant to be paid directly from EOEEA project funding to utilize existing information on river hydraulics from previous time of travel studies as well as information on CSO triggers to develop the first evolution of an early alert system for the City of Newburyport. The intention is that this scope of work will shape the first phase of an evolutionary system by uniting prior studies with real-time rainfall and streamflow conditions to assist in identifying the possibility of dangerous bacteria levels in Newburyport due to upstream CSO events. Further, the hope is that this work ultimately evolves beyond this initial phase into a real-time data monitoring and alert system for bacteria from any source as pilot technology for real-time testing is reviewed and approved.

- **GIS Planning – Consultant, EDA Data Portal Project - \$39,600**

Consultant to be paid directly from EDA Data Portal Project funding to provide us with a customized, easy-to-use, Data Portal for the Merrimack Valley. GIS Planning has deployed their data tools throughout the nation and are considered a leader in the field.