

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

**Federal Fiscal Year 2021  
(October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021)**

Prepared by the

**Merrimack Valley Planning Commission  
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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 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that was signed into law on November 15, 2021. 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 public.

23 CFR 450.334, the federal regulation which defines how the above requirement is to be met, stipulates that at a minimum this Listing must contain the following information for each project:

- The amount of funds requested in the TIP;
- Federal funding obligated during the preceding year;
- Federal funding remaining and available for subsequent years;
- Sufficient description to identify the project or phase; and
- Identification of the agencies responsible for carrying out the project or phase.

## **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:

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

### **Sources of Obligation Information**

Data on the obligation of FFY 2021 federal transportation funds for roadway and bridge projects was provided by the MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning. Information on the obligation of federal transit funds in the region in FFY 2021 was provided by the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA).

### **Summary of Federally Funded Projects in the Merrimack Valley Region**

The term *obligation* refers to the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) legal commitment to pay the federal share of the cost of a project 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. For FTA projects, obligation occurs when FTA approves a grant application it has received from a recipient, which in the case of the Merrimack Valley MPO region is usually the MVRTA.

### **Agencies Responsible for Implementing Project**

MassDOT is responsible for implementing the roadway and bridge projects that received federal funding obligations in FFY 2021, while the MVRTA is responsible for implementing the transit projects and services that received obligations.

### **Roadway, Pedestrian and Bridge Project Obligations**

Almost \$17.2 million in federal transportation funds were obligated for five intersection, pedestrian, and bridge projects in the Merrimack Valley during FFY 2021 (see [Table 1 on Page 6](#)).

As has been the case in recent FFYs, the most significant federal obligation of funding in the Merrimack Valley in FFY 2021 was \$7,694,416,23 for the replacement of Bridge H 12 039 that carries I495 over the Merrimack River in the Ward Hill area of Haverhill (Project #605306). FFY 2021 is the fourth year of federal expenditures for this project, which will ultimately cost \$108,833,832 and

take five years to complete (see definition of *Advance Construction* on the following page).

Two intersection projects in the region received funding obligations in FFY 2021. The reconstruction of the Route 110 (Kenoza Avenue and Amesbury Road)/ Route 108 (Newton Road) intersection in Haverhill (Project #608761) received an obligation of \$2, 717,561.12, and \$987,205.69 was obligated for the project to improve the Route 28 (South Broadway)/ Mount Vernon Street intersection in Lawrence (Project #609251).

In Groveland, \$2,357,432.09 was obligated for the project to construct the Groveland Community Trail that will run from Main Street to King Street (Project #608298).

FFY 2021 also saw the obligation of \$2,773,889 in MVMPO Target Funding for a MVRTA transit project; the replacement of seven Model Year 2009 vehicles (Project #S10777).

The \$16,530,504.13 that was obligated to the five projects described above was actually 3.8% less than the \$17,189,341.60 that was programmed for these projects in the 2021 element of the MVMPO FFYs 2021 to 2025 TIP, as amended. Much of this difference is accounted for by the \$621,892.57 less that was obligated for the replacement of Bridge H 12 039.

### **Transit Project Obligations**

In addition to the MVMPO Target Funding that was obligated to replace seven Model Year 2009 buses, there were four MVRTA projects that received funding obligations from the Federal Transit Administration during FFY 2021. Data on these project obligations may be found in Table 2 on Page 7.

The MVRTA used \$495,335 in federal funds to replace two Model Year 2009 buses. Matching funds for this grant provided through MassDOT's RTA Cap program.

The Authority also received an obligation of \$264,353 to fund seven mobile surveillance/security projects. These included replacement of the security surveillance systems at the Gateway Parking Area in Lawrence as well as at the MVRTA Intermodal Parking Facility in Haverhill, and the purchase of Motion Detection cameras and communications equipment for nine ADA service vehicles.

Related to the above, the Authority received a separate obligation of \$104,800 to replace the Security Camera System at the McGovern Transportation Center in Lawrence.

The fourth project, which was for the replacement of 16 Model Year 2015 minivans, received an obligation of \$590,240.

In addition to the above, on December 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSAA) was signed into law. This legislation includes \$14 billion of funding that will be allocated to support the transit industry during the COVID 19 public health emergency. The MVRTA received an obligation of \$299,747 in Section 5307 funding in FFY 2021 through this legislation.

### **Definitions of Terms Referred to in this Report**

*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 regional 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 regional combined Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)/Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)/Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ)/Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding target.

*GrantsPlus* is the system used by MassDOT to track the status of transit projects for the Regional Transit Authorities around the Commonwealth.

*ProjectInfo* is the system used by MassDOT to track the status of its approved roadway, trail, pedestrian and bridge projects.

**TABLE 1: FFY 2021 ANNUAL LISTING OF OBLIGATED ROAD, BRIDGE, AND BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PROJECTS  
IN THE MERRIMACK VALLEY MPO REGION PER 23 CFR 450.334**

Agency	ProjInfo_ID	MassDOT_Project Description	Obligation Date	FFY 2021 Programmed Federal Fund	FFY 2021 Obligated Federal Fund	Remaining Advance Construction Fund
<b>REGION : MERRIMACK VALLEY</b>						
MassDOT Highway	605306	HAVERHILL BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, H 12 039, I-495 (NB & SB) OVER MERRIMACK RIVER	24-Sep-21	\$8,316,308.80	\$7,694,416.23	\$2,700,969.61
MassDOT Highway	608298	GROVELAND GROVELAND COMMUNITY TRAIL, FROM MAIN STREET TO KING	10-Jul-21	\$2,363,865.60	\$2,357,432.09	
MassDOT Highway	608761	HAVERHILL INTERSECTION RECONSTRUCTION ON ROUTE 108 (NEWTON ROAD)	21-Aug-21	\$2,759,584.00	\$2,717,561.12	
MassDOT Highway	609251	LAWRENCE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS AT SOUTH BROADWAY (ROUTE 28)	16-Jan-21	\$974,694.40	\$987,205.69	
MassDOT Highway	608027	MVRTA FLEX TO FTA TO REPLACE YR 2009 BUSES WITH NEW BUSES DELIVERY	14-Dec-20	\$2,773,888.80	\$2,773,888.00	
<b>MERRIMACK VALLEY REGION TOTAL :</b>				<b>\$17,188,341.60</b>	<b>\$16,530,503.13</b>	<b>\$2,700,969.61</b>

**TABLE 2: FFY 2021 ANNUAL LISTING OF OBLIGATED TRANSIT PROJECTS  
IN THE MERRIMACK VALLEY MPO REGION PER 23 CFR 450.334**

Agency	GrantsPlus Project Number	MVMPO TIP_Project Description	Obligation Date	FFY 2021 Programmed Federal Fund	FFY 2021 Obligated Federal Fund
<b>REGION : MERRIMACK VALLEY</b>					
MVRTA (TRANSIT)		REHAB/RENOVATE BUS SURVEILLANCE/SECURITY SYSTEM @ McGOVERN TRANSPORTATION CENTER	11/30/2020	\$104,800.00	\$104,800.00
MVRTA (TRANSIT)		BUY REPLACEMENT VANS (16) Replace Model 2015	11/30/2020	\$590,240.00	\$590,240.00
MVRTA (TRANSIT)		BUY REPLACEMENT 35-FT BUS (2) Replace Model 2009	1/04/2021	\$495,337.00	\$495,335.00
MVRTA (TRANSIT)		ACQUIRE MOBILE SURV/SECURITY EQUIP	4/16/2021	\$264,352.00	\$264,353.00
MVRTA (TRANSIT)		EMERGENCY RELIEF OPERATING ASSISTANCE 100% FED SHARE 5307 FUNDS	6/2/2021		\$299,747.00
<b>MERRIMACK VALLEY REGION TOTAL :</b>				<b>\$1,454,729.00</b>	<b>\$1,754,475.00</b>

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