



495/METROWEST PARTNERSHIP

Leaders for Regional Prosperity

July 27, 2016

Mr. Steve Woelfel
MassDOT Representative to CMMPO
Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission
Union Station, Washington Square
Worcester, MA 01604

Re: Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization's Draft FY2017-2021
Transportation Improvement Program

Dear Mr. Woelfel:

On behalf of the 495/MetroWest Partnership, please accept the following as our official comments regarding the draft *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* for FFY 2017 to FFY 2021 for the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (CMMPO).

The 495/MetroWest Partnership is a non-profit advocacy organization serving thirty-five communities, over half a million residents, and an employment base of over \$22.5 billion per year. The Partnership seeks to address regional needs through public-private collaboration by working to enhance economic vitality, improve quality of life and sustain natural resources. The Partnership focuses on helping to alleviate regional constraints and limitations, and conducts numerous initiatives on transportation, workforce housing, brownfields, and water resources.

With our latest economic analysis, we know that the 495/MetroWest region has continued to grow thanks to a diverse economic base and a high quality of life. While this growth has resulted in opportunities and benefits, the transportation challenges remain. If ignored, these challenges threaten the quality of life and economic wellbeing of a region that has become an economic engine for the Commonwealth. Our regional transportation challenges affect the state's ability to remain economically competitive. These challenges include: increasing traffic congestion, an increase in vehicle miles traveled, highway capacity issues, gaps in public transit coverage, and aging transportation infrastructure.

While the CMMPO region includes only seven of the Partnership's thirty-five communities, we greatly appreciate the number of projects included in the Draft TIP which benefit our region. In addition to the FY 17-21 projects, we are eager to see the advancement of the **Route 9/Lyman St. Intersection and Signal Improvements Project (Project #604864)** in FY 2016 in Westborough and are hopeful there will be no further delays given that the project was originally scheduled for FY 2015. In the current Draft TIP, the Partnership strongly supports the inclusion of the following projects:

495/METROWEST PARTNERSHIP

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FFY 2017

- Shrewsbury—resurfacing & related work on Main Street, from I-290 ramps easterly to Maple Avenue (Project #602740, \$6,278,484)

FFY 2019

- Northborough—structural steel cleaning and painting of overhead bridges on I-290 (Project #608237, \$1,379,786); this project also extends to Boylston and Worcester
- Upton—reconstruction of Hartford Avenue North, High Street and Hopkinton Road (Phase I) (Project #606125, \$6,749,184)

FFY 2020

- Grafton—reclamation on Route 122A (Main Street), from Providence Road to Sutton T.L. (Project #607903, \$5,399,347)
- Upton—reconstruction of Hartford Avenue North, High Street, and Hopkinton Road (Phase II) (Project #606125, \$4,274,483)

In addition to the above mentioned projects, the Partnership appreciates the way in which the MPO has presented the Equity Distribution Analysis for FY 2012-2021. The information is presented in an easy to understand manner, allowing stakeholders to quickly assess investments in their communities.

Given our role on the CMMPO Advisory Committee as well as our work on transportation and transit needs in the 495/MetroWest region, the Partnership recognizes that there is simply not enough revenue to cover the many worthy projects in the queue, which is why we have consistently advocated for greater resources for MassDOT.

We thank you for your consideration of our comments. If there are any questions regarding these projects or our commentary on the TIP, please contact Jessica Strunkin at 774.760.0495 x.101, or by email at Jessica@495partnership.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Paul F. Matthews
Executive Director



Jessica Strunkin
Deputy Director