



TRANSPORTATION TODAY

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Issue 11

DRAFT TIP COMMENT PERIOD

The MRPC staff are currently putting together a Draft of the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) and will be putting the document out for public comment during the month of July.

The MRPC staff annually develops the TIP project listing. Sources used include the Mass Highway's Project Information System, MassHighway Districts 2 and 3, local officials, the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee, and the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

This TIP is a prioritized listing of transportation projects proposed for implementation during the next five federal fiscal years.

For more information on the TIP process please visit our website at www.mrpc.org.

MPO ENDORSED PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

On June 13, the Public Participation Plan (PPP) was endorsed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The PPP is a requirement of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act, which requires planning areas to have a Continuing, Comprehensive, and Coordinated transportation planning process that considers all transportation modes, while supporting community and social goals. The endorsed version of the PPP outlines the process for gathering public involvement in the development of the Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Projects, Unified

Planning Work Programs, and long range plans.

Individuals interested in receiving mailings should contact the MRPC by phone 978-345-7376, or by email mrpc@mrpc.org.

SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM

Massachusetts currently has three State Scenic Byway projects underway with about a 75% to 80% success rate of acquiring Scenic Byway status and receiving funding. To be designated a Scenic Byway, a road must possess characteristics of regional significance within at least one of the intrinsic qualities, which include archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational or scenic. While the program does not directly contribute funds to routine maintenance and reconstruction to the road, its implementation money is most often used for improvement projects such as: improving links to nearby recreation areas, installation of historic markers, town common improvements, off-road parking areas, informational kiosks, scenic vista preservation, etc.

Rt. 122 is part of the State of Massachusetts scenic byway program in which Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) received a grant from the Federal Scenic Byway Program (Federal Highway Administration) to prepare a management plan for. The Federal program provided \$88,000 and MassHighway matched this with an additional \$22,000 for a total project cost of \$110,000. The two-year process is expected to be completed by October of 2008. As of now there is still no official name for the Byway.

Mohawk Trail East Scenic Byway is also part of the State of Massachusetts scenic byway program in which Franklin Regional Council of Governments has received funding to prepare a management plan for. The study area for the *Mohawk Trail East Corridor Management Plan* includes Route 2 and/or Route 2A and a one half mile buffer along each side of the road. State Highway Route 2 in Western Massachusetts is one of the earliest scenic byways in New England.

For more information please contact George Snow at 978-665-2267 or gsnow@mrpc.org.



NATURAL HAZARD PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PLAN

The MRPC has been conducting Hazard & Vulnerability workgroup sessions for a number of its' communities. The purpose of these sessions is to assess and map the natural hazards that affect, or have the potential to affect, individual communities as well as the region as a whole. Currently 13 sessions have been completed with 10 sessions remaining. The goal is to complete all of these sessions in the summer and begin the Critical Infrastructure Identification & Mapping Sessions in the early fall. For more information on the MRPC Natural Hazard Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan please contact Bob Biagi at 978-345-7376 x2383 or bbiagi@mrpc.org.



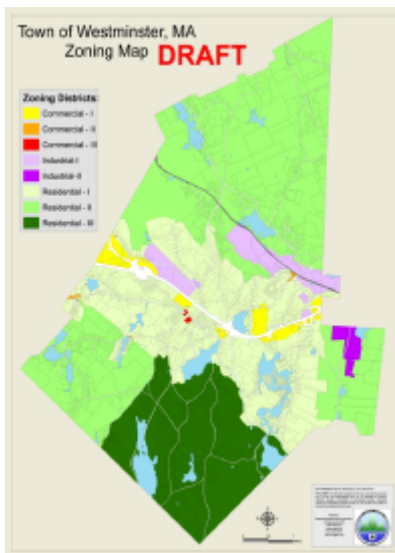
GIS DEPARTMENT NEWS

In addition to the Natural Hazard Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, the MRPC GIS Staff has been working with several communities on various projects. We are currently in the process of working on Trail Inventory projects for the towns of Groton, Lancaster, Sterling and Townsend; Official Street, Zoning & Zoning Overlay Maps are being created for the town of Lancaster; an Official Zoning Map is being created for the town of Westminster; an Official Street Map is being created for the town of Hubbardston; a Street Map is being created for the town of Ayer; a map is being created for Leominster's Summer Stroll; updates are being made to the town of Townsend's GIS Parcel layer; and updates are being made to the town of Clinton's Open Space Map. For more information on any of these projects, please contact Jason Stanton or Nathalie Orhac at 978-435-7376 x 2266 and 2225.



RT. 140 LANE DEPARTURE CRASH ROAD SAFETY AUDIT

The FHWA defines a Road Safety Audit (RSA) as a formal safety examination of an existing or future traffic facility by an independent and multidisciplinary team. The purpose of an RSA is to identify existing and potential safety issues and opportunities for implementing comprehensive countermeasures that consider all roadway users. Lane departure crashes are a considerable safety problem in the State, especially when these crashes result in injuries and fatalities. From 2002 to 2004, they accounted for approximately 50% of fatal crashes.



Route 140 in Gardner was selected as the subject roadway for the MRPC region. An RSA meeting was held on May 29th, 2007. The RSA team included officials from Gardner, MassHighway, FHWA, MassSAFE, and the MRPC. In a three year period approximately 30 lane departure crashes occurred on this highway. Many of the crashes were bad weather related, occurred on curves, and involved a single vehicle and with speed as a contributing factor. The final RSA Report should be completed in the near future. Please contact George Snow at x 2 2 6 7 or gsnow@mrpc.org for more information.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

MRPC Meetings

7:00 pm in the
MART Conference Room:

June 26
July 31
August 28
September 25



MJTC Meetings

7:00 pm in the
MART Conference Room:
3rd Wednesday of every month



Call MRPC to confirm meetings