



Appendix 1- Public Participation Comments



Comments from RTP Public Meetings

Meeting	Comments
2/21/19 – Fitchburg/Leominster Outreach	<p>Route 2 - Improvements needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mt. Elam Road – dangerous traffic light. Suggestion to buy out property owners and close roadway/eliminate light. Emergency response is also delayed to accidents at the light because it's in Fitchburg and they will be coming westbound and need to turn around to head eastbound where the light is located. More up to date & visible advanced warning signage is needed prior to the light. Solar glare is also a problem here. Runoff into Monoosnoc Brook near the water filtration plant. MDOT settled a lawsuit against them 8+ years ago. A plan was established to fix the issues but it appears that no work has been done. <p>Route I-190</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced warning signs needed before the merge with Route 2 <p>Prioritize Complete Streets & trail connections</p> <p>Trail priorities –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect Twin Cities Rail Trail to the Mass Central Rail Trail Connect North Central Pathway into Ashburnham and points West MRTC to work on this at upcoming meetings <p>Game On Fitchburg is currently being built. This is an economic development opportunity. It was mentioned that “active” people will be coming out to this facility so hiking & biking opportunities nearby may be of interest.</p> <p>Route 31 railroad bridge in West Fitchburg is a pinch point. This should be expanded to accommodate the heavy truck traffic and also provide a safe place to connect the Streamline Trail to Wachusett Station.</p>
2/21/19 – Fitchburg/Leominster Outreach	<p>Route 12 corridor in Fitchburg – potential TIP project. The area closer to down town and to the north. Sidewalks/pedestrian & bike improvements are needed.</p>
2/28/19 – Harvard Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Route 117 – Willard Road, no sidewalks. This is a mode shift barrier No Park & Ride facilities in Harvard or along Route 2 in the area Ayer Road corridor – good candidate for a bike lane to connect Ayer Center to Harvard Center and to the Nashua River Rail Trail Devens – trail connections to Harvard (Old Mill Road), connect Ayer rotary area Encourage strategic connections (future planning) for future TIP projects Encourage people to force trail/bike/ped accommodates for projects that could create future trail connections
3/4/19 – Ayer Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More Ch. 90 money needed, current funding levels have been the same for a number of years and it is impossible for communities to keep up with maintenance of their roads. Project costs/process is out of control. A community spends much less money than the state on similar projects.
3/5/19 – Phillipston Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UPWP project conversation TIP project process



3/12/19 – Winchendon Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No grocery store in town, need better access to grocery store for people without access to car/seniors. MART needs to do a better job of communicating bus service to the public. Active community members from Winchendon had no clue what service was available. North Central Pathway and its possible connections to Monadnock region and its assets would boost economy of Winchendon.
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Comments from Online Comment App

Comment App	Comment Type	Response
Federal Aid Roads & Pavement Conditions	Accident Locations; Geometric Deficiencies; Intersection or Locations That Need to be Addressed; Enforcement Areas; Speed Issues; Pavement Issues	Specific locations were noted and will be reviewed as part of Safety Analysis or possible future UPWP planning task.
Safety & Freight	Geometric Deficiencies; Areas of Congestion; Improper Motorist Behavior; Truck Access Issues; Accident Issues & Locations	Areas of concern will be addressed in current or planned work activities. This includes freight issues and safety analysis programs.
Trails	Trail Support; Bicycle Usage Support	Trail support will be noted in planned Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans.
Evacuation Routes	Facility Update	Routes discussed as part of Homeland Security participation work.
Bridges, Environmental Justice, Title VI	No Comments Provided	

Comments from Survey Questions

Survey Question 4

Senior Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Senior Housing, a Senior Center, a LGBT friendly community * Harvard is minimally invested in its Senior Citizens COA. We have NO Van of our own. Most importantly, we have NO VAN to take Seniors into Boston for medical appointments. This is vitally important, as all my doctors are in Boston. And their current arrangement to 'drop off' Seniors at a nearby town's rapid transit stop (Littleton) is hardly appropriate for seniors unable to navigate train stations and then walk to hail cabs! * Reliable van service for seniors * Senior housing opportunities
Mobility/Bicycle & Pedestrian Accessibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Community connections * As medical services become more and more dependent on independent travel, transportation is needed. * Recreation availability, in town transportation availability * Transportation from rural communities to places they work, healthcare and education. This is extremely important for our area. * Bicycle safety on our roads * Sidewalks and bike lanes * I didn't answer other. Climate concerns are real but secondary in this questionnaire. I would take a bus if i could. Or a train. Or a bike. Or walk.



Open Space/Historic Preservation

- * Preservation of historic buildings and community fabric in the face of over-development and excessive automobile traffic
- Linked open space/ bike trails
- * Recreational opportunities and tourism
- * Protection from development near water supply, wetlands, and streams. Non-point source runoff.
- * Better protection for local waters, i.e. 1, replace culverts to meet DER standards for passage; 2, promote open space; 3, reduce road runoff/road salt
- * Acquisition of open space/multi-purpose trails, including equestrian access

Other

- * Education
- * Population health/health equity/SDOH
- * Overall quality of life; viable food system; sense of belonging
- * Use of sand on roads during Winter whenever it snows needs to be abolished immediately as it causes dirt after the snow melts and clogs sewer/drainage systems.
- * Social and economic too many people living in poverty
- * Overall road safety is horrible.
- * Business/Industrial Park needs to be in the 20-year plan. Rezoning parcels on Route 12 and continuing the water supply in order to do this will be key to any economic future of the town.
- * Healthcare
- * Harvard is a town out of balance. Over 90% of property tax revenue goes to public schools run like private ones. Schools get all. Seniors are marginalized, severely underserved.....

Survey Question 5

RURAL - MRPC Region Only

Community	Comment	Applicable Strategy
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Municipal Employees & Officials

Harvard	Sidewalks and trails	Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities
Townsend	Sidewalks	Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities

General Public

Ashburnham	Commuter rail service	Transit Options
Harvard	Availability for independent travel for medical needs, other individual needs \$50	Transit Options; Community & Regional Access
Harvard	\$100 to the COA for a van that can travel into Boston	Transit Options; Community & Regional Access
Shirley	Turn the rail line, in Ayer, heading to West Groton into a road. This will relieve traffic on Lawton Road & 111 (past Tiny's); Add a Market Basket to Devens	Community & Regional Access
Townsend	Connecting towns together by trails - bike / walking	Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities
Townsend	Decrease pollution/climate change and congestion by improving bike and pedestrian access.	Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities; Climate Change & Environment
Townsend	Explore better town management systems	Local Management
Winchendon	Tourism & Recreation	Tourism; Recreation

URBAN - MRPC Region Only

Community	Comment	Applicable Strategy
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Municipal Employees & Officials

Fitchburg	Use people and fundraisers for many projects. Charge permits for using the rail trail. Put more police officers out in high crash locations. Try earning money for projects instead of taking money ahead of time.	Local Management; Safety (High Crash Locations)
Gardner	Stormwater Infrastructure	Stormwater; Climate Change & Environment
Lunenburg	Stormwater; keeping it off the roads and keeping it from flooding our roadways and polluting our waters	Stormwater; Climate Change & Environment

General Public

Fitchburg	Access to Route 2	Community & Regional Access
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Survey Question 6

Rural		
Harvard	Municipal Official	Sustainable, rural, smart agritourism community w/return of jurisdiction of Devens as economic base diversifier/engine.
Hubbardston	Municipal Official	I think the population will continue to grow slightly but the school age population has declined sharply and is likely to continue to, unless we can attract young families.
Harvard	General Public	Seeking senior housing and business development.
Harvard	General Public	Poorly governed town, run by insiders and those with an agenda. People move here for schools only, care about themselves & not the whole town. They are affluent and entitled. Not invested in this place, they leave after kids graduate. Leaving long term school dept behind. Harvard's Seniors are underserved and devalued.
Harvard	General Public	Rural residential - low key industry - way more trees than people. Keep it rural.
Winchendon	General Public	If little changes, a stagnant community with lots of aspirations, but not quite succeeding.
Urban		
Lunenburg	Municipal Official	Farming, hopefully
Fitchburg	General Public	Clean and desirable living environment with good infrastructure and public amenities like parks. Good schools.

Survey Question 7

Rural		
Groton	Municipal Employee	A residential community with housing available to all demographic types and needs while preserving environmental diversity and habitat
Harvard	Municipal Official	Up & coming bc it has planned for future development ie managed growth impacts like traffic, values rural, sustainable growth, retains its natural beauty & resources, supports strong schools, regains Devens to financially support smart growth policies.
Hubbardston	Municipal Official	Regional tourist destination for outdoor recreation
Lancaster	Municipal Official	A turn around to ethical and improved government integrity
Ashburnham	General Public	Part of a region wide network supporting local Ag, small businesses and micro grids for energy
Ashburnham	General Public	Quiet rural alternative to suburbia
Ashby	General Public	Resilient, 50% Art. 97 protected open space
Groton	General Public	Sustainable, Accessible, Pedestrian & Bike Friendly
Groton	General Public	Arts & recreation destination
Harvard	General Public	A Senior friendly community with outstanding public schools.
Harvard	General Public	Rural residential with as much open space and nature as possible.
Harvard	General Public	Stable community
Harvard	General Public	Conservation-minded leading by example community
West Townsend	General Public	Townsend - a friendly town that has lots of open space, supports it elderly, veterans, schools and local churches AND continues its charm with Summer Band Concerts on the Common!
Urban		
Fitchburg	Municipal Employee	Well balanced
Lunenburg	Municipal Official	Farming, hopefully
Fitchburg	General Public	Improved socioeconomic
Leominster	General Public	Green community including transportation

Survey Question 8

Senior Issues	
Rural	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transportation options for seniors and disabled is the number ONE issue we deal with. - Seniors need services or we will lose them! - In Harvard ... concerned about getting around town... to services in nearby towns when I have to give up driving ... - Need better senior housing opportunities and better van or other transportation opportunities for seniors - Senior transit and housing 	



Mobility/Transit Options

Rural

- Groton needs bus and other shared ride options.
- ...more should be done so that people can work in the community that they live in and not have to commute 30-60 miles away ... to work. Ideally, people should be able to walk or bike to work
- We need more travel options in and out of town.
- Help with access to highways/jobs. 20 minutes to highways means no younger home buyers which leads to aging and stagnation
- ... if we devote more resources to mass transportation, bicycle and pedestrian travel, that should help reduce single-occupant automobile traffic
- We need better access to Rt 2 whether by highway or train.
- Enhance access to the commuter rail for residents of neighboring communities. ... a shuttle twice a day from Harvard to the Ayer, Littleton, or South Acton stations.
- Harvard needs transit options for all citizens to save the environment and give non-drivers quality of life
- Need to broaden accessibility of transportation systems including vac services for seniors and disabled
- Must help improve the quality of life by reducing the commute to Boston/ inside 495
- As a very rural area...most accommodations at least 8-10 miles away... need for transportation for...less fortunate population is a must...While...buses are available, the schedule is nearly non-existent, and that could easily be changed.
- Fixed the commuter rail. The congestion and wider region transit goals cannot be met without a strong and vibrant mass transit option to Boston.

Urban

- We need to link Leominster MART and Worcester WRTA! The WRTA Route 30 and Leominster Jytek link!
- I believe we should continue to work to improve transportation infrastructure within our region, especially long distance trails and bike path/greenways (not emphasized in this survey). However, I believe we also need to advocate strongly for improvements to Route 2 through Concord to eliminate that "bottleneck" congestion problem associated with the rotary and cross-traffic. It is long overdue and affects thousands of commuters from this region each day. While this is outside of our region, I believe it is important to the social, cultural, and economic success of the Montachusett Region.
- Use riverway and rail lines for accessible trails coupled with transit. On road routes should be barrier-protected.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Accessibility

Rural

- Making Townsend walkable - both pedestrian and hiking - would be great.
- The more we make our communities walkable and bikeable, the better life will be in them.
- ...would love more sidewalks and sidewalk to bike path/long-distance mixed-use trail connections. Once you are home, you should be able to take a safe walk through your community.
- Being able to get around rt 119 on a bicycle is key for me. Plus, more protected land around the watershed.
- Plant more trees downtown; include bicycle lane on roads



Other

Rural

- Tree removal at roadsides where they interfere with power lines if they fall...they loom dangerously over...roads.
- less development; more land conservation and historic preservation.
- Ashburnham does not do something to rein in spending... the current lack of upkeep on infrastructure will...lead to unnecessary spending...roads... just paved in last 5 years...already showing signs of breakdown because crack-sealing has never been a priority. The DPW needs ...resource management software.
- Education is number 1 in importance...to support this, the community needs to grow in population and in industry and commerce.
- The Town needs to do better on maintaining their facilities.
- With the population decreasing, we need to adapt our schools' systems, transportation and tax base.
- ...town of Harvard is losing its younger population due to costly real estate, taxes, low commercial development... As a result, the retired older pop. is footing more and more of the tax burden thus forcing them to consider...leaving.
- I would like to see it more as a diverse community that invests in keeping people as they age by meeting their needs such as a strong COA, housing options that prevent isolation, down to simple things such as level walking paths.
- More commercial entities.
- Increased traffic pressure from outside Harvard and the growing concern for safety and speed limit enforcement have the potential to dramatically impact safety and lessen the enjoyment of the rural qualities of our town for everyone.
- There needs to be more retail in our area. A large scale build up would increase foot-traffic and raise housing prices. Also, our schools would improve.
- Open space is paramount to keeping 01469 a bedroom place forever
- Town and State groups more closely together. Maybe forums set quarterly around the state to meet with groups of towns on transportation issues to obtain a broader perspective on where the citizens would like us to move.
- If we don't start working on climate change, we won't have a future to worry about.
- Townsend does not have enough local business for tax support. A lot of the burden of infrastructure improvements lay on the tax payers. This does not lead to positive feedback from the community when trying to enact positive changes for the future of the town.
- More work needs to be done to develop an across-community regional identity for North Central MA.

Urban

- Describe Fitchburg in next 10 years as Fitchburg as regional destination for arts and culture with a strong mixed-use portfolio- it is a vibrant hub to an integrated transportation system