



## Appendix 3- Draft Comment & Responses



	Comment	Response
MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning	Page 3: Within the table entitled, "Regional Transportation Plan Goals, Objectives and Performance Measures Summary," please more explicitly connect the performance measures to their corresponding objectives.	The Performance Measure Dashboard, previously provided in the Appendix, is now incorporated into this chapter. The dashboard ties each PM with a specific Goal and corresponding objectives.
	Page 14: Please directly state the performance targets that the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART) established within their Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan	TAM performance targets have been included in this chapter
	Throughout this chapter, please revise references to the Surface Transportation Program (STP) to the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)	References updated and corrected as noted.
	Page 4: Within Table 4 - 5, "Title VI and Environmental Justice Populations," please address or add a footnote describing why the fields for the total population and percent of population classified as Environmental Justice based on income are currently listed as "N/A."	Due to the different criteria used for the FTA and FHWA Low Income definitions, a specific population count cannot be calculated. The FTA definition is based on a regional average and FHWA is based on the statewide median income.
	Page 61: Please reference the level of investment that is required to meet the recommendation of maintaining a state of good repair.	Overall Increase in Level of Investment: Network conditions over the last four years show an increase in percentage of roads in "poor" condition and decrease in percentage of "excellent" condition. This indicates that the current funding level of road maintenance projects is inadequate to keep up with the rate of deterioration. An overall increase in pavement repair projects along with investing in roads before they require full depth reconstruction is recommended. Furthermore, conditions should be closely monitored due to the threat of a deteriorating network.
	Within the safety section of this chapter, please provide the source of the data that is depicted in the graphs throughout this section and reference the previously discussed performance measures.	Staff will provide the data source of the graphs and reference the previously discussed safety PM.
	Pages 75-77: To the extent possible, please provide details on where there have been road safety audits and/or initiated projects among the listed high crash locations identified.	Staff will provide details on where there have been RSAs, completed projects and initiated projects among the identified high crash locations.
	Within the bicycle and pedestrian section, please reference the upcoming regional bicycle and pedestrian plans programed in the FFY 2020 Montachusett Unified Planning Work Program and describe how these plans will address the priority areas and recommendations identified within this chapter.	The UPWP tasks were referenced and included in the recommendations listed within the RTP.
	Page 83: Please indicate that a MassTrails grant was awarded in June 2019 to support the construction of the Squannacook River Rail Trail.	We included all five communities that received funding and specified the Squannacook River Rail Trail in the trail project section.
	Page 93: In addition to listing critical rural and urban freight corridors, please explain the purpose and implications of these designations.	Staff will explain the purpose and implications of the critical urban and rural freight corridors.
	To the extent possible, please provide responses to the public comments that were received through the online comment application, survey, and at the RTP public meetings, referencing ongoing planning efforts or projects that address these comments.	Where applicable, a table will be added that outlines a response for the individual or grouped comments received. These responses will outline expected planning activities (past or future work tasks in the Montachusett Unified Planning Work Program) and/or applicable projects (identified from this RTP or the Transportation Improvement Program) that are likely to address the comment.
	In addition to the equity analysis that is provided regarding the distribution of Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects, please describe how equity considerations were accounted for when developing the scenarios and recommendations contained within this RTP.	The following will be added to the Equity chapter stating: "Recommendations developed were not targeted specifically for EJ/Title VI populations but rather based upon the comments received and the trends and deficiencies identified throughout the RTP development process....The goal to improve the efficiency, reliability and accessibility of the various transportation networks in the Montachusett region benefits all populations but will likely have more of an impact to the key equity populations."
	Please describe what action items are needed to implement each recommendation listed within this chapter and to what extent ongoing planning efforts are currently addressing them.	Information will be added to each recommendation in this chapter identifying "Action Items" that will address the recommendations. This will include future planning activities and/or tasks as well as projects that need to be implemented.



<b>MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning</b>	Please more explicitly describe how the demographic projections and the regional vision informed the scenarios that were developed.	Additional wording will be added that highlights how the demographic projections impact or effect the scenarios developed. As an example, the expected slowdown in population, employment and household growth, will need to be addressed by communities as they determine how to best provide access to basic necessities for their residents. Do municipalities want to stay within their boundaries and provide more opportunities for residents by improved local mobility (Scenario 3 Strong Community Centers) or do they take advantage of established commercial and employment districts in the region by improved long distance mobility (Scenario 2 Multiple Hubs)?
	Please ensure that the final document contains the results of the greenhouse gas modeling currently underway.	Up to date modeling has been added to this chapter.
	Page 6: Please remove Table 10-3, "Fiscal Analysis Federal Bridge Funds for Montachusett Region vs Regional Needs," as bridge funding is determined at the discretion of MassDOT's Bridge Section.	Table will be removed and wording changed to reflect MassDOT bridge funding discretion.
	Page 16: The fiscal constraint analysis should be performed using only MPO target/discretionary funding as an assumed source of revenue. As such, please revise the "available funding less estimated needs" line within the fiscal constraint analysis to reflect this.	This table will be revised and corrected as indicated in the comment. Appropriate wording will be included as needed.
	Pages 21 - 27: Please add the Route 2 Interchange at South Athol Road to the financial analysis for each identified scenario to indicate the amount of funding available within each identified program after this project is accounted for.	All tables will be revised to identify the Major Infrastructure Project on Route 2 at South Athol Road for the various planning scenarios as requested.
<b>Peter Sutton, MassDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator</b>	"Just gave the RTP bike/ped section a quick review and am impressed by the extensive info regarding trail development. Also glad to see both MassDOT bike and ped plans referenced as well as the municipal resource guides. Feel free to hyperlink all of them in the final version of the plan. "	Hyperlinks were included in the final version
	MassTrails grants should definitely be added as a funding source under Resources and Funding. Earlier this morning, announcements were made on the first round of grant recipients, with five within MRPC's region: Athol, Fitchburg, Groton, Lunenburg & Townsend.	Included MassTrails Grant under funding sources and mentioned the five communities that received MassTrails Funding in 2019 (see response above)
<b>Rosemarie Meisner, Ashburnham</b>	In regards to the Ashburnham Rail Trail - One word needs to be changed. Change "keep" to "deem".	Correction made.
<b>Brian Cline, Sterling &amp; MRTC</b>	General overview of the Mass Central Rail Trail - write up suggestions	Comment was noted and incorporated where appropriate.



<b>Neil Angus, Environmental Planner, Devens Enterprise Commission (Received after the close of comment period but included as reference)</b>	<p>Devens is a Census-designated-place and has its own statistics: <a href="https://datausa.io/profile/geo/devens-ma/#housing">https://datausa.io/profile/geo/devens-ma/#housing</a> I believe this data is separate from Ayer Harvard and Shirley so should Devens be included in all the report tables where applicable? It was included in the 2015 Plan but not consistently throughout the plan. Including Devens as a specific entity may help to more accurately represent conditions within the region. While the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone ("Devens") is not an actual municipality, MassDevelopment and the Devens Enterprise Commission are considered a municipality, municipal agent, or unit of local government under Chapter 498. Devens could be included in this table and the RTP as a whole with an asterisk/note explaining that it is a Regional Enterprise Zone and an Economic Target Area and an Economic opportunity Area within the region.</p>	<p>Comment provided after closed comment period and the July 17, 2019 MPO meeting. Comments will be noted and where possible, information related to Devens and their plans will be reviewed as the MRPC "Moves Forward". In particular the planned regional bicycle and pedestrian plans will take into account Devens and its various networks.</p>
	<p>Devens is home to an intermodal rail facility that services a large portion of the over 100 businesses and industries that are located within Devens. This has a huge impact on economic vitality and transportation in the region and might be worth noting.</p>	
	<p>The Devens Shuttle service (provided by MART) helps connect Devens residents and its over 5,500 employees with Ayer, Shirley, Leominster and Fitchburg and the entire MART system.</p>	
	<p>The Devens Open Space and Recreation Plan and Main Post Trail Master Plan and Complete Streets Policy are facilitating bicycle, pedestrian and trail connections within the region – improving safety, connectivity and accessibility within the region – specifically in Ayer, Harvard and Shirley.</p>	
	<p>Environment and Climate Change: Devens redevelopment is guided by MGL Chapter 498 of the Acts of 1993 and the Devens Reuse Plan and sustainable redevelopment is a guiding principle. Our redevelopment efforts align very well with the 7 goals of the RTP. Redevelopment within Devens helps to promote concentrated development in previously serviced/disturbed areas (brownfield redevelopment) and our Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Climate Action Plan (currently underway) will contribute greatly to GHG reduction targets, as well as health and safety goals in the Montachusett Region.</p>	