

*DRAFT PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CIRCULATION ELEMENT OF
THE TEMPLETON MASTER PLAN UPDATE*

Circulation Goals and Objectives

Goal:

- Construct and maintain a safe road system that is consistent with the desired Town's rural character.

Objective:

- Maintain a roadway management plan to achieve maintenance oriented roadway network condition and provide a basis for establishing priorities and level of budget allocation.

Proposals and Recommendations

1. **Continue Proactive Town Participation with MRPC.** Decisions related to project development, prioritization, funding and scheduling are made through the metropolitan planning process and the MRPC serves as staff to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Through continued and active involvement in the planning process via the MRPC, the Montachusett Joint Transportation Committee (MJTC) and the Montachusett MPO, issues and projects important to the town can be discussed, heard and acted upon with the town's input and knowledge. MRPC is working with towns interested in establishing bikeways in order to provide technical assistance in bikeway implementation. Therefore, Templeton should be more actively engaged in MRPC activities.

Responsible Entity: Templeton Board of Selectmen and Planning Board are each responsible for designating MJTC Templeton Representatives who should make every effort to attend monthly MJTC meetings and communicate with MRPC transportation staff.

2. **Schedule Traffic Counts with MRPC.** Each year the regional planning agency, MRPC, solicits from each community up to 5 traffic count locations per calendar year. Templeton has not taken advantage of this program for the past few years. The Town should consider working with the MRPC to establish key traffic count locations to go along with those locations that are part of the MRPC's regional traffic count program. The purpose is to monitor traffic patterns over time in order to anticipate the need for

future improvements. Traffic counts are conducted by MRPC at no cost to the community.

Responsible Entity: Board of Selectmen is the responsible entity for forwarding traffic count requests to the MRPC. The BOS should solicit up to five potential locations for traffic counts from Town Boards and Departments (Department of Public Works, Police Department, Planning Board, etc.) on an annual basis.

3. **Promote Traffic Calming Efforts.** Traffic calming measures include a range of strategies to slow down traffic and deter the use of local residential roads for through traffic. Strategies might include one-way streets, intersection re-design, neckdowns or narrow travel lanes, flashing speed/stop signs, on-street parking, or speed humps. These strategies include ones that may be more effective than those currently employed by the town such as the development of cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets. Traffic calming must be conducted in a comprehensive manner—not piecemeal—otherwise traffic will simply shift from one local street to another. Traffic calming recommendations were made for the Templeton Center Common and can be located in the Templeton Center Common Master Plan completed in January 2010.

Responsible Entity: Templeton Board of Selectmen with significant input from the Department of Public Works, Police Department, and Planning Board/Planning Department.

4. **Sidewalks.** Make the neighborhoods, especially the villages, more pedestrian - friendly through the construction and rehabilitation of sidewalks. Current design standards for ADA compliance should be incorporated. This effort could, at least in part, be incorporated into a Comprehensive Circulation Study/Plan (See Recommendation #6). Financing for needed roadway and sidewalk repair for Templeton's existing local roads include Enhancement funds, public/private partnership projects, and Community Development Block Grant funds (in moderate-income neighborhoods) for potentially eligible areas. All roadway projects should be designed to accommodate all roadway users.

Responsible Entity: Templeton Board of Selectmen with significant input from the Department of Public Works, Police Department, and Planning Board/Planning Department.

5. **Regional Trail Network.** Work with neighboring communities and regional entities to establish a regional trail network that would ultimately link Templeton to various recreational opportunities outside of the town. Currently there are limited bike and pedestrian trails within the community. The town may wish to identify, prioritize and implement additional trail opportunities. The town may also wish to establish on street bike lanes along major roadways.

Responsible Entity: Templeton Board of Selectmen with significant input from the Department of Public Works, Conservation Commission, Open Space Committee, and Planning Board/Planning Department.

6. **Comprehensive Circulation Study/Plan.** The town may seek to establish a Comprehensive Circulation Study/Plan of non-motorized users that could identify major travel routes, crosswalks, sidewalks, appropriate pavement markings and signage, etc. This plan should include major areas of concern for the town (ie. Village Centers, town hall, library, schools, etc). Because of Templeton's many unique villages, it is recommended that a Circulation Study be conducted at each village individually. In addition, this plan could identify links to the towns overall trail/bike network.

The Town could communicate with MRPC Transportation Staff to investigate the possibility of conducting such a study under MRPC's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) at no cost to the community. The UPWP for the Montachusett Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a financial programming tool developed annually as part of the federally certified transportation planning process. This document contains task descriptions of the transportation planning program of the MPO, with associated budget information and funding sources for the program year. The purpose of the UPWP is to ensure a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3C) transportation planning process in the Leominster-Fitchburg Urbanized Area and the Montachusett Region. Other funding options to supplement a project like this might include the Safe Routes to School Program - for more information, contact MassRIDES (www.commute.com).

To supplement and work in conjunction with a Comprehensive Circulation Study/Plan, Design Guidelines could be established – the guidelines would be for property owners planning exterior alterations, additions to or the rehabilitation of existing buildings and they would also apply to the design of new buildings. A potential funding source for Design Plans might include MRPC's District Local Technical Assistance Program which is funded by the Commonwealth. While funding for this program is currently available, future funding is not guaranteed.

Responsible Entity: Templeton Board of Selectmen in cooperation with the Planning Board/Department, Department of Public Works, and Police Department.

7. **Bridges.** Encourage the State to further investigate the structure, function, and scour ratings of key bridges in Templeton, and to make these bridges a funding priority. It is also recommended that the town also investigate the local bridges as well (ex. Stone Bridge).

Responsible Entity: Templeton Board of Selectmen should initiate discussion with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) District 2 office and encourage involvement from the Templeton Department of Public Works.

8. **Culverts.** Maintain the Storm Water Inventory Plan (an inventory of culverts within the community and seek to identify a mechanism to clean, repair and update the structures as needed). New subdivisions should be included within this inventory. The Town should also investigate low impact development techniques to minimize stormwater runoff by participating in MRPC's federal 319 Non-Point Source Pollution Grant awarded by

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection . MRPC's scope of work entails free educational low impact development (LID) workshops throughout the Montachusett Region's municipalities that are in the Millers River Watershed and free technical assistance to these communities to develop a LID Bylaw.

Responsible Entity: Templeton Department of Public Works. The Planning Board, Conservation Commission and others should also be involved in exploring low impact development.

- 9. Analyze Traffic Crash Data.** Analyze traffic crash data for crashes on major roads and intersections to determine the patterns and causes. Seek potential projects to address identified issues at major crash locations (see section Inventory for top crash locations). Where appropriate, state and federal funding assistance should be utilized. Work with your local regional planning agency (MRPC) as well as the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) highway division office on projects and funding opportunities.

Responsible Entity: Templeton MJTC Representatives working with the Department of Public Works, Police Department, and reporting to the Templeton Board of Selectmen

- 10. Pavement Management System.** The Town needs to protect its investment in roads and other public facilities commensurate with its level of assets. Lack of routine maintenance investment results in needless deterioration and replacement resulting in reduced utility of the facility and greater long-term replacement costs. Where appropriate, the town should seek local and federal funding assistance on eligible roads. Work with your local regional planning agency (MRPC) as well as the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) highway division office on projects and funding opportunities.

Responsible Entity: Templeton MJTC Representatives working with the Department of Public Works, Police Department, and reporting to the Templeton Board of Selectmen.