

RESOLUTION OF THE
BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

North-Central Berkshire Access Study Final Report
Dated March 31, 2001

WHEREAS, the stated goal of the North-Central Berkshire Access Study was for the Berkshire Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to decide which alternative or project, if any, it will include in its long-range transportation plan to meet the transportation and mobility needs identified in the study; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the study's public participation process was a well-informed public that contributed to decisions in a meaningful way with reasonable effort made to reach consensus but agreement not being required; and

WHEREAS, a detailed study design was developed by the MPO member agencies and formally agreed to in January 1999 that was intended to meet these stated goals; and

WHEREAS, the long-range transportation plan is a requirement to obtain federal funding for specific transportation projects in the Berkshire region; and

WHEREAS, during the course of the study, the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway), the lead agency for the study, discarded the approved study design; and

WHEREAS, on January 25, 2001, MassHighway released a draft North-Central Berkshire Access Study; and

WHEREAS, at a special meeting on March 1, 2001, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission approved its comments on the draft study and those were submitted to MassHighway; and

WHEREAS, on March 31, 2001, MassHighway released its final study report, which was unresponsive to concerns expressed by BRPC in its comments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission:

Section 1: That the North-Central Berkshire Access Study does not quantify or document the extent of existing transportation problems in the North-Central Berkshires in an adequate or professionally acceptable manner; and

Section 2: That the analysis of various alternatives is neither complete nor technically sound and therefore can lead to inappropriate conclusions and cannot be used as a basis for informed decisions; and

Section 3: That many alternatives recommended in the study are not supported by the technical analysis in the study; and

Section 4: That the abandonment of the approved study design has lead to a public that has not been well-informed in a manner that allows it to contribute to decisions in a meaningful way; and

Section 5: That many of the specific recommendations made in the study, while not constituting needed long-term improvements to the region's transportation system, are helpful in maintaining the existing system for the region and, to the extent that they maintain that system, are appropriate to include in the regional Transportation Improvement Program, as many are; and

Section 6: That long-range recommendations that lead to improvements in the long-standing transportation deficiencies in the region are lacking in the study; and

Section 7: That the Commission remains committed to meeting the original goals of the study; and

Section 8: That the North-Central Berkshire Access Study, dated March 31, 2001, is inadequate and unsupportable and cannot be included in the Regional Transportation Plan.

Adopted by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission at its meeting on May 17, 2001.