

Minutes of the Virtual Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting
 Wednesday, September 9, 2020
 Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
 60 Congress Street, Springfield, Massachusetts 01104

Present were:

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Glenn Barrington	UMass Transit Services	Laura Hanson	MassDOT District 2
Chris Bouchard	DPW Director, South Hadley	Betsy Johnson	Walk/Bike Springfield
Gary Briere	MassBike	Derek Krevat	Transportation Planner, MassDOT
Paul Burns	PVTA Director, Transit Operations	Andy Krar	Town Engineer, Springfield
Michelle Chase	Town Engineer, Agawam	Nick LaPoint	Fuss & O'Neill
Mark Cressotti	City Engineer, Westfield	Dan McCormack	Beta Group
Jim Czach	West Springfield DPW	Bob Peirent	Engineer, Holyoke
Nick Dines	Town of Williamsburg	Carmen Rosado	Stavros
Wayne Feiden	Northampton Planning Director	Marvin Ward	MassBike Easthampton
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1	Elizabeth Williams	Director of Data & Policy, MassDOT
PVPC Staff			
Andy McCaul	Senior Transportation Planner	Gary Roux	Principal Planner
Jeff McCollough	Senior Transportation Planner	Louise Sullivan	Admin Support
Dana Roscoe	Principal Planner		

1. Introductory Remarks

Jim Czach opened the JTC Zoom meeting at 10:20 a.m. and he asked everyone to introduce themselves.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Czach asked for a motion to approve the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) minutes of the May 13, 2020 meeting.

MOVED BY MARVIN WARD, MASSBIKE EASTHAMPTON, SECONDED BY MARK CRESSOTTI OF THE CITY OF WESTFIELD TO APPROVE THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING MINUTES OF THE MAY 13, 2020 MEETING. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

Mr. Czach then moved to take up agenda item 3.

3. Draft Shared Use Path Addendum

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux reported that because of an error and new construction, some Shared Use Path crossing locations were missed. As a result, an Addendum has been added to the Shared Use Path report and by the end of September a draft Shared Use Path report will be distributed. Mr. Roux further reported that 16 additional locations have been identified by staff members who used the same data collection procedures that were used for the original locations. Mr. Roux stated that two locations were added in Amherst; three locations were added in Northampton; and five locations were added in Southhampton.

Mr. Roux explained that in addition to listing the Shared Use Path locations, the Addendum includes inventories and best practices based on functional classifications of roadways and the type of traffic that they are serving. He noted that examples of the types of road treatments being used in our region are provided in the hope that this will help to identify some of the other treatments being used in the new locations.

Mr. Roux remarked that during data collection in Shared Use Path locations, a lack of consistency for pavement markings, roadway signs and controls was found. As a result, design is now being based on guidance and current practices to ensure current guidelines are being met and to ensure consistency between recently constructed locations and those constructed ten years ago.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. Roux for his update and he moved on to agenda item 4.

4. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP): – 2020 Project Status

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Andy McCaul announced that an MPO meeting is scheduled this month for September 22nd at 10:00 a.m. Mr. McCaul reported that there are no changes needed to be made to the FFY 2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), but some slight changes need to be made to the FFY 2021 TIP. Mr. McCaul stated that the changes include minor bookkeeping adjustments involving redistribution funding; an adjustment to the Self-Certification review; and the noting that the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) has received a million and a half dollars in 5339 funds.

Mr. McCaul reported that all transportation projects included in the FFY 2020 TIP were advertised on time. He explained that the *Chicopee Reconstruction and Related Work on Fuller Road from Memorial Drive to Shawinigan Drive (604434)* needed to use local funds to remain on the TIP. In addition to the #604434 Chicopee project, Mr. McCaul briefly reviewed the following FFY 2021 advertised TIP projects: the *Chicopee Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway Construction*; the *Northampton, Amherst, Chicopee, Easthampton, Hadley, Holyoke, South Hadley, Springfield and West Springfield ValleyBike Share (phase II)*; the *Northampton Intersection Improvements at King Street, North Street and Summer street*; the *Northampton Reconstruction of Damon Road*; the *Springfield Intersection Improvements at Berkshire Avenue, Cottage and Harvey Streets*; the *Northampton Bridge Reconstruction over Hockanum Road*; the *Westfield Bridge Replacement over the Little River* and the *Westhampton Bridge Replacement over the N. Branch Manhan River*.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. McCaul for his update and then he temporarily skipped agenda item #5 and moved on to agenda item #7: A Presentation of the MassDOT Mobility Dashboard.

7. **MassDOT Mobility Dashboard Presentation by Elizabeth Williams (MassDOT)**

Elizabeth Williams, MassDOT Director of Data & Policy, stated that the MassDOT Mobility Dashboard visualizes, analyzes, and monitors data collected by MassDOT in order to understand the effects of COVID-19 on transportation in Massachusetts. Ms. Williams explained that when the COVID-19 pandemic began, MassDOT began receiving data centered on how much people were traveling in Massachusetts; how long it was taking them; and where they were going. As a result, MassDOT launched the MassDOT Mobility Dashboard to consolidate the data in the Dashboard so that it could be shared with the MassDOT Highway Division, the public and the state's MPOs. Ms. Williams explained that the Mobility Dashboard includes relevant data regarding traffic volumes, transit revenue and safety which is continually being monitored and updated weekly. She reported that MassDOT receives the number of COVID-19 cases from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the impacts of COVID-19 are then analyzed.

Ms. Williams displayed a graph which reflected average weekly traffic volumes at select count locations from February 1, 2020 to August 30, 2020 along with data summarized in tables. She reported that weekly traffic volumes are from 18% - 25% lower than in 2019. Indicating a Vehicle Miles Traveled graph, Ms. Williams stated that the state's average weekday vehicle miles number is down 23% compared to pre-COVID-19 levels and transit revenue has also seen a decline. She reported that the Safety section of the Mobility Dashboard reflects speeding violations by month from January 2020 to August 2020. The speeding violation data shows that despite less congestion across the Commonwealth, there are proportionally more violations being issued for speeding.

Mr. Czach thanked Ms. Williams for her presentation and he returned to agenda item #5.

5. **Draft Top 100 High Crash Intersection List**

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux stated that today's handout document entitled *Top 100 High Crash Intersections List* is the fourth iteration of the document which identifies and ranks the top 100 high crash intersections based on specific criteria. Mr. Roux indicated that this list of intersections does not include rotaries or intersections with interstate ramps. Data is provided for separately for each of the rotaries, and interstate highway data is not provided because the exact locations of crashes can't be identified.

Mr. Roux noted that the last version of the *Top 100 High Crash Intersections* was finalized in 2016 and used crash data from 2011 – 2013. He remarked that more recent data is available but it has not yet been finalized by MassDOT. Mr. Roux explained that the ranking of the intersections is based on *EPDO* or *Equivalent Property Damage Only* scoring and EPDO is now calculated differently. He stated that the new method assigns a value of "21" for serious injury and fatal crashes and property damage has an EPDO value of "1." In comparison using the old method, a fatal crash had an EPDO value of "10;" an injury crash had an EPDO value of "5;" and a property damage crash had an EPDO value of "1." Mr. Roux underscored that the new method places a much higher emphasis on serious injury and fatal crashes which are the types of crashes tracked in the Safety Performance Measures.

Mr. Roux displayed a PowerPoint slide of a pie chart showing ten different communities having at least one intersection that appears on the *Top 100 High Crash Intersections* list: Springfield (63), Chicopee (17), Holyoke

(11), Westfield (4), West Springfield (1), South Hadley (1), Hadley (1), Northampton (1), Wilbraham (1) and Granby (1). He displayed a PowerPoint slide entitled Top 100 High Crash Intersections for the Pioneer Valley 2015 – 2017. Mr. Roux pointed out that the #1 location, the one with the most crashes, is the “X” in Springfield (Sumner, Belmont and Dickinson). He indicated that there are 46 new locations on the list which are highlighted in yellow and there are 28 locations that were dropped in rank since the last list. He further indicated that 23 locations increased in rank from the last list and four locations had no change in rank. Mr. Roux reported that the intersection location with the largest increase in crashes is Prospect Street at Buckley Boulevard in Chicopee with 78 crashes. Mr. Roux announced that 25 intersection locations have had improvements made and 11 locations are scheduled on the TIP for improvements.

Mr. Roux reported that PVPC staff members are currently working on an interactive map of all intersection locations which will include detailed data for each location such as its historic and current crash history. He further reported that 5 locations from which to collect drone video have been selected and the goal is to identify possible causes of crashes. Mr. Roux added that the final *Top 100 High Crash Intersections* report will be finalized in October and he asked if there were any questions or comments. There being none, Mr. Czech moved on to the next agenda item.

6. PVPC Regional Traffic Count Program

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux noted that at the May JTC meeting, it was announced that MassDOT had suspended its traffic count program due to COVID-19. At that time, PVPC staff proposed to monitor 30 locations per month and MassDOT accepted the PVPC proposal in early June. Mr. Roux explained that the goal was to count each location monthly through October and compare how traffic volume had changed because of the work-at-home order. Then in late July, MassDOT sent a notice stating that it was resuming its traffic counting program which resulted in PVPC staff having to count an additional 57 locations. Mr. Roux stated that as a result, PVPC staff had to reduce its commitment to some of the regional locations. He added that staff will monitor and count each of the 30 locations three times and will begin working on the additional 57 locations received from MassDOT. Copies of all counts will be sent to each community.

Mr. Roux reported that the PVPC typically performs automatic traffic counts from late April to early November and usually counts over 40 locations each year for MassDOT. He explained that each location is counted 3 times because cold weather causes the nails that hold down equipment to loosen. PVPC’s ability to do counts for communities is becomes limited in the fall due to the colder weather. Mr. Roux indicated that PVPC staff members will complete those counts that have been scheduled and will try to process new requests weather permitting; however, some new requests may not be possible. Mr. Roux added that Shared Use Path counts will continue as planned but on-road bike lane counts will not resume until the spring.

Mr. Roux reported that there is no evident trend at the 30 regional count locations. Most locations show little variation between June and July volumes with a few exceptions such as the July counts on Dickinson Street south of Belmont Avenue in Springfield, which are over 3,000 vehicles per day lower than June counts. To conclude the presentation, Mr. McCaul displayed a series of line graphs of daily traffic counts taken in locations in West Springfield, Brimfield, Ware, Northampton and Ludlow showing traffic spikes in peak hours.

Mr. Czach thanked Mr. Roux for his two excellent presentations and then moved on to agenda item 8.

8. **Other Business**

Laura Hanson reported that she received an email from the Complete Streets Funding Coordinator saying that the deadline for Tier 2 has been extended a month through October 1st, and Tier 3 has been extended to November 2nd.

Mr. McCaul reported that PVPC staff continues to migrate its handouts to the PVPC.org website. He asked the JTC members to let him know if they have any issues. He added that he is now sending emails using Constant Contact and he asked the members to contact him if they are not receiving emails.

Jeff McCollough reported that Bay State Bike Week is moving ahead as a virtual event and the Mass Commuter Challenge will continue this year. He added that links to these events can be found on Facebook.

9. **Adjourn**

MOVED BY PAUL BURNS OF THE PIONEER VALLEY TRANSIT AUTHORITY (PVTA), SECONDED BY GLENN BARRINGTON OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST, TO ADJOURN THIS JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING AT 11:27 A.M. ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED, THE MOTION CARRIES.

Relevant Documents Emailed for this September 9, 2020 JTC Meeting:

- *Joint Transportation Committee September 9, 2020 Meeting Agenda*
- *Minutes of the May 13, 2020 Joint Transportation Committee Meeting*
- *FFY 2020 TIP – Project Status*
- *PVPC 2020 Counting Program*
- *JTC Top 100 High Crash Intersections for the Pioneer Valley 2015 - 2017*