

Minutes of the Tuesday, April 26, 2022 Virtual Zoom Meeting of the  
Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)  
Held by the  
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission  
60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104-3419

MPO Members Present:

Steve Woelfel	Director of Strategic Planning, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) representing MPO Chair Jamey Tesler, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer
James Barry	Selectboard, Town of Belchertown
Joshua Garcia	Mayor, City of Holyoke
Mark Gold	Selectboard, Town of Longmeadow
Walter Gunn	Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Mark Moore	Massachusetts Highway, District One, representing Jonathan Gulliver MassDOT Highway Division Administrator
Nicole LaChapelle	Mayor, City of Easthampton
Douglas Slaughter	Chair, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA)
Rick Sullivan	President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts

Guests and PVPC Staff Present:

Daryl Amaral	MassDOT District Two Office, Acting State Aid Engineer
Mark Cressotti	City of Westfield, City Engineer
Peter Frieri	MassDOT, District One Office
Laura Hanson	MassDOT, District Two Office
Michelle Ho	MassDOT Planning
Christopher Klem	MassDOT Planning
Derek Krevat	MassDOT Transportation Planner – Office of Transportation Planning
Andrew McCaul	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Jeff McCollough	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Andrew Reovan	Federal Highway Administration
Kimberly H. Robinson	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Executive Director
Dana Roscoe	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Gary Roux	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Steve Savaria	Fuss & O'Neill, Senior Project Manager
Lynn Shell	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Support Staff

**Note:** Because this meeting was held via Zoom, not all those present are included as some participants were only identified by a phone number and no name was available.

1. Chairman's Call to Order, Welcome and Opening Remarks

Steve Woelfel, Director of Strategic Planning, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, representing MPO Chair Jamey Tesler, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer, called the April 26, 2022 meeting of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at 10:02 a.m. Mr. Woelfel first reviewed the virtual meeting format and he noted that the meeting is being recorded.

PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe took roll call and the following MPO members responded that they were present: Steve Woelfel, MassDOT Director of Strategic Planning, Office of Transportation Planning, representing MPO Chair Jamey Tesler, MassDOT Secretary and CEO; Mark Moore, MassDOT District One representing MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver; Joshua Garcia, Mayor of Holyoke; Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor of Easthampton; Walter Gunn, Chairman, PVPC; Douglas Slaughter, Chair PVTA; and Mark Gold, Longmeadow Selectboard. Mr. Roscoe confirmed that this roll call constitutes a quorum.

2. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO held remotely on March 22, 2022

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the March 22, 2022 meeting minutes of the Pioneer Valley MPO.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY DOUGLAS SLAUGHTER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 22, 2022 PIONEER VALLEY MPO MEETING AS PRESENTED.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

3. Review, Discussion and MPO Endorsement of the Required Annual Self Certification of the 3C Planning Process

PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe explained that when receiving federal funds, we must attest that they are being spent in accordance with federal requirements and he referred to the requirements displayed on the screen.

MOVED BY RICK SULLIVAN, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, TO ENDORSE THE REQUIRED ANNUAL SELF CERTIFICATION OF THE 3C PLANNING PROCESS.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

4. Review, Discussion and MPO Endorsement of the Required Annual Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Self Certification

Mr. Roscoe stated that we are attesting that we are using our federal funds in compliance with all Greenhouse Gas federal requirements. He noted that this is an annual update for FFY 2023, October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023.

MOVED BY RICK SULLIVAN, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN TO ENDORSE THE REQUIRED ANNUAL GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) SELF CERTIFICATION.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

5. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Release the Draft FFY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the Required 21-day Public Review Period

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux stated that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) describes the transportation activities anticipated over the next federal fiscal year. He believed that the draft report complies with the recommendations from MassDOT, Federal Highway and Federal Transit. It incorporates the requirements of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and addresses new Federal Planning Emphasis Areas. Mr. Roux also noted that it incorporates a request from the Town of Agawam for a Safety and Accessibility Study, and there is a Traffic Operations and Safety Study for the City of Springfield. He stated that the lion's share will be the 2024 update to the Regional Transportation Plan which must be endorsed no later than July of 2023. Mr. Roux stated that the MPO is being asked to vote on releasing the draft UPWP for the required 21-day public comment period.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY MARK GOLD, TO RELEASE THE DRAFT FFY 2023 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) FOR THE REQUIRED 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD.

Mr. Roscoe noted that the draft is to be released for 21 days. Mr. Gunn then amended his motion to the following:

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY MARK GOLD, TO RELEASE THE DRAFT FFY 2023 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

6. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Release the Proposed Amendment to the 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Required 21-day Public Review Period

PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Andy McCaul stated that there were issues with the Holyoke Project #606450 and MassDOT advised that the project be put on hold until it is rescope at which time it will be reassessed. Mr. McCaul also noted that under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, we will receive an additional \$5 million in federal money. He stated that based on best information and the recommendation of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC), the proposed amendment is to remove the Holyoke project for the time being, and to ensure that we are fully programming our 2022 target we would forward fund the West Springfield Memorial Avenue project #608374. Mr. McCaul noted that this project was originally funded over three years. Under this proposal, \$10 million is being moved into Year One and the remainder of the project would be funded in Year Two, FFY 2023. He stated that the MPO is being asked to release the proposed TIP amendment for a 21-day public review.

Mr. Woelfel asked Mayor Garcia if he would like to comment on the amendment. Mayor Garcia stated that he understands how the decision was made and he is in support of the decision for West Springfield. However, he pointed out that Holyoke needs this project and he will do what he can to ensure that it will happen in the very near future. Mr. Sullivan asked if construction will be able to meet the timeline for the West Springfield project. Mr. Roscoe noted that the cost of the project exceeded what we had available in a single year, and we were allowed to divide the cost among three building construction seasons. He stated that the dollar amounts allocated in each year did not necessarily correspond with the proposed work on the ground. Mr. Sullivan asked if the Holyoke project could go back into 2024. Mr. Roscoe stated there are elements of the project as proposed that are not eligible for federal funding. He noted that MassDOT will have to rescope the project and MassDOT has agreed to provide for redesign and engineering costs. Mr. Roscoe stated that when we get a project number and a scope, the Holyoke project will be put back on the list which he envisioned in no less than three years. In response to a question raised by Mr. Reovan, Mr. Roscoe stated that the next agenda item will discuss the 2023-2027 TIP. He noted that our starting point for 2023-2027 will be the funding of the West Springfield project in two years rather than three.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY RICK SULLIVAN, TO RELEASE THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE 2022-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

7. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Release the Draft 2023-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Required 21-day Public Review Period

Mr. McCaul reviewed the development schedule noting that today the MPO will be asked to release the draft 2023-2027 TIP for public review and he stated that the May 11<sup>th</sup> JTC meeting will be advertised as a formal public hearing for the TIP. He noted that comments will be collected and shared with the MPO prior to the May 24<sup>th</sup> MPO meeting at which time the MPO will be asked for an endorsement.

Mr. McCaul next discussed the transit side of the TIP. He noted that PVTA has a need for buses on an annual basis and they also fund infrastructure improvements for their various buildings. He pointed out that over the next five years they will be spending \$155 million on this program.

As regards the highway side, Mr. McCaul referred to a preferred list of projects that was presented to the MPO in March. He stated that the proposal was to fund the Granby intersection project, part of the West Springfield project at \$15.7 million, as well as the addition of a Valley Bike Share Phase 3 project and the proposed move from 2024 to 2023 of the Cummington Retaining Wall Replacement project. Mr. McCaul stated that the amendment to the FFY 2022 TIP opened additional money for programming in FFY 2023 that was just over \$11 million and PVPC staff reached out for a strategy to fund this money. He noted there were no potential projects that would be ready to

advance into FY 2023. During their outreach, some options came to their attention and were brought to the JTC for discussion which include (1) potential flexing of FHWA money for PVTA to purchase two 35 hybrid buses; (2) a small bridge program; (3) potential cost sharing for the West Springfield/Holyoke Route 5 Reconstruction Project. The City of Westfield also proposed the Westfield River Multi-Use Path project. Mr. McCaul noted that the recommendation at TIP Days was that this project would not be ready for 2023 but the City felt it was an option and the JTC made a recommendation to include it. He noted that they also recommended including the balance of the target money for the Holyoke/West Springfield Route 5 project as well as leaving \$500,000 for possible future project cost increases.

Mr. McCaul displayed a table of proposed projects based on the April JTC recommendations which included the Holyoke-West Springfield Riverdale Project; Cummington Project; Granby Intersection project; Westfield River Levee Project; West Springfield Memorial Avenue Project; Valley Bike Share Expansion Phase 3; PVTA bus purchases. Mr. McCaul then referred to a table that included several changes. He noted that the Granby intersection project experienced a \$900,000 cost increase. He stated that Westfield will verify with MassDOT that the Westfield River Levee Project will be ready to go in FFY 2023. In addition, to ensure this document is fiscally constrained and can be released for public review, the commitment to the Route 5 Riverdale Road project needs to be reduced by \$500,000.

City of Westfield Engineer, Mark Cressotti, stated that the City has worked with multiple MassDOT agencies with District 2 on right-of-way. He believed they are now in concurrence that Westfield can achieve the timeframe; the City has submitted a schedule to have things completed by July of 2023 and they will work expeditiously to meet the obligation. Christopher Klem, MassDOT Planning, asked Mr. Cressotti to update MPO members regarding a change in the proposed path limits. Mr. Cressotti stated that the scope of the project goes from Williams Riding Way to Ellsworth Street but due to many neighborhood concerns, for the current process and time frame they would like to end the project at Shepherd Street.

As requested by Mr. Woelfel, Mr. McCaul reiterated the major changes to the draft 2023-2027 TIP:

1. West Springfield Route 5 Riverdale funding to offset the cost the state is committing to this \$27 million project.
2. Cummington Road Project experienced a modest cost increase.
3. Granby 2 Intersection project experienced a \$894,000 cost increase.
4. Proposal to add the Westfield River Levee multi-use path project.
5. Reduce the funding because of forward funding the West Springfield project.
6. Valley Bike Share Expansion Phase 3.
7. PVTA - Addition of two 35 hybrid buses at a cost of \$1.5 million.

Mr. McCaul stated that is the Year One proposal. He next reviewed the 2023-2027 TIP projects for the out years which he shared on the screen. Mr. Gunn asked why the Longmeadow Route 5/Converse Street project moved from 2024 to 2025. Mr. McCaul stated that the project was moved two years ago when the new TIP was being developed. He noted that it went out for public review but this project was specifically moved at that time based on money available. Mr. McCaul suggested that when developing a new TIP, the PVPC needs a better process to make sure the information is shared appropriately with the municipality and the public.

When Mr. McCaul finished discussing the proposed 2023-2027 Tip projects, Daryl Amaral, MassDOT District 2, noted for the record that upon consultation with their right-of-way and environmental sections, it was determined that it will be very challenging for the Westfield project to make 2023. Mr. Woelfel then called for a motion to release the Draft 2023-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the required 21-day public review period.

**MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY RICK SULLIVAN, TO RELEASE THE DRAFT 2023-2027 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD.**

Mr. Roscoe pointed out that MPO Region 4 is represented by James Barry of Belchertown and the alternate representative is Mark Gold from Longmeadow. He noted that Mr. Barry has just joined the meeting and he asked if he should be asked to vote as the member or if Mr. Gold will continue to vote. Mr. Woelfel stated that Mr. Barry should vote. Mr. Roscoe then took roll call and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

8. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Release the 2020 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Plan for the Required 21-day Public Review Period

Mr. Roscoe noted that the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority is having their triennial review and he explained that Mr. McCaul will present comments on their behalf. Mr. McCaul then gave a brief overview of the 2020 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Plan (CPT-HSP). He noted that this plan was put together pre-COVID and will be reviewed and updated but it needs MPO endorsement. Mr. McCaul explained that this plan helps to improve transportation services for individuals with disabilities, older adults and those in lower income classifications within the Pioneer Valley region. He stated that the needs identified in this plan are used to evaluate and rank eligible projects for various federal transportation grants. He noted that some of the grants that are made eligible through this plan include MassDOT Community Transit Grant Program; MassDOT Mobility Assistance Program; FTA Mobility for All Pilot Program; MassDOT Helping Hand Mini-Grant Program; MassDOT Workforce Transportation Program; AARP Community Challenge Grants; Transportation Networking Companies Assessments.

Mr. McCaul stated that the MPO is being asked to approve the release of the CPT-HSP. He noted that comments will be brought back to the MPO in May for endorsement.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, SECONDED BY RICK SULLIVAN, TO RELEASE THE 2020 COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT – HUMAN SERVICES PLAN FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD.

Mr. Roscoe took roll call and each MPO member in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

9. Updates from MassDOT District One and District Two Officials on Relevant Transportation Issues and Projects of Interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

Mr. Amaral presented the following updates from MassDOT District Two:

**2022**

Project ID	Description	Update
608374	West Springfield reconstruction Memorial Ave., Route 147	Design is at PS&E; Environment has been cleared; PS&E review completed April 11 <sup>th</sup> ; waiting responses to comment; ad date is June 4, 2022
608577	Easthampton improvements, related work on Union Street from Payson Ave. to High street	Advertised March 12 <sup>th</sup> ; bid opening date April 20 <sup>th</sup> with low bidder Ludlow Construction at \$4.02 million

**2023**

Project ID	Description	Update
606895	Granby improvements at two locations on Route 202, School Street and Five Corners	Design at 75%; 100% will be ready to submit when permits are obtained; ad date is May 13, 2023
608163	Wales reconstruction improvements on Monson Road from Monson town line to Reed Hill Road	Design at 75%; 100% submission is due July 11, 2022; current ad date is March 2, 2024

Mr. Frieri presented the following updates from MassDOT District One:

**2023**

Project ID	Description	Update
606797	Cummington retaining wall Route 9	On March 23 <sup>rd</sup> Design Section submitted 25% design; currently under review by MassDOT

**2024**

Project ID	Description	Update
609287	Worthington Phase 2 of Route 142 reconstruction	Received 100% design in December; submitted comments; anticipate final design to be submitted in October 2022

**2025**

Project ID	Description	Update
612031	Worthington 6-mile resurfacing project	Plan to begin design in a year or so

**2026**

Project ID	Description	Update
607231	Williamsburg reconstruction of Mountain Street	Public hearing was in June 2021; back for redesign based on those comments

**2027**

Project ID	Description	Update
608787	Williamsburg Construction of Mill River Greenway	Anticipate a 25% design by summer
608886	Chesterfield reconstruction of North Road and Damon Pond Road	Received 25% design in spring of 2021; waiting for the public hearing date to be set.

10. Updates from PVTA Administrator Sandra Sheehan on Relevant Transit-related Issues and Projects of Interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

Mr. Roscoe stated that there will not be a PVTA update today given that PVTA is engaged in a week-long triennial federal review.

11. Other Business

Mr. Woelfel noted that the next virtual MPO meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2022 and he encouraged everyone to attend. Mr. Woelfel stated that if anyone is planning to attend the Innovation Conference in May in person, they should register as soon as possible, adding that he might need to shut down registration by the end of this week. There being no other business, Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to adjourn.

MOVED BY RICK SULLIVAN, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, TO ADJOURN THE APRIL 26, 2022 MEETING OF THE PIONEER VALLEY MPO. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:53 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Shell,  
Administrative Assistant I Specialist  
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

**List of Documents Distributed at the April 26, 2022 MPO Meeting**

1. MPO Agenda: April 26, 2022
2. March 22, 2022 MPO Meeting Minutes
3. Proposed Draft 2023 -2027 TIP
4. Pioneer Valley MPO Power Point Presentation