

Minutes of the Tuesday, March 23, 2021 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	Deputy Director, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Representing MPO Chair Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer
Walter Gunn	Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Richard Masse	MassDOT District Two Office Representing Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division Administrator Jonathan Gulliver
William Reichelt	Mayor, Town of West Springfield
Rick Sullivan	President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts

**Guests and PVPC Staff Present:**

Daryl Amaral	MassDOT District 2 Office, Acting State Aid Engineer
Glenn Barrington	University of Massachusetts
Patrick Beaudry	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Manager, Public Affairs
Robert Colson	West Springfield DPW
Mark Cressotti	City Engineer, City of Westfield
Peter Frieri	MassDOT, District 1 Office
Van Kacoyannakis	Civil Engineer, VHB
Timothy Keane	Town Engineer, Town of Longmeadow
Derek Krevat	Regional Planning Coordinator, MassDOT Planning
Craig Markham	Assistant Town Engineer, Town of Longmeadow
Andrew McCaul	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Jeff McCollough	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Mike McManus	Superintendent, Holyoke DPW
Mark Moore	MassDOT Project Development Engineer
Khyati Parmar	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Andrew Reovan	PVPC Liaison with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Kimberly H. Robinson	Executive Director, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
+Dana Roscoe	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Gary Roux	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Louise Sullivan	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, Deputy Director, Office of Transportation Planning, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), Representing MPO Chair Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer, called the February 23, 2021 meeting of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at 10:03 a.m. Mr. Woelfel then asked for a roll call from the MPO members present as follows: Richard Masse, MassDOT District Two, Representing Massachusetts

Department of Transportation Highway Division Administrator Jonathan Gulliver; Walter Gunn, Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission; Rick Sullivan, President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts; and William Reichelt, Mayor of West Springfield. PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe confirmed that this roll call constitutes a quorum.

Following the roll call, Mr. Woelfel moved to take up the minutes of the previous MPO meeting held on February 23, 2021.

2. MPO Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Pioneer Valley MPO Held Remotely on February 23, 2021

Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous Pioneer Valley MPO meeting which was held on February 23, 2021.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN, PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION, SECONDED BY RICK SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 23, 2021 PIONEER VALLEY MPO MEETING AS PRESENTED.

Mr. Woelfel requested a roll call and each of the MPO members in attendance responded affirmatively.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS APPROVED BY THE MPO MEMBERS PRESENT.

3. Review of the Draft List of Projects Currently under Consideration for Inclusion in the 2022-2026 TIP

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe to discuss the 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Roscoe reviewed the *2022 – 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development Schedule* saying that for today, March 23rd, the Joint Transportation Committee's (JTC's) recommended list of preferred TIP projects will be presented for review. Mr. Roscoe explained that on April 14th, the JTC will perform a final review of the TIP based on MPO and MassDOT updates and comments, and then on April 27th, PVPC staff will ask the MPO members for a vote to release the draft FFY 2022 – 2026 TIP for a required 21 day public review period. On May 12th, there will be a TIP Public Hearing and the JTC will review comments on the draft FFY 2022 – 2026 TIP. Mr. Roscoe stated that on May 25th, the MPO members will be asked to endorse the FFY 2022 – 2026 TIP.

Mr. Roscoe, indicating the Transit TIP displayed on the screen, explained that the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) works with their PVTA Advisory Board and the Transit Division of MassDOT to create a list of transit capital projects based on available funding for vehicles and facility maintenance.

Mr. Roscoe reported that the first highway project listed for FFY 2022 is Year 2 of the Hadley Reconstruction on Route 9 (605032) Project starting in FFY 2021 and carrying over into FFY 2022. He stated that this is a \$26 million plus project and approximately \$17.5 million has been programmed for the project. In an earlier handout document, the project cost was \$16.7 million for a \$700,000 cost difference. Mr. Roscoe explained that the \$700,000 was absorbed in the Holyoke Traffic Signal Upgrades at 15 Intersections (606450) Project and if this spreadsheet illustrated on the zoom screen is compared with an earlier one, that \$700,000 is

shown decreasing from \$5.3 million to \$4.6 million. At this point, Mr. Roscoe said, the hope is to absorb that \$700,000 for this Holyoke (606450) project which is on the statewide list of projects.

Mr. Roscoe noted that the West Springfield Reconstruction of Memorial Avenue (608374) Project is a three year project with a total construction cost of \$21.6 million. It's anticipated that \$1.7 million will be programmed in Year 1.

Mr. Roscoe indicated that the Easthampton Improvements on Route 141 from Payson Avenue to High Street (608577) Project at a cost of \$3.6 million leaves the FFY 2022 highway element completely programmed.

Mr. Roscoe reported that the first TIP project listed for FFY 2023 is the Granby Improvements on Route 202 (606895) Project for \$3.5 million followed by the Wales Reconstruction on Monson Road (608163) Project for \$4.4 million. He explained that the greater portion of the three year West Springfield Reconstruction of Memorial Avenue (608374) Project is occurring during this 2023 fiscal year for the sum of \$19.5 million.

Mr. Roscoe announced that FFY 2024 is the final year of the West Springfield Memorial Avenue Project for \$3.6 million. Next for FFY 2024 is the Springfield Reconstruction of Sumner Avenue at the "X" (608717) Project for \$12.2 million followed by the Worthington Reconstruction on Route 143, Phase 2 (609287) Project for \$11.6 million; and the Cummington Reconstruction on Route 9 Retaining Wall (606797) Project now listed in FFY 2024 for \$1.8 million.

For FFY 2025, Mr. Roscoe listed the Longmeadow Resurfacing and Improvements to Route 5 (608881) Project for \$6.9 million; the Northampton Downtown Corridor (609286) Project for \$16.6 million; and the Holland Resurfacing on Brimfield Road (608727) Project for \$1.1 million.

Mr. Roscoe reported that for FFY 2026, there are three projects: the Holyoke Resurfacing and Related Work on Cabot Street and Race Street (609065) for \$5.9 million; the Chicopee Intersection Reconstruction of Montgomery Road at Granby Road, Mckinstry Avenue and Montgomery Road at Turnpike Access Road (609061) Project for \$10.2 million and the South Hadley Main Street Road Improvement (608785) Project for \$6.3 million.

Mr. Woelfel thanked Mr. Roscoe for his presentation and he called on PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux to discuss the next agenda item.

4. Update on the Unified Planning Work Program and the Anticipated Timeline for Releasing a Draft and Endorsing the Work Program

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux indicated that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) will be released on the same development schedule as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Roux explained that the UPWP is the annual summary of all the proposed planning tasks scheduled over the next fiscal year from October 1st of this year until September 30th of next year, 2022. He reported that PVPC staff has asked that a letter from a municipality's CEO be sent to PVPC Executive Director Kimberly H.

Robinson by March 26th in order to have a municipality's project or study be considered for inclusion in the UPWP. Mr. Roux encouraged projects and studies emphasizing mobility and safety enhancements. Mr. Woelfel asked if there were any questions for Mr. Roux, and there being none, he moved on to the next agenda item.

#### 5. Update on the Pioneer Valley Safety Compass

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Senior Transportation Planner Khyati Parmar to discuss the Pioneer Valley Safety Compass. Ms. Parmar stated that the current draft *Pioneer Valley Safety Compass* is an update to the first *Pioneer Valley Safety Compass* that was released in October 2017 based on crash data from 2012 – 2014. Ms. Parmar explained that the current *Safety Compass* is in draft form and it is based on crash data from 2015 to 2017. She noted that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has a website that includes Interactive Data Dashboards such as year-to-date crashes, pedestrian crashes, bicyclist crashes, fatalities, and a data extraction service at <https://apps.impact.dot.state.ma.us/cdp/home>. She added that data is available for 2018 – 2020 but the data has not been finalized yet. Ms. Parmar indicated that each of PVPC's 43 communities is provided with GIS detailed crash data on a flash drive.

Ms. Parmar indicated that PVPC's *Top 100 High Crash Intersection* report is contained in the *Safety Compass* along with interactive maps with detailed crash data for each location; drone videos and photos for select locations; and links to MassDOT Roadway Safety Audits. Ms. Parmar explained that the *Safety Compass* helps cities and towns classify their individual problem locations by providing a detailed individual profile for each community. She added that the *Safety Compass* also is a helpful guide in the selection of transportation planning study candidate locations.

Ms. Parmar explained that this update of the *Safety Compass* contains a two-page template of each community providing a quick brief snapshot. Ms. Parmar reported that ranking of the crash data is based on EPDO which stands for *Equivalent Property Damage Only* scoring and the EPDO is now calculated differently emphasizing injury crashes more than property damage crashes.

Ms. Parmar displayed a screen illustrating two locations extracted from the *Safety Compass*: the City of Westfield (2012-2014) and the Town of Wales (2012-2014) with each location having a template consisting of two web pages and providing an opportunity to compare the urban and rural format. Next, Ms. Parmar displayed as an example, page 1 for the City of Holyoke illustrating quick facts in a side bar along with maps and charts. Page 2 for Holyoke, she said, is more detailed with key findings, contribution codes for all drivers, roadway classification, location of crashes and motorist crashes by type and year.

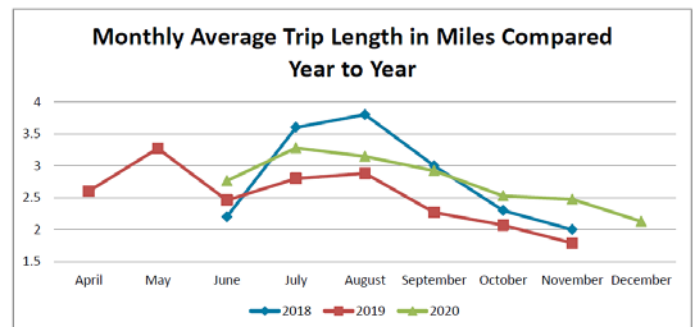
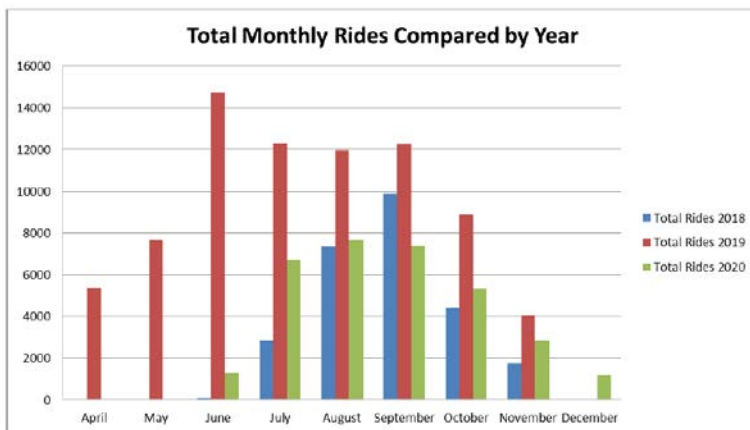
Ms. Parmar's next screen displayed a quick summary of all the regional data that is included in the two pages of each community profile: Total Community Crashes; Driver Age; Regional Monthly Crashes; Regional Safety Performance Measures and Targets; Non-Motorist Crashes by Community; Under Height (<3.5 ft.) Bridge Crashes; and Fatal Crashes per Month with a comparison of before and after Covid-19. Ms. Parmar concluded her presentation saying that the *Safety Compass* has already been presented to the JTC members for their comments and a draft *Safety Compass* will be released for public review in April with the goal of finalizing the *Safety Compass* in May.

Mr. Woelfel moved on to the next agenda item and called on Gary Roux for an update on Valley Bike Ridership.

6. Update on Valley Bike 2020 Ridership

Mr. Roux explained that ValleyBike began operation in June 2018 and has completed its third year and is going into its fourth year. He stated that ValleyBike is the regional bikeshare program for six communities: Northampton with 14 stations, Amherst including the University of Massachusetts with 10 stations, Holyoke (9), Easthampton (4) South Hadley (3) and Springfield which didn't open any of its stations in 2020 due to COVID-19. Mr. Roux stated that ValleyBike is funded with Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds through the Pioneer Valley Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He noted that all the bikes are electrical assist bicycles making them easy to ride for all ridership levels.

Mr. Roux noted that a typical season for ValleyBike is April to November but COVID -19 delayed the start of the program in 2020. He indicated, however, that for this season in 2021, new stations will be added in the Cities of Chicopee and West Springfield. He reported that the number of rides from June through December in 2020 totaled 32,415. Mr. Roux displayed two interesting charts illustrating the total monthly rides and trip length in miles compared year to year for the years: 2018 (blue), 2019 (red) and 2020 (green) as appear below:



Mr. Roux reported the highest usage of bicycles occurs on Saturdays and the peak usage time frame occurs from noon to 9:00 p.m. He emphasized the importance of showing monthly usage at each station to determine whether the station is appropriately located. Mr. Roux underscored that the good news is that the ValleyBike program is being used on a regular basis and it's getting people to ride bikes instead of driving vehicles.

Mr. Woelfel asked if there were any questions for Mr. Roux and Walter Gunn commented that in Massachusetts electric bikes require registration and are banned from bike trails and sidewalks. Mr. Roux replied that the speed limit on the bikes can be restricted and by restricting their speed, the laws can be met and the bikes won't be subject to the Massachusetts laws.

After a brief discussion of the electric bikes, Mr. Woelfel moved on to the next agenda item.

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

Mr. Woelfel called on Daryl Amaral of the MassDOT District Two office in Northampton to present District Two's updates on relevant transportation issues and projects. Mr. Amaral reported on the following TIP projects:

- Westfield Route 20, Court Street and Lloyds Hill, Phase 2 (607773) Project received its PS&E on January 25th and has a May 21st advertisement date.
- Hadley Route 9, Mill Street to Maple Street Project (605032) is at 100% Design including acquisition of ROW with final PS&E due in April and advertisement date is September 21, 2021.
- Amherst Routes 9 and 116 (608084) Project received its PS&E on December 21, 2020 and its current advertisement date is April 24, 2021.
- the Springfield Intersection Improvements on Cottage, Industry and Robbins Road (608782) Project PS&E received on January 21st, ROW issued on March 22, 2021 and advertisement date scheduled for March 27, 2021.
- Districts One and Two Resurfacing at Multiple Locations (610858) Cross-District Project received its PS&E in January, no ROW and the advertising date is May 29, 2021.

Mr. Woelfel called on Peter Frieri of the MassDOT District One office in Lenox to present District One's updates on relevant transportation projects within its jurisdiction. Mr. Frieri reported that the Worthington Route 143 Reconstruction Project (609287) Phase 1, advertised in July 2019, is 50% complete with 100% completion scheduled for April of this year. The current completion date of Phase 2, comprised of the western three miles, currently programmed in FFY 2024, is scheduled for August 2021.

Mr. Woelfel thanked Mr. Frieri and Mr. Amaral for their updates and he then moved on to the next agenda item.

8. Updates from Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) Administrator Sandra Sheehan on Relevant Transit Issues and Projects of Interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

No update was available.

9. Other Business

Mr. Woelfel asked if there was any other business. Mr. Roscoe expressed his gratitude to Alex More, Mayor of Holyoke, who is resigning on Friday to become Mayor of Provincetown. Mr. Roscoe reported that Jim Czach, Chair of the PVPC's Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) has resigned, and PVPC staff are grateful for his many years of service. Mr. Woelfel voiced his appreciation for both Mayor Morse and Mr. Czach and then announced that the next MPO meeting is scheduled for April 27, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

There being no other business, Mr. Woelfel called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOVED BY RICK SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC), TO ADJOURN THIS MARCH 23, 2021 MEETING OF THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S MPO.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THIS MARCH 23RD MPO MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:55 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly H. Robinson, Executive Director  
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission