

Minutes of the Tuesday, April 27, 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) <i>Representing</i> MPO Chair Stephanie Pollack, Massachusetts Secretary of Transportation and Chief Executive Officer
Roger Fuller	Selectboard Member, Town of Chesterfield
Walter Gunn	Chairman, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)
Nicole LaChapelle	Mayor, City of Easthampton
Richard Masse	MassDOT District Two Office Representing Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division Administrator Jonathan Gulliver
David Narkewicz	Mayor, City of Northampton
William Reichelt	Mayor, Town of West Springfield
Sandra Sheehan	Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA)
Rick Sullivan	President and CEO, Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts

Guests and PVPC Staff Present:

Rana Al-Jammal	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Daryl Amaral	MassDOT District 2 Office, Acting State Aid Engineer
Patrick Beaudry	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Manager, Public Affairs
Elizabeth Botelho	City Engineer, City of Chicopee
Robert Colson	West Springfield DPW
Peter Frieri	MassDOT, District 1 Office
Michelle Ho	Senior Project Manager, MassDOT
Derek Krevat	Regional Planning Coordinator, MassDOT Planning
Andrew McCaul	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Jeff McCollough	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) – Transportation Section
Bryan Pounds	Manager of MPO Activities, MassDOT
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
Steve Savaria	Fuss & O’Neill, Senior Project Manager
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 Jamey Tesler, Acting 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; William Reichelt, Mayor of West Springfield; David Narkewicz, Mayor of Northampton; Nicole LaChapelle, Mayor of Easthampton; Roger Fuller, Selectboard Member, Town of Chesterfield; and Sandra Sheehan, Administrator, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA). 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 March 23, 2021.

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

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

MOVED BY DAVID NARKEWICZ, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, SECONDED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN, PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 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, Discussion of Proposed Amendments and or Adjustments Required for the 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Required 21 Day Public Review Period

Mr. Woelfel called on PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe to discuss the 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Roscoe explained that the four FFY 2021 TIP projects displayed (see below) are the same projects displayed last month and the dollar amounts highlighted in yellow are the current amounts. Mr. Roscoe stated that all TIP projects on the 2021 element have been advertised with exception of the Hadley(605032) Project which has a proposed September 11th advertisement date. He added that no action is needed for this agenda item; it is just for information.

- Hadley Reconstruction on Route 9 (605032) Project
- Holyoke Traffic Signal Upgrades (606450) Project
- West Springfield Reconstruction of Memorial Avenue (608374) Project
- Easthampton Improvements on Route 141 (608577) Project

There being no questions for Mr. Roscoe, Mr. Woelfel called on Mr. Roscoe to discuss the FFY 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

4. Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Release the Draft 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Required 21 Day Public Review Period

PVPC Principal Planner Dana Roscoe announced that this list of FFY 2022 – 2026 TIP projects was reviewed by the JTC members at their April 14th meeting and they’ve recommended that the MPO members release this FFY 2022 – 2026 for the required 21 day public review.

Mr. Roscoe listed the total highway target funds for each of the years as follows:

Highway	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Total Target Funds	\$26,839,851	\$27,426,056	\$27,785,521	\$27,136,864	\$26,432,171

Mr. Roscoe reported that the first highway project listed for FFY 2022 is Year 2 of the Hadley Reconstruction on Route 9 (605032) Project followed by the Holyoke Traffic Signal Upgrades at 15 Intersections (606450) Project; Year 1 of the three-year West Springfield Memorial Avenue (608374) Project; and the Easthampton Work on Union Street from Payson Avenue to High Street (608577) Project. Mr. Roscoe added that outside of the target funding is the Northampton Bridge Replacement (606552) Project; the South Hadley Resurfacing (608473) Project; the Ware Bridge Replacement (605126) Project; the Northampton Safe Route to School (609515) Project; and the Amherst-Belchertown Norwottuck Rail Trail Resurfacing (608719) Project.

For FFY 2023, Mr. Roscoe reported the Granby Improvements on Route 202 (606895) Project; the Wales Improvements on Monson Road (608163) Project; and Year 2 of the West Springfield Memorial Avenue (608374) Project. Outside of target, he reported bridge work in the Ludlow (609120) Project; the Wales Bridge Replacement (608847) Project; the Springfield Safety Improvements on St. James Avenue (608565) Project; the Holyoke-West Springfield Rehabilitation of Route 5 (604209) Project; the Longmeadow Safe Routes to School (609517) Project; the Springfield Improvements on St. James Avenue at Tapley Street (608560) Project; and the Agawam Safe Routes to School (610652) Project.

Mr. Roscoe reported for FFY 2024: the Cummington Retaining Wall Replacement (606797) Project; the final year of the West Springfield Memorial Avenue (608374) Project; the Springfield “X” (608717) Project; and Phase 2 of the Worthington Reconstruction on Route 143 (609287) Project. Outside of target, Mr. Roscoe reported the Monson Bridge Replacement (608846) Project and the Hampden Bridge Maintenance (610779) Project.

For FFY 2025, Mr. Roscoe reported the Holland Resurfacing on Brimfield Road (608727) Project; the Longmeadow-Springfield Resurfacing on Longmeadow Street (608881) Project; and the Northampton Downtown Complete Streets on Route 9 (609286) Project. Outside of target are the Springfield Bridge Project (609409) Project; the Westhampton Bridge Maintenance (610768) Project; the Northampton Bridge Replacement (608869) Project; the Hadley Bridge Replacement (608460) Project; the Monson-Palmer Bridge Replacement (604136) Project; the Worthington Pavement (612031) Project; the Chicopee Safe Routes to School (SRTS) (612079) Project; the Springfield SRTS (612080) Project; the Northampton Rocky Hill Greenway Trail (608413) Project; and the Easthampton-Northampton Shared-Use Path (610657) Project.

Mr. Roscoe reported the following TIP Projects in FFY 2026: the South Hadley Reconstruction of Main Street (608785) Project; the Chicopee Intersection Improvements (609061) Project; the Holyoke Resurfacing of

Cabot and Race Streets (609065) Project and non-targeted is the Springfield-Chicopee Guide and Traffic Sign Replacement on a Section of I-291 (611953) Project.

Mr. Roscoe then announced the total Transit Capital Investments for each of the 2022-2026 fiscal years:

Transit	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Transit Capital Investment	\$25,770,768	\$27,160,305	\$30,516,886	\$24,751,604	\$24,299,150

Mr. Roscoe explained that in FFY 2022, the majority of transit funding is comprised of federal 5307 dollars for the purchase of buses and for capital expenses. There also is Section 5339 funding for the rehabilitation and purchase of buses and bus-related facilities. In FFY 2023, the larger portion of 5307 funding reflects bus purchases. Mr. Roscoe noted that the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) purchased several buses ten years ago that are reaching the end of usefulness so replacements are needed for those buses that expired. He reported that American Disability Act (ADA), bus purchases, vehicle maintenance and shelter work comprise FFY 2024 funding. Mr. Roscoe added that for FFY 2025, among the many items, there are electric buses; and for FFY 2026, there is the replacement of an articulated bus and additional capital expenses. Mr. Roscoe concluded his summary of the highway and transit elements from FFY 2022 – 2026 and he requested a motion to approve. Mr. Woelfel then called for a motion.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN, PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION, SECONDED BY RICHARD SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION’S DRAFT FFY 2022-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

Mr. Woelfel asked if there were any questions or discussion on the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

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

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

5. Update Review, Discussion and MPO Approval to Release the draft 2022 Unified Planning Work Program for the Required 21 Day Public Review Period

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 then briefly review the four parts of the UPWP:

- Work Element 1: Development of the TIP, the UPWP, Environmental Justice, Title VI planning and the public participation process

- Work Element 2: Data collection in support of the UPWP, transportation analysis and tracking regional transportation performance measures
- Work Element 3: Transportation planning in support of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and key studies for FFY 2022 including:
 - Task 3.1: Support of regional Complete Streets planning and Monson’s pedestrian safety study
 - Task 3.2: Support of the regional bikeshare program and ValleyBike communities
 - Task 3.3: Regional Freight Planning, analysis of low clearance railroad underpass in Holyoke
 - Task 3.4: Regional Congestion Management Process Project development
 - Task 3.5: Regional Pavement Management in eight communities
 - Task 3.6: Regional Performance Measures assessment and performance-based planning
 - Task 3.7: Regional Safety and Planning and use of IMPACT Safety Analysis Tools
 - Task 3.8: Transit System Surveys and Route Implementation in collaboration with PVTA
 - Task 3.9: Regional Transit Planning in cooperation with PVTA
 - Task 3.10: Paratransit Planning Assistance in support of PVTA services for disabled and elderly
 - Task 3.11: Climate Change Implementation and updating regional Climate Action Strategies
 - Task 3.12: Green Streets and Infrastructure Planning and DLTA assistance to municipalities
- Work Element 4: Scenic Byway Planning, Regional Land Use Planning and local technical assistance

Mr. Roscoe stated that action was needed from the MPO members on this agenda item and in May, the MPO members will be asked for their endorsement of the UPWP. Mr. Woelfel thanked Mr. Roux for his presentation and he called for a motion.

MOVED BY WALTER GUNN, CHAIRMAN, PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION, SECONDED BY RICHARD SULLIVAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION’S DRAFT FFY 2022 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

Mr. Woelfel asked if there were any questions or discussion on the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

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

Mr. Woelfel called on Mr. Roux to take up the next agenda item.

6. PVPC Staff Update on the Soon-to-Be Released Virtual Public Involvement Survey

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux reported that as part of the current work program, a virtual survey is going to be released to the MPO members, the JTC members and the full Planning Commission members to obtain feedback on how the virtual public process is working; suggestions for ways to improve it; and suggestions for holding hybrid meetings in the future.

Mr. Woelfel moved on to the next agenda item and called on Jeff McCollough for an update on the Southwick/Westfield Bikepath Survey.

7. PVPC Staff Update on the Southwick/Westfield Bikepath Survey Results

Senior Transportation Planner Jeff McCollough explained that normally people would be stopped on the Southwick/Westfield Bikepath and asked about their experience using the bikepath; but instead, signs have been placed on the bikepath that have a hyperlink to the Southwick/Westfield Bikepath Survey that will allow them to access the survey on their smart phones.



Mr. McCollough then related some of the survey questions and their responses. When asked how folks got to the bikepath, most of them reported driving alone or with someone. When asked their reason for using the trail, they answered dog walking, shopping,, or personal use. Mr. McCollough remarked that one out of five people came from Connecticut to use the bikepath. When asked what services people wanted, their first response was rest rooms. Mr. McCollough added that the largest expenditures made by the users of the bikepath were for lunch or dinner. Mr. McCollough concluded his presentation saying shared-use paths impact health, the economy, transportation, the environment, safety, accessibility, and equity.

Mr. Woelfel asked if there were any questions for Mr. McCollough. Rick Sullivan asked if the bikepath's path through downtown Westfield might result in more revenue from people on the bikepath stopping to shop. Mr. McCollough replied that there will be an opportunity for shopping at bike shops or restaurants.

Mr. Woelfel moved on to the next agenda item.

8. 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 was advertised on March 20, 2021; its current bid opening is scheduled for May 4, 2021.
- Hadley Route 9, Mill Street to Maple Street Project (605032) is in its final stage of design; its PS&E is under review; and it has an advertisement date of September 11, 2021.
- Amherst Routes 9 and 116 (608084) Project has a current advertisement date of April 24, 2021.
- Springfield Intersection Improvements on Cottage, Industry and Robbins Road (608782) Project will be advertised on March 27th and its bid opening is scheduled for May 11th.
- Districts One and Two Resurfacing at Multiple Locations (610858) Cross-District Project received its PS&E in January 2021; right of way certification was issued in January; its environmental clearance on April 24th and its advertisement date is May 29th.

Mr. Woelfel then 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 currently awaiting receipt of its 100% design phase which is anticipated for the end of May. Phase 1 is under construction and was given its Notice to Proceed in January 2020. The completion date will be in August of 2021. Also, Mr. Frieri reported that work is continuing on the Cumington Retaining Wall Replacement (606797) Project and he's hoping to see 25% design in the near future.

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

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

PVTA Administrator Sandra Sheehan added to Mr. Roscoe's review of the transit elements from FFY 2022 – 2026 saying that the majority of the PVTA capital improvement expenditures are for buses and maintaining transit garages, the administration building and all other assets in a state of good repair. Ms. Sheehan reported that the PVTA is currently going through a public participation process holding public hearings regarding proposed changes that the PVTA Advisory Board hopes to implement this summer. One change proposed is a service between Amherst and Worcester funded by a MassDOT grant which will provide access to rural communities and urban centers.

Ms. Sheehan further reported that the PVTA is proposing three trips to Worcester to allow access to commuter rail, and express service to the Academy of Music, the Holyoke Mall, and Union Station in Springfield. She indicated that changes to the Ware-Palmer shuttle are planned and PVTA is partnering with the Quaboag Connector to provide microtransit for that region.

10. Other Business

Mr. Woelfel encouraged the MPO members to register for the Virtual 2021 Transportation Innovation Conference scheduled for May 25, 26 and 27. Mr. Woelfel announced that the next MPO meeting is scheduled for May 25, 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 DAVID NARKEWICZ, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, TO ADJOURN THIS APRIL 27, 2021 MEETING OF THE PIONEER VALLEY REGION'S MPO.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER DISCUSSION, THIS APRIL 27TH MPO MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 11:00 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly H. Robinson, Executive Director
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at the April 27, 2021 MPO Meeting

1. *Pioneer Valley Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting Notice and Agenda: April 27, 2021*
2. *Minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Meeting: March 23, 2021*
3. *2021 – 2025 TIP*
4. *Draft TIP 2022 – 2026*
5. *the draft 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)*
6. *Draft PVTA TIP - April*
7. *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development Schedule*
8. *MPO Meeting Presentation Slides*