

## Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Zoom Meeting

Wednesday, October 12, 2022 -- 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

### Participants (30):

Amaral, Daryl	MassDOT District 2
Briere, Gary	MassBike
Brown, Randy	Southwick
Burns, Paul	Pioneer Valley Transit Authority
Chase, Michelle	Agawam
Christensen, Tom	East Longmeadow
Cressoti, Mark	Westfield Consultant
Dines, Nick	Williamsburg
Dwyer, Bill	Hadley, JTC Chairman
Ellis, Doug	Chicopee
Fenney, Bruce	East Longmeadow
Frieri, Peter	MassDOT District 1
Gamelli, Matt	Westfield - Engineering
Johnson, Betsy	Pedestrian Rep, Walk-Bike Springfield
Jones, Shatoyia	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Kacoyannakis, Van	VHB
Keane, Timothy	Longmeadow
Knightly, Connor	West Springfield
Krar, Andrew	Springfield
Mayboroda, Dmitriy	McMahon and Associates
McCaul, Andy	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
McCollough, Jeffrey	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
McCormack, Dan	BETA Group
Murphy, Benjamin	Monson
Nims, Dawn	Holyoke Engineer
Rosado, Carmen	Stavros - Mobility Impaired Rep
Roscoe, Dana	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Roux, Gary	Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Savaria, Steve	Fuss and O'Neil
Ward, Marvin	Easthampton Resident

**Note: All participants may not be mentioned due to phone number in Zoom Meeting.**

### 1. Chairman Call to Order

Bill Dwyer, JTC Chairman, opened the October 12, 2022 Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Zoom meeting at 10:00 a.m., confirmed a quorum and asked PVPC Planner Andrew McCaul to initiate roll call.

Carmen Rosado, Stavros, asked to record the meeting. Mr. Dwyer approved the request.

### 2. Approval of Minutes – September 14, 2022 JTC Meeting

Mr. Dwyer opened the floor for comments on the September 14, 2022 Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) meeting minutes.

Hearing and seeing no other comments, Mr. Dwyer asked for a motion for approval on the September 14, 2022 Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) meeting minutes.

MOTIONED BY CONNOR KNIGHTLY, WEST SPRINGFIELD; SECONDED BY CARMEN ROSADO.

Mr. McCaul initiated roll call.

7 IN FAVOR, 6 ABSTAINED. MOTION CARRIES.

### 3. Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) Review—Update

Mr. McCaul shared his screen and showed the proposed updates to the TEC, as well as the TEC Scoring Summary as of October 2022 regarding the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). He stated that the changes consisted primarily of altering the mobility score by 2 points in the system preservation criteria and determined that the congestion management process (a federal requirement) should hold a little more weight than mobility. He also noted that the goal is to alter the criteria for max effectiveness without exceeding the maximum point system allowance of 100 points. He summarized the minor tweaks made to other factors that include but are not limited to:

**Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Virtual Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, August 10, 2022 – 10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

- **Safety and Security:** +1 point increase with a proposal for a -1 point decrease to a criterion
- **Environmental Change:** 0.5+ point increase
- **Environment Justice:** +1 point increase
- **Item 1B:** language clarification to be intended for corridor at half a mile rather than a specific location and should show improvements and flow with a no points change
- **Item 1C:** received a point bump which directly corresponds to congestion management process, a federal requirement that involves performance reports on projects
- **Item 2A:** language clarification because previous language on Complete Streets wasn't going to be good enough to get maximum points; change entails no longer getting points for being a Complete Streets community or an adopted community but now requires a *specific* Complete Streets plan that the Complete Streets project came out of to receive the maximum 3 points
- **Item 2B:** language clarification for multi-mobile criteria to include transit option with a +1 point increase
- **Pedestrian for Transit:** reduced by .5 points with an added transit option for 1 point with a language clarification that this criterion is specific to downtown or village centers
- **Item 2C:** clarified language to specify project completion of known gaps within a pedestrian network to enhance no motorized transportation with an added +1 point for the inclusion of transportation demand management (TDM) strategies

Mr. McCaul added that links are included for the summary of changes that were distributed to the JTC prior to the meeting.

Paul Burns, PVTA, suggested that Item 2B include downtown shelters and improving connectivity in rural areas where there is no village or town center. Mr. McCaul stated that it was a great suggestion and that made a note of it for consideration.

Mr. McCaul continued his presentation by noting more minor tweaks that include but are not limited to:

- **Item 3B:** language clarification to be specific to an intersection that is not a corridor but could be two intersections (that is not a corridor) within a quarter mile
- **Item 3C:** -2 town points were removed, and the language was clarified to specifically call out congestion areas that would not fall into the CMP report, which does not cover 100% of federal aid road systems which won't be picked up in the CRP, so the criterion now includes non-identified areas

For the next few sections, Mr. McCaul shared the following:

#### **Section 4**

Mr. McCaul noted that in the past, if there was an intersection project where there was water / sewage, you would get an automatic 1-2 points and stated that it was decided that simply having a water-sewage system did not hold much weight regarding broader improvement goals. He stated that the language clarification change to this section now requires municipalities to make improvements to modernize the infrastructure in the urban area as opposed to simply having the infrastructure.

#### **Section 5**

Mr. McCaul noted a proposal to reduce Section 5B by -1 point to apply to a new criterion: 1) *carbon reduction program*, which replaces streetlights or traffic control devices with energy efficient alternative and 2) *project improves habitat connectivity*, which includes maintaining connectivity (which is added under Section 6).

#### **Section 6**

Mr. McCaul noted that the biggest focus was a proposal to merge the two CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (carbon emissions) and improved air quality criteria to create more efficient air quality infrastructure with  $\geq$  +25% air quality improvement to receive 2 points,  $<$  than 25% air quality improvement to receive 0.5 points and if it a project to reduce air quality -1 points, which is to be determined after undergoing PVPC's CMAC quality analysis.

Under mode shift (6H), Mr. McCaul noted a proposal to eliminate the mode shift criterion to open up an extra point because it seems duplicative, as this is also discussed under the pedestrian and transit criteria to instead

**Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Virtual Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, August 10, 2022 – 10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

use the extra point to create two new criteria: carbon reduction programming, which replaces streetlights or traffic control devices with energy efficient alternatives for +.05 points and habitat connectivity improvement for +1 points.

**Section 7**

Mr. McCaul stated that item 7C was updated regarding housing improvement to include a project that is adjacent to documented affordable housing and access to jobs for economic development strategy. He noted that not many projects currently fall under this criterion and noted tweaks made for language clarification and emphasis points for alignment with the BIL (i.e. improved access to employment).

For section 7H, Mr. McCaul noted the addition to implement ITS strategies other than traffic signal operations to add clarifying language to include installation of a permanent ITS specifically for traffic monitoring equipment for 1 point instead of 2 points (a -1 point reduction).

For section 7I, Mr. McCaul noted a proposal to add a new line item regarding the construction or reconstruction of rest areas or roadside areas to include sanitation and water facilities for +0.5 points.

**Section 8**

For section 8G, Mr. McCaul noted a proposal to add a criterion for public involvement with impacted underserved communities which would include additional outreach for them to have an opportunity to provide feedback. He added that to receive points for this item, projects should be above and beyond the MassDOT 25% public hearing with the intention to inform these communities and address any concerns about projects that fall within this category.

After final review of TEC tweaks, Mr. McCaul opened the floor for questions.

Betsy Johnson, Pedestrian Rep and Walk/Bike Springfield, stated that the tweaks to the TEC seemed geared to promote the Complete Streets Design projects and reminded the committee that even though one of the goals of the TEC is to highlight Complete Streets Design projects, the Complete Streets Design projects should be promoted independently of what gets funded locally, especially as communities like Springfield cannot access the Complete Streets Design fund for another 2 years at this time. She added that the idea of points awarded should be to give points not if it is funded by Complete Streets but rather "if it meets the spirit of Complete Streets even if it is not blessed by the state," noting that there are many more projects in progress in their prioritization plan that meets the criterion in spirit but won't ever be submitted to MassDOT.

Mr. McCaul clarified that the projects do not have to be submitted to MassDOT to be included for consideration for the complete streets design criterion and could indeed qualify for points if it meets the spirit of the criterion item.

Upon Mr. McCaul opening the floor for any further questions or concerns, Ms. Johnson stated that access to Education to Safe Routes to Schools only applies to elementary schools and proposed that this criterion be looked at more broadly to include universities as well.

With respect to time, Mr. Dwyer asked Mr. McCaul to outline what action he is currently looking for regarding the TEC at this time so that we can move for a motion and continue discussion. Mr. McCaul stated that the motion would be to recommend the TEC changes to the MPO for the MPO to release for the public review for a 21-day period.

Mr. Dwyer asked for a motion to forward the proposed amendment to TEC to the MPO for further review and discussion and stated that if the motion is made and seconded, the discussion regarding additional amendments and changes shall continue if that's what the JTC would like to do before releasing the document for public review.

MOTIONED BY GARY BRIERE, MassBike; SECONDED BY DOUG ELLIS, CHICOPEE.

Mr. Dwyer asked the JTC if the committee felt the current changes to the TEC should go forward for public review as is with any additional changes to be considered during the public review period or if the committee believe the TEC document should be refined more before being released for public review.

Gary Roux, PVPC Transportation Planner, added that the intent of the changes is not only to have the Complete Street projects funded through the Massachusetts program or Massachusetts for All but rather to encourage communities to start documenting projects that should be funded through the state and federal level or the

**Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Virtual Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, August 10, 2022 – 10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

transport improvement programs to be able to award maximum criterion points, which can include receiving points for intent or “spirit” of the criterion.

Ms. Johnson added that there is a lot about congestion and improvement addressed in the TEC plan and not enough emphasis on speed reduction, which is her community’s number one priority.

Randy Brown, Southwick, asked if there is one scoring criterion that could be applied to both rural and urban areas and noted a concern that points are being skewed for urban areas. He added that towns like Southwick will never be considered for a good number of points, even though it is considered an urban area and noted that as a whole, the town would never get a project that will be scored as high as other urban projects.

Mr. McCaul stated that there are criteria that applies to both rural and urban areas, but rural areas do not score as well generally due to some criteria not being applicable to rural areas. He noted that the committee is working to level the playing field for scoring.

Mr. Roux added that the analysis of the TEC criteria does not offer a cause for concern and asked Mr. Brown to review the current criteria and offer suggestions for improvement regarding rural and urban scoring. Mr. Brown asked if it was possible to look at some past projects and compare them with the new criteria. Mr. Roux responded that the request would take time to put together, but for the immediate future, he could offer a summary of how rural projects have been scored as opposed to urban projects in the past.

Mr. Dwyer stated that he was getting the impression that the JTC members would like to have a little more input before forwarding the TEC to the MPO and asked about timing restraints regarding the potential motion.

Mr. Roux stated that the ideal timing would be to have the final TEC plan approved by February 2023, so the drop deadline is January 2023 for MPO endorsement and would need two MPO meetings before that time. He added that the TEC would need to be adopted by January 2023 to be ready for the next TIP cycle.

Mr. Dwyer asked if there would be enough time to meet those deadlines if the motion to give the JTC a little more time for input before forwarding the TEC to the MPO is voted on in the November meeting. Mr. McCaul and Mr. Roux confirmed that there would be enough time to meet the deadlines.

Mr. Dwyer called for a motion to vote to forward the TEC to the MPO members for the 21-day public review in which JTC members could offer feedback during the review period as opposed to giving the JTC more time to give more input.

Mr. McCaul initiated roll call.

16 IN FAVOR, 1 OPPOSED. MOTION CARRIES.

The TEC document is motioned to be forwarded to the MPO with recommendations that it be ready for public review and that any additional comments should be made during the 21-day public review period.

**4. Update on Pioneer Valley MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP)—Currently Out for Public Review**

Jeffrey McCollough, PVPC Senior Planner, stated that the PPP is the guiding document for all the major documents including the TEC and TIP, with the most important addition being the virtual formatting which has been incorporated into the PPP. Mr. McCollough invited the JTC to contact himself or Mr. Roux to learn more or get more information should the committee have questions regarding the virtual formatting addition.

**5. FFY 2023-2027 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)—Review of Programmed Projects**

Mr. McCaul reported that once the MassDOT rolls over, projects will be refreshed, and increased costs will be addressed with an action to be taken on the document soon. He reviewed the current STIP investment projects with the MPO and reminded the MPO that if they had any projects on the lists to give any relevant updates as soon as possible.

**6. FFY 2024 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)—Public Engagement**

Mr. Roux reported that the 2022 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is the long-range planning document for transportation guide for the PVPS and is required to be updated at least every 4 years. He noted that the committee has at least until July 2023 before needing MPO endorsement. He stated that regarding community outreach, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) are engaging with community members at local farmer’s markets via a short-survey and word-cloud activity, which will allow the public to comment on what

**Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Virtual Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, August 10, 2022 – 10:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

they want to see in the future regarding transportation. He shared the September and October farmer's market schedule and noted an additional engagement at Pope Francis High School Career Day in November.

Mr. Roux proceeded to share Amherst and Springfield community's word-cloud activity insights. He noted that Amherst's community feedback focused on adding additional bus service, and Springfield's community feedback was similar regarding car dependency. He added insight from other communities as well with Northampton's community feedback primarily on the need for additional public transit service and expensive transportation costs, Easthampton's community feedback with a primary focus on inaccessibility and Westfield's community feedback with similar concerns and a primary focus on diversity in transit methods (bicycle, bus, and protection from the elements), as well as car dependency. He stated that at this time, 140 responses have been received with a good number of participants preferring paper as opposed to online engagement.

Regarding the 6-question survey engagement activity which asked participants to rank from 1-6 their transit values and priorities, Mr. Roux shared that many participants were in favor of the East-West rail project, improving bike way paths and amenities and improving infrastructure to reduce crashes, fatalities, and injuries, which received the greatest number of responses next to transit inaccessibility.

Mr. Roux concluded his presentation with a note that the farmer's market outreach will be wrapped up soon which will proceed to focus groups that are intended to bring feedback to the commissioners meeting with an exercise of the vision development of the RTP document. He noted a monthly update on the RTP development status throughout the process.

Ms. Johnson asked if the questions are being in Spanish and English. Mr. Roux stated that language options include Spanish, English, Russian, and Vietnamese with an element where individuals can select on flags to attempt to facilitate language translation. He added that in the case that a participant needed an interpreter, a separate meeting would be scheduled to be sure the individual is properly accommodated.

Mr. Dwyer asked who would be endorsing the RTP in July 2023. Mr. Roux stated that the JTC would be asked to forward the document to the MPO who would also be responsible for endorsing it.

**7. Other Business**

There was no further business to discuss.

**8. Adjourns**

Upon hearing and seeing no further business to review, Mr. Dwyer called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOVED BY PAUL BURNS, PVTA; SECONDED BY RANDY BROWN, CHICOPEE.

The October 12, 2022 meeting was adjourned by Bill Dwyer at 10:54 a.m.

**Linked Documents**

- [BPCS Meeting Notice](#)
- [Meeting Notice](#)
- [Draft August Minutes](#)
- [FFY 2023-2027 TIP](#)
- [TEC Update](#)
- [PPP Public Review](#)

Prepared by Shatoyia Jones, PVPC admin assistant – 10.19.2022