2020 RTP Vision and Goals for the Pioneer Valley MPO

The Pioneer Valley region strives to create and maintain a safe, dependable, resilient, environmentally sound, and equitable transportation system for all. We pledge to balance performance based strategies and projects that promote sustainable development, reduced use of fossil fuels, healthy and livable communities, provide for efficient movement of people and goods, advance economic vitality and enhance connectivity in the region.

Goals:

1. **Safety** - To provide and maintain a transportation system that is safe for users of all travel modes and their property.
2. **Operations and Maintenance** - To provide a transportation system that is dependable, resilient, and adequately serves users of all modes. To give priority to adaptable repair of existing infrastructure.
3. **Environmental** - To minimize the transportation related adverse impacts to air, land, wildlife and water quality and strive to improve environmental conditions at every opportunity and incorporate green infrastructure.
4. **Coordination** - - To facilitate collaborative efforts between the general public and local, state and federal planning and project implementation activities.
5. **Energy Efficient** - To promote the reduction of energy consumption through demand management techniques and increasing the use of energy efficient travel modes.
6. **Cost Effective** - To provide a transportation system that is cost effective to maintain, improve and operate.
7. **Intermodal** - To provide access between travel modes for people and goods while maintaining quality and affordability of service.
8. **Multimodal** - To provide a complete choice of adequate travel options that are accessible to all residents, students, visitors and businesses.
9. **Economically Productive** - To maintain a transportation system that promotes and supports economic stability and expansion.
10. **Quality of Life** - To provide and maintain a transportation system that enhances quality of life and improves the social and economic climate of the region.
11. **Environmental Justice** - To provide an equitably accessible transportation system that considers the needs of and impacts on low-income, people of color, elderly and disabled persons.
12. **Land Use** - To incorporate the concepts of Sustainable Development in the regional transportation planning process and integrate the recommendations of the current Regional Land Use Plan into transportation improvements.
13. **Climate Change** - To promote and advance transportation projects that reduce the production of greenhouse gasses, such as CO2, and advance new energy technologies consistent with the Pioneer Valley Clean Energy Plan.

Emphasis Areas

A total of five emphasis areas were identified to assist in the development of regional transportation needs and strategies that achieve regional goals. These emphasis areas are not intended to be a replacement for the regional transportation goals. Instead, they were established with the recognition that many strategies can meet multiple regional transportation goals.

	Safety	Operations and Maintenance	Environmental	Coordination	Energy Efficient	Cost Effective	Intermodal	Multimodal	Economically Productive	Quality of Life	Environmental Justice	Land Use	Climate Change
Safety and Security	√			√		√	√	√		√	√		
The Movement of People	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
The Movement of Goods	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
The Movement of Information			√	√		√	√	√	√	√	√		√
Sustainability	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

1. **Safety and Security** - The safety and security of the regional transportation system is vital to the efficient movement of people and goods. It is important to ensure that the transportation system is safe for all users across all modes. Similarly, the security of our transportation infrastructure and operations centers will rely on sound planning for their safeguard.

2. **The Movement of People** - The movement of people is generally what most people associate with the term "transportation." This area consists of the identification of needs for all modes of transportation and how to increase their efficiency. The movement of people assists in reducing existing and anticipated future congestion while improving connections between all transportation modes.

3. **The Movement of Goods** - The availability of an efficient, multimodal transportation network to move goods through the region is essential to maintain economic vitality. The movement of goods includes truck, rail, air, and pipeline.

4. **The Movement of Information** - The movement of information consists of the ability to utilize technology to maximize the efficiency of the existing transportation system and to convey information to the traveling public. In addition, information sharing between agencies can reduce duplicative data collection and assist in the completion of ongoing studies.

5. **Sustainability** - Sustainability considers both the environmental and social costs of the transportation system. A sustainable transportation system improves access and mobility while reducing environmental impacts such as the production of greenhouse gas emissions and increased air pollution. Sustainable transportation projects also have a positive impact on society through a reduction in single occupant vehicle use, the promotion of transportation modes that have lower impact on air quality, the promotion of fuel-efficiency, advancing healthy lifestyles, and supporting healthy walk able and livable communities.

Safety and Security Needs (S&S)

1	Reduce the number of fatal and incapacitating injury crashes for bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicles in the region.	Ongoing
2	Ongoing construction activities, special events and major incidents can negatively impact emergency responders.	Ongoing
3	Improve safety at freight facilities and at-grade railroad crossings.	Ongoing
4	Improve knowledge and compliance with existing Emergency Evacuation plans.	Ongoing
5	Protection of critical/at-risk regional transportation infrastructure.	Ongoing
6	Ensure the safety and security of mass transit facilities and equipment.	Ongoing
7	Provide for the safety and security of hazardous materials while in transportation and in storage.	Immediate
8	Improve access to driver, bicycle, and pedestrian education.	Immediate
9	Many roadways are unsuitable for bicycles, pedestrians and transit users.	Immediate
10	Communities lack the proper resources to maintain bridges and culverts under their jurisdiction.	Immediate

Needs to Enhance the Movement of People (MoP)

1	Proper integration of complete streets, traffic calming, parking and connectivity into transportation improvements.	Ongoing
2	Monitor peak hour congestion in the region.	Ongoing
3	Expansion of the existing bicycle and pedestrian network.	Ongoing
4	Maintain equity in providing transportation services and access throughout the region.	Ongoing
5	Maintain and increase access to national passenger rail service in the Pioneer Valley.	Ongoing
6	The regional transportation system does not address the requirements of an aging population.	Ongoing
7	Improve coordination and notification of the review of roadway improvement projects.	Ongoing
8	Secure adequate, dependable and equitable funding for a balanced regional transportation system that serves both urban and rural areas in the region.	Immediate
9	Increase the number of riders using transit to commute to work and school.	Immediate
10	Expand transit options for inter-city, inter-regional passenger trips.	Immediate
11	Transportation options for underserved populations to designated heating and cooling centers	Immediate
12	Expand opportunities for tourism along designated Scenic Byways.	Future

Needs to Enhance the Movement of Goods (MoG)

1	Support the development and maintenance of short line and regional railroads.	Ongoing
2	Improve the communication between private carriers and state and local officials.	Ongoing
3	Increase opportunities for air cargo in the region.	Ongoing
4	Improve coordination with class one carriers serving the region.	Immediate
5	Consider impacts on freight when making future transportation investments.	Future

Needs to Enhance the Movement of Information (MoI)

1	Improve distribution and access of real-time highway and transit information.	Ongoing
2	Coordinate efficient use of existing rights of way to house communication infrastructure.	Ongoing
3	Educate communities on the advantages of ITS and expand the use of ITS in the region.	Ongoing
4	Outdated navigation applications provide incorrect travel directions.	Ongoing
5	Increase public and community involvement in the transportation planning process.	Ongoing
6	Improve the availability of high speed internet and wireless communication access in the region.	Immediate
7	Develop and implement policies on autonomous vehicles.	Immediate
8	On demand services require a smart phone and cellular service which are not easily available to low income households and rural areas.	Immediate

Summary of Needs to Enhance Sustainability (S)

1	Protect existing natural, historical, and cultural resources.	Ongoing
2	Reduce vehicle miles traveled in the region to minimize impacts on air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.	Ongoing
3	Raise the average vehicle occupancy rate for the region.	Ongoing
4	Consider the impacts of large scale development on surrounding communities.	Ongoing
5	Reduce impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff from roads and highways.	Ongoing
6	Promote transit oriented development and pedestrian friendly development.	Immediate
7	Reduce visual and light pollution while ensuring pedestrian and bicycle visibility.	Immediate
8	Incorporate renewable energy into transportation improvement projects and transportation facilities.	Future
9	Reduce sprawl and foster investment in existing urban areas.	Future
10	Provide for fish and wildlife migration and passage in transportation projects.	Future

Safety and Security Strategies

		Priority	Need(s) Addressed
1	Develop a regional list of high crash locations. Incorporate "Vision Zero" strategies in safety planning.	Ongoing	S&S 1,9 S 7
2	Work with appropriate agencies to improve the consistency of crash records and reporting to assist in identifying the contributing factors to crashes, fatalities, and incapacitating injuries.	Ongoing	S&S 1
3	Provide accommodations for pedestrians, transit users, and bicyclists in roadway and bridge design and the maintenance of existing facilities. Promote connectivity as part of all transportation improvement projects.	Ongoing	S&S 1,9
4	Implement communications and ITS technologies to improve public transit safety, and security.	Ongoing	S&S 2,6
5	Develop an inventory of critical transportation choke points, haz-mat routes, and users.	Ongoing	S&S 5,7
6	Promote the Safe Routes to School program.	Ongoing	S&S 1,8
7	Promote and advance the use of roadway safety audits in the Pioneer Valley.	Ongoing	S&S 1
8	Work with emergency responders to update regional evacuation plans.	Ongoing	S&S 4
9	Identify and advocate for additional revenue sources to bring the regional transportation system into a state of good repair.	Immediate	S&S 10, MoP 8
10	Improve intersection geometry and upgrade traffic signal control equipment to improve safety. Consider roundabouts as alternatives to new traffic signals.	Immediate	S&S 1
11	Develop appropriate educational resources to promote safety for drivers, bicyclists, transit users, and pedestrians.	Immediate	S&S 8
12	Limit opportunities to access freight rail facilities and infrastructure.	Immediate	S&S 3

Strategies to Assist in the Movement of People

		Priority	Need(s) Addressed
1	Seek innovative methods to increase transit ridership, including express routes and flex vans.	Ongoing	MoP 6,8,9 S 2,3,6
2	Monitor congested areas using the regional Congestion Management Process (CMP).	Ongoing	MoP 2
3	Develop a regional list of top congested locations.	Ongoing	MoP 2
4	Promote the implementation of cycle tracks.	Ongoing	MoP 3
5	Advance and promote the principles of pavement management. Invest in the repair and maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure.	Ongoing	MoP 8
6	Conduct parking studies for downtown areas and village centers for all modes of transportation. Identify locations for park and ride lots and supporting express transit service.	Ongoing	MoP 9,10 S&S 9
7	Work with local communities to incorporate the concepts of Complete Streets and Traffic Calming into transportation improvement projects.	Ongoing	MoP 1,3 S&S 9
8	Maintain equity in providing transportation services and access throughout the region.	Ongoing	MoP 4 MoI 8
9	Incorporate TAP eligible components into transportation improvement projects.	Ongoing	MoP 12
10	Develop a comprehensive Commuter Rail network.	Immediate	MoP 5 S 2,3,6
11	Work with the State and local communities to enhance education and use of GeoDOT and the MaPIT tool.	Immediate	MoP 7
12	Advocate for better collaboration and coordination between all transportation service providers to allow for more opportunities to provide connections between existing services.	Immediate	MoP 5,10,11
13	Identify sources of revenue for local transportation projects.	Immediate	MoP 8
14	Promote compact "Village Center" development to include senior and low-income housing, access to healthy food and medical services via a variety of modes of transportation.	Future	MoP 3,6
15	Encourage private connections to the regional bikeway network.	Future	MoP 3

Strategies to Enhance the Movement of Goods

		Priority	Need(s) Addressed
1	Enhance directional and guide signs to/from the regional highway system and major destinations.	Ongoing	MoG 1,3
2	Meet with class one carriers on a regular basis to enhance the regional freight rail network.	Ongoing	MoG 4
3	Incorporate appropriate design measures in roadway improvement projects to accommodate freight movements.	Ongoing	MoG 2,5
4	Improve the connections between the national highway network and air and rail intermodal terminals, freight yards, and distribution centers.	Immediate	MoG 1,3
5	Develop incentives to encourage businesses to utilize a mix of freight transportation alternatives.	Immediate	MoG 1,3
6	Identify and mitigate vertical clearance issues at underpasses.	Immediate	MoG 5
7	Use the regional CMP to identify areas of freight congestion.	Immediate	MoG 1,2,3 MoP 2

Strategies to Enhance the Movement of Information

		Priority	Need(s) Addressed
1	Encourage the integration of cameras, security devices and other ITS equipment as part of transit and roadway improvement projects.	Ongoing	MoI 1
2	Provide training for local communities and stakeholders to increase their understanding of various ITS technologies and equipment.	Ongoing	MoI 3
3	Ensure consistency with the ITS Regional Architecture for Western Massachusetts.	Ongoing	MoI 1,2,3,6,7
4	Monitor emerging information and communications technologies to stay current with state-of-the-art information systems and identify opportunities for expansion of existing service.	Ongoing	MoI 1,7,8
5	Expand efforts to incorporate more feedback into the regional transportation planning process.	Ongoing	MoI 5 MoP 7
6	Continue to refine and improve the regional TEC project prioritization system as necessary.	Ongoing	MoI 5 MoP 7
7	Educate local communities on the project development process.	Ongoing	MoI 5 MoP 7
8	Encourage and promote telecommuting and video conferencing.	Ongoing	MoI 5 S 2
9	Expand real-time passenger and travel information systems.	Immediate	MoI 1,3
10	Pursue public/private partnerships to reduce costs and enhance information access.	Immediate	MoI 2,6
11	Pursue relationships with application developers to ensure they have access to the latest transportation network.	Future	MoI 4
12	Incorporate best practices to accommodate autonomous vehicles as part of future infrastructure projects.	Future	MoI 7

Strategies that Enhance Sustainability

		Priority	Need(s) Addressed
1	Mitigate the adverse impact of sprawl by creating incentives for downtown revitalization, promoting smart growth and mixed use development in and around existing city and town centers.	Ongoing	S 2,3,4,9
2	Divert highway runoff to stormwater Best Management Practices, such as rain gardens and dry swales.	Ongoing	S 5
3	Restore or maintain connected habitats that allow for movement of fish, water, and wildlife.	Ongoing	S 1,10
4	Encourage the use of permeable materials and reduce the use of concrete.	Ongoing	S 5
5	Assist local communities with their sub division needs.	Ongoing	S 4,6
6	Designate wild and scenic corridors along highways and streams of historic and natural significance to promote tourism.	Ongoing	S 1
7	Implement the Regional Clean Energy Plan to promote energy efficient travel modes and encourage local fleets to use clean fuels.	Ongoing	S 2,3
8	Implement transportation based strategies identified in local Hazard Mitigation Plans.	Ongoing	S 1
9	Encourage the planting of shade trees in urban areas and along shared use paths to improve air quality and modulate extreme weather conditions.	Ongoing	S 6,8
10	Work with major employers to develop incentives to decrease single occupant vehicle use.	Immediate	S 2,3,4 MoI 6
11	Mitigate the impacts of roadway salt and chemical usage during snow season.	Immediate	S 1
12	Refer new TIP projects to the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Toolkit.	Immediate	S 5,7,8,10
13	Incorporate energy efficient lighting, solar power, and electric vehicle charging stations as part of transportation improvement projects.	Immediate	S 7,8
14	Improve education and enforcement of idling reduction programs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	Immediate	S 2
15	Identify hazardous locations susceptible to drought and flooding along major roadways.	Immediate	S 1
16	Prohibit billboards and screen lighting on highways.	Future	S 7

RTP Problem Statements

1. There are seriously insufficient resources to support the state of good repair of the regional transportation system.
2. Expanded regional passenger rail and transit service is integral to education, economic development and workforce development.
3. There is a need for innovative, cost-effective solutions independent of the regional transit authorities to provide services to rural areas.
4. Intermodal connections are necessary to support and enhance transportation options for downtown areas and village centers.
5. Increased and comprehensive resources and policies to improve sustainability in the transportation sector are necessary if the region is to meet its fair share of GHG reductions to comply with the Massachusetts Global Warming Solutions Act.
6. The regional transportation infrastructure does not sufficiently accommodate the movement and distribution of freight.
7. The built environment for bicycling and walking is hampered by significant barriers that include: narrow road and bridge cross sections, disjointed/unconnected off-road trail networks, a lack of sidewalks, uniformity in signs/markings and maintenance issues.