



# Infrastructure Focus Group

For the 2024 Update to the Pioneer Valley  
Regional Transportation Plan

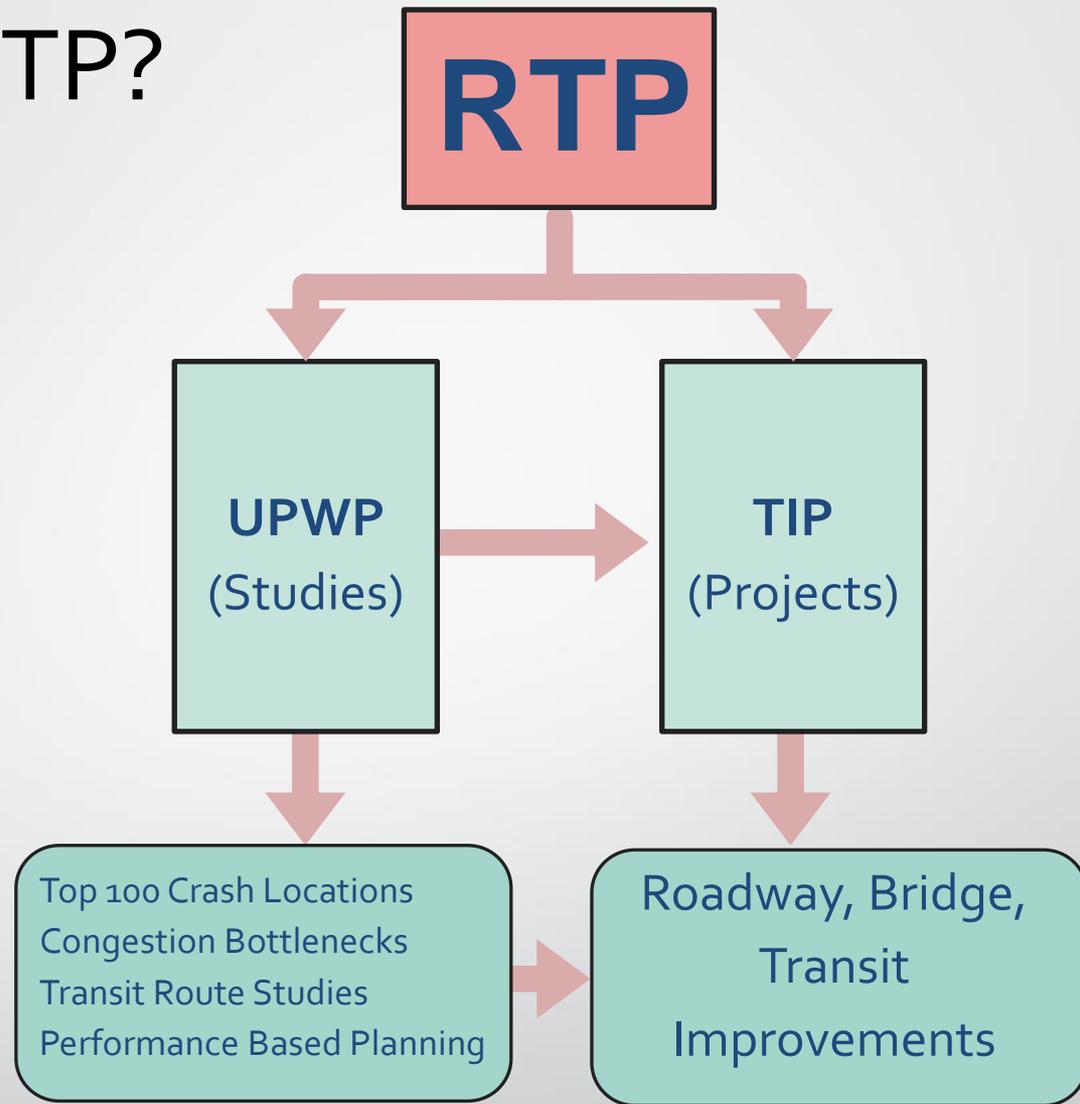
November 9, 2022

# Introduction

- This meeting is being held virtually as allowed by An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations, which, among other things, extends the expiration of the provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2023.
- Participants will be muted upon entrance into the zoom meeting.
- \*6 mutes your phone (call in only).
- This meeting is being recorded for the purpose of transcribing information. Please raise your hand now to notify the facilitator if you are also recording this meeting.
- In the interest of time, it is requested that comments be restricted to the Chat feature or be held until the end of the meeting during the open Question and Answer period.
- This Focus Group will consist of a series of Polls designed to capture feedback and inform the content of the 2024 Update to the RTP for the Pioneer Valley MPO.
- Participants wishing to speak during the Q & A portion should click the "Participants" icon on the lower toolbar and then click "Raise Hand" in the dialog box to notify the facilitator. Telephone participants should press \*9 to indicate that they wish to speak.

# What is the RTP?

- A long-range planning document that:
- Outlines the direction of transportation improvements.
- Identifies existing and future regional transportation needs.
- Presents strategies to alleviate deficiencies in the regional transportation system.
- Demonstrates Air Quality Conformity
- Is financially constrained.
- Advances both construction projects and planning studies.
- Is equitable for all.
- Is performance based.
- Complies with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA or BIL)



# 2022 RTP Public Outreach

- September/October Farmer's Market Schedule:
  - Saturday September 17, 2022 – Amherst Farmer's Market
  - Tuesday September 27, 2022 – Springfield Forest Park Farmer's Market
  - Sunday October 2, 2022 – Easthampton Farmer's Market
  - Tuesday October 4, 2022 – Northampton Farmer's Market
  - Thursday October 6, 2022 – Westfield Farmer's Market
  - Saturday October 15, 2022 – Holyoke Farmer's Market
- Other Outreach Events
  - Saturday November 5, 2022 - Gujarati Association of Western Massachusetts Diwali Party
  - Thursday November 10, 2022 – Pope Francis High School Career Day
- Six Question Survey – 295 responses received
- Unique Word Cloud for Each Event

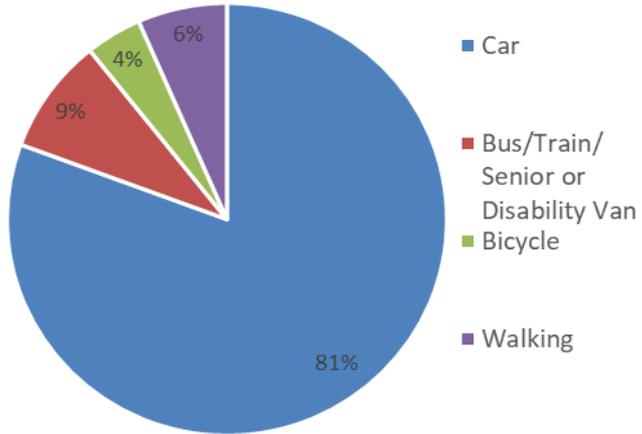
# 2022 RTP Focus Group Schedule

- Wednesday November 9, 2022 – Bicycle and Pedestrian
- Wednesday November 9, 2022 – Infrastructure
- Thursday December 1, 2022 – Transit
- Wednesday December 7, 2022 – Sustainability
- Thursday December 8, 2022 – PVPC Commissioners

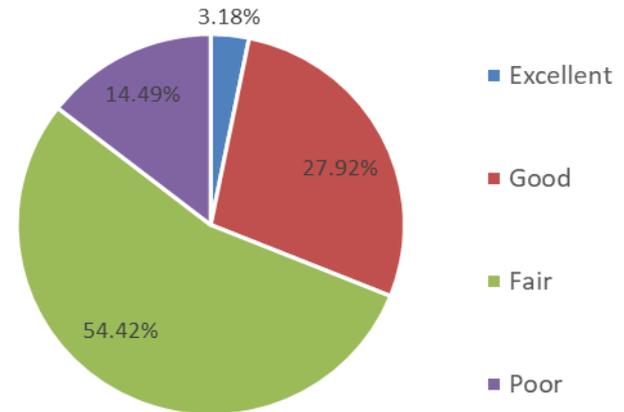


# RTP Survey Results

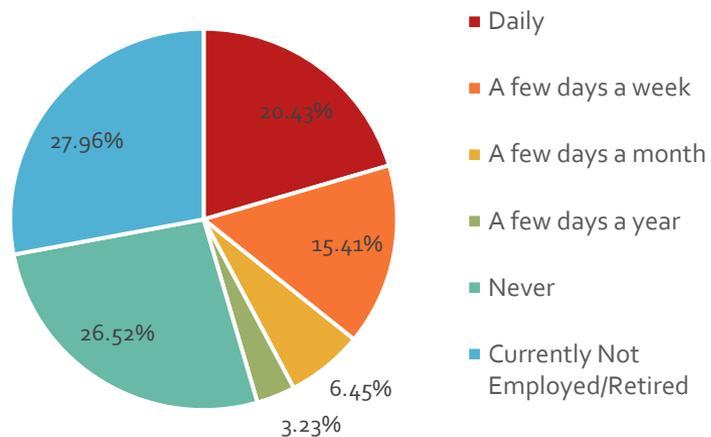
Most of the time I travel by:



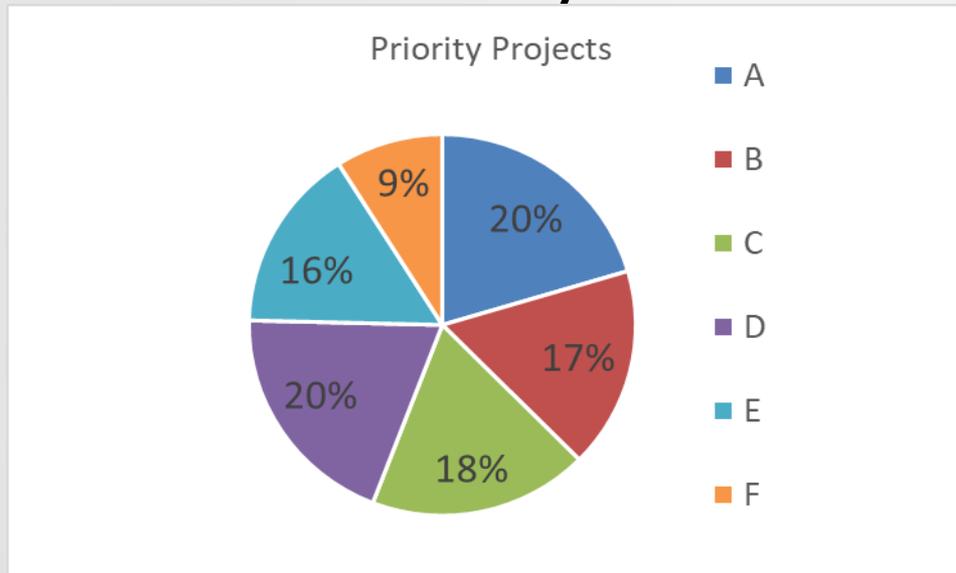
Current Condition of Transportation



I Work From Home:



# RTP Survey Results



	Priority Project
A	Funding necessary maintenance of roads and bridges.
B	Improve bicycle path network connections and amenities for riders and pedestrians.
C	Fund operation and maintenance of our regional transit system.
D	Add more train trips to the east-west passenger rail service to connect the Pioneer Valley region in the west with Boston in the east.
E	Implement projects that help reduce roadway crashes causing fatalities and serious injuries.
F	Remove physical and visual barriers to the Connecticut River and Riverwalk in Springfield by redesigning the raised highway at that section of the Interstate I-91 Viaduct.

# Current RTP Vision Statement

*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.*

Open Response Poll

# Current RTP 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.

Open Response Poll

# Current RTP Needs

## Safety and Security Needs

A	Reduce the number of fatal and incapacitating injury crashes for bicyclists, pedestrians and vehicles in the region.
B	Address ongoing construction activities, special events and major incidents that can negatively impact emergency responders.
C	Improve safety at freight facilities and at-grade railroad crossings.
D	Improve knowledge and compliance with existing Emergency Evacuation plans.
E	Protect critical/at-risk regional transportation infrastructure.
F	Ensure the safety and security of mass transit facilities and equipment.
G	Provide for the safety and security of hazardous materials while in transportation and in storage.
H	Improve access to driver, bicycle, and pedestrian education.
I	Mitigate roadways that are unsuitable for bicycles, pedestrians and transit users.
J	Identify proper resources for communities to maintain bridges and culverts under their jurisdiction.

Poll  
Delete, Modify, Keep

# Current RTP Needs

## Movement of People Needs

A	Proper integration of complete streets, traffic calming, parking and connectivity into transportation improvements.
B	Monitor peak hour congestion in the region.
C	Expand the existing bicycle and pedestrian network.
D	Maintain equity in providing transportation services and access throughout the region.
E	Maintain and increase access to national passenger rail service in the Pioneer Valley.
F	Address the requirements of an aging population in the regional transportation system.
G	Improve coordination and notification of the review of roadway improvement projects.
H	Secure adequate, dependable and equitable funding for a balanced regional transportation system that serves both urban and rural areas in the region.
I	Increase the number of riders using transit to commute to work and school.
J	Expand transit options for inter-city, inter-regional passenger trips.
K	Identify transportation options for underserved populations to access designated heating and cooling centers.
L	Expand opportunities for tourism along designated Scenic Byways.

Poll  
Delete, Modify, Keep

# Current RTP Needs

	Movement of Goods Needs
A	Support the development and maintenance of short line and regional railroads.
B	Improve the communication between private carriers and state and local officials.
C	Increase opportunities for air cargo in the region.
D	Improve coordination with class one carriers serving the region.

Poll  
Delete, Modify, Keep

# Current RTP Needs

	Movement of Information Needs
A	Improve distribution and access of real-time highway and transit information.
B	Coordinate efficient use of existing rights of way to house communication infrastructure.
C	Educate communities on the advantages of ITS and expand the use of ITS in the region.
D	Consider the impacts of outdated navigation applications that provide incorrect travel directions.
E	Increase public and community involvement in the transportation planning process.
F	Improve the availability of high speed internet and wireless communication access in the region.
G	Develop and implement policies on autonomous vehicles.
H	Improve access to on demand services as smart phones and cellular service are not easily available to low income households and rural areas.

Poll  
Delete, Modify, Keep

# RTP Discretionary Spending

Category	2016 RTP %	2020 RTP %
Roadway Improvement Projects	70%	67%
Congestion improvement Projects	12.5%	8%
Safety Improvement Projects	12.5%	12.5%
Bicycle Improvement Projects	1.25	5%
Pedestrian Improvements Projects	1.25	5%
Air Quality Improvement Projects	2.5	2.5

Poll  
Too High, Too Low, About Right

# Current RTP Problem Statements

1. There are seriously insufficient resources to support the state of good repair of the regional transportation system.
2. Existing passenger rail and transit service does not meet the needs of residents of the Pioneer Valley. 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. There are a lack of intermodal connections that 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 walking, bicycling and transit 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, transit access points and maintenance issues.
8. The regional transportation system is not prepared to adequately support changes in future transportation technology. The system must be prepared for the safe and seamless integration of innovations in technology which includes autonomous vehicles.
9. People use the regional transportation system differently based on their age, residence and occupation. The regional transportation system must continue to evolve to safely meet the needs of an aging population, young adults and children.
10. There are inconsistencies in how cities and towns regulate development and their requirements to encourage alternative forms of transportation through development.

Open Response Poll

# Open Comment Period

- What items would you like to discuss that haven't been covered?
  - Use the raise hand feature and the facilitator will call on you
  - Alternatively – post your comments in the chat

# 2024 RTP Update Schedule

Schedule	Milestone
September/October 2022	Public outreach at local farmer's markets – 4-6 events
November/December 2022	RTP Focus Groups – Env., Transit, Bike/Ped, Infra.
December 2022	PVPC Commission Meeting – RTP Visioning
January 2023	Draft RTP Vision, Goals and Emphasis Areas
February – March 2023	Draft Chapter release for MassDOT/MPO review
April 2023	RTP Environmental Consultation
April/May 2023	Air Quality Conformity/Financial Constraint
May 2023	Environmental Justice, Title VI and Justice 40
June 2023	Draft RTP release for 21 day public comment period
July 2023	RTP Endorsement

# THANK YOU

- Please participate in a brief exit survey to identify other areas you would like to have considered for the Update to the RTP. Please complete the following brief survey within the next 3 days (link will be placed in the Zoom Chat and emailed to all participants)
- Survey Link – <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JRNTLJB>