

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC)
Minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Zoom Meeting
Tuesday, December 23, 2025, 10:00 A.M.

Organization Members Present

William Dwyer, Chair of PVPC
Joshua A. Garcia, Mayor of Holyoke
Michael McCabe, Mayor of Westfield
Mark Moore, MassDOT Highway District 1
Gina-Louise Sciarra, Mayor of Northampton
JM Sorrell, Chair of PVTA
Rick Sullivan, WesternMass EDC
James Whalen, Holland Selectboard
Stephen Woelfel, MassDOT OTP

Non-Voting/Ex-Officio Members

Kimberly Robinson, Director of PVPC
Sandra Sheehan, Administrator of PVTA

Guests

Daryl Amaral, MassDOT Highway District 2
Amy Chatterjee, MassDOT
Salem Derby, Mayor of Easthampton
Timothy Keane, Town of Longmeadow
Derek Shooster, MassDOT OTP
Sam Taylor, MassDOT OTP
Lily Wallace, MassDOT

PVPC Staff Present

Carl Jackson, Principal Transit Planner
Geoffrey Klafeta, Transportation Planner
Jeffrey McCollough, Principal Transportation Planner
Andrew McCaul, Deputy Director of Transportation Planning
Gary Roux, Director of Transportation Planning

1. Chairman's Call to Order, Welcome, and Opening Remarks

The Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting on December 23, 2025, was called to order at 10:00 a.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was noted.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting Held on November 25, 2025

MOVED BY RICK SULLIVAN, SECONDED BY JM SORRELL, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 25, 2025, METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MEETING AS AMENDED. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH ONE ABSTENTION FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

4. Review, Discussion, and MPO Endorsement of the Proposed Amendments to the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) Currently out for the Required 21-Day Public Review

Andrew McCaul presented the proposed amendments to the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC), developed in collaboration with MassDOT, the Joint Transportation Committee, and the MPO, to assess TIP projects for regional significance. The TEC has been revised multiple times. The latest version was released for public review, but no feedback was received. Recent updates include modernizing the quality-of-life criteria to better align with housing, incorporating elements from the PVPC's housing plan, and updating the Title 6 section to align with current federal requirements. These changes were presented at recent meetings, and the goal is to endorse them before TIP development begins in January, 2026.

MOVED BY RICK SULLIVAN, SECONDED BY JM SORRELL, TO ENDORSE THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE TRANSPORTATION EVALUATION CRITERIA (TEC) FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

5. Review, Discussion, and MPO Approval to Release Amendment No. 2 to the FFY 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Required 21-day Public Review Period

A. McCaul presented the release of TIP amendments for federal fiscal years 2026 to 2030, mainly reallocating unspent earmarks from previous years to fund ongoing and upcoming projects. Several projects, including those in Longmeadow, Chesterfield, Montgomery Street, Northampton, Holyoke, PVPC, Westfield, and Chicopee, received adjustments as a result of these earmarks. Some projects, such as the Huntington Bridge and PVPC SS4A, were considered amendments due to significant changes in cost or schedule. The group decided to release all amendments and adjustments together for a 21-day public review, after which public comments will be considered and a final endorsement sought in January, 2026.

MOVED BY JM SORRELL, SECONDED BY JAMES WHALEN, TO RELEASE AMENDMENT NO. 2 TO THE FFY 2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

6. MPO Review and Discussion of the Current Status of the SS4A Regional Action Plan Development – Schedule Update

Gary Roux shared that the region received funding from the USDOT and MassDOT to develop a Regional Safety Action Plan and a demonstration project to reduce serious injuries and fatal crashes. VHB and IMEG were selected to lead the project, which includes updating the Vision Zero statement and integrating the Safety Compass document. The Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) will guide the SS4A work, with extensive outreach planned to identify safety concerns and potential projects across communities. Coordination is necessary since five communities already have their own SS4A-funded safety plans.

The demonstration project will evaluate outdated traffic signals and consider intersection redesigns to improve safety. A virtual mapping tool will support public participation by enabling residents to identify problem areas and propose solutions. The draft safety action plan is expected to be released for public review in May or June, 2026, with the demonstration project continuing into 2027.

7. MPO Review and Discussion of the Status of the Current MPO Membership

G. Roux reported that several MPO representative terms are expiring on January 1, 2026, and that changes will occur in accordance with the memorandum of understanding. In Tier 1, Joshua A. Garcia will become a member, replacing Mayor View, who will move to the alternate spot. Michael McCabe and Gina-Louise Sciarra from Sub-Regions 2 and 3 wish to continue as members; however, other interested candidates will be solicited, and, if necessary, an email ballot will be held. Alternate recruitment will follow the same process, with notifications sent to select boards in Sub-Region 4. James Whalen confirmed that his term does not expire, but he will bring the alternate opportunity to the upcoming tri-town meeting. For Sub-Region 5, Roger Fuller's continued interest is pending, and Stephen Thor Johnson remains the active alternate. An updated list of MPO representatives will be presented at the January, 2026, meeting.

8. MPO Review and Discussion of the Draft Development Schedule for the FFY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the FFY 2027 to 2031 TIP

TIP and UPWP development begins each January, following a draft schedule aligned with MassDOT guidance. The process begins with a kickoff by the JTC, which informs officials and updates project lists. Project data is collected and reviewed by February, and a refreshed list is presented to the MPO for project decisions for fiscal years 2027 to 2031. After further review, a draft document is prepared and released for public comment in April, with a formal hearing in May and final endorsement sought at the end of May. The TIP is amended frequently – typically five to six times a year, especially in the first two years, to keep the program current. MassDOT also reviews statewide programs and may recommend changes to project years. Each year, a formal solicitation is sent out to gather new project ideas for the upcoming UPWP.

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

District Two reported progress on several infrastructure projects, including resurfacing and intersection improvements in Chicopee, South Hadley, Northampton, Springfield, East Longmeadow, and Westfield. Most projects are in various stages of design or review, or are awaiting bid openings and public hearings, with some scheduled for construction in 2026 and 2027.

District One announced that the Chesterfield reconstruction project has entered the construction phase following receipt of the notice to proceed. Other projects, such as the Huntington Bridge replacement and Mountain Street reconstruction, are adjusting schedules, with design hearings and submissions planned for 2026. Some projects have had funding changes but remain in progress with ongoing coordination and permitting.

10. Updates from PVTA Administrator Sandra Sheehan on Relevant Transit-Related Issues and Projects of Interest to the Pioneer Valley MPO Members

Sandra Sheehan reported that fixed-route ridership for November, 2025, increased by 4% compared to last November, while paratransit ridership remained steady. Fiscal year-to-date ridership (July to November) is 10% higher than last year, and calendar year ridership for 2025 has surpassed both 2018 and 2019 levels.

Service enhancements began on December 21, 2026, including increased frequency for the G2 route to Springfield, schedule adjustments for the R10 (Westfield) and R24 (Holyoke), and an extension of the new X94 route to Colonial States in Springfield. Construction projects at UMass and Cottage Street will continue through the winter, with completion dates set for April and December, 2026, respectively.

The PVTA received discretionary funding for renovations at the Northampton transit garage and has begun design services for the project. New and continued funding supports expanded service across the Berkshires, Northampton, North Adams, Greenfield, and Southwick, with joint efforts by the Berkshire and Franklin Regional Transit Authorities. Some new vehicles are expected to arrive in January or February, 2026.

The PVTA is procuring new transit buses and reviewing proposals for paratransit management services, as the current contract expires June 30. They are also upgrading scheduling and dispatching software to improve efficiency and enable micro-transit services similar to Uber and Lyft. The agency is working to connect regional transit systems for seamless passenger transitions and has completed its CIP, which will be submitted to the PVPC for inclusion in the test.

11. Other Business

- JTC Recruitment and Engagement: The team has been actively reaching out to all member communities regarding their membership. There has been success in getting some communities, whose representatives were not attending, to appoint new members. This process is ongoing, and an annual reminder will be sent out in January, 2026, to all member communities.
- Funding Opportunities: It was suggested to add information about open grant opportunities at the end of meetings. Many of these grants are listed on the grant central page.

The next MPO meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

There being no further discussion, a motion to adjourn the meeting was called.

MOVED BY JM SORRELL, SECONDED BY GINA-LOUISE SCIARRA, TO ADJOURN TODAY'S METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MEETING. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED WITHOUT OBJECTION AT 10:52 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at the December 23, 2025, Meeting

1. Metropolitan Planning Organization, December 23, 2025, Presentation