

Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization

Vision Zero & Safe System Statement

Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while improving safety, increasing healthy, equitable mobility, and providing resilient infrastructure for all. In 2024, 48 people died and 245 people were seriously injured due to roadway crashes in the Pioneer Valley region. We acknowledge that deaths and severe injuries on our roadways are preventable and the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) top priority is **ensuring the safety of all roadway users**: whether they are taking transit, walking, bicycling, or using any other mobility device; driving a vehicle, truck, or motorcycle; or riding as a passenger. One life lost or seriously altered is one too many. The Pioneer Valley MPO is committed to the goal **to achieve zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries by 2050**. Pioneer Valley's MPO will work towards this goal by applying the Safe System Approach into daily practice.

Consistent with the Safe System Approach and Safe Streets for All (SS4A) principles, the Pioneer Valley MPO embraces **shared responsibility** among transportation agencies, policymakers, planners, emergency responders, community groups, and all roadway users. **Safety is embedded as a foundational consideration** in all transportation planning, project development, operations, and funding decisions.

The MPO has incorporated elements from the Massachusetts 2023 Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) into its 2024 Update to the Regional Transportation Plan for the Pioneer Valley MPO (RTP). This provides a framework for how the MPO will work to make regional roadways safer for all road users. The RTP includes specific **safety strategies that can aid in achieving a Vision Zero regional transportation network in the Pioneer Valley**. These strategies include the following:

- Advocate for a Safe System Approach, as defined by the Federal Highway Administration, to place safety first in roadway investment decisions.
- Partner with MassDOT and other regional authorities to improve the consistency of crash records and reporting, and to assist in identifying the contributing factors to crashes, fatalities, and severe injuries.
- Promote connectivity as part of all transportation improvement projects and provide accommodations for pedestrians, transit users, and bicyclists in roadway and bridge design and the maintenance of existing facilities.
- Implement communications and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies to improve vehicle safety, public transit safety, and security.
- Improve intersection geometry and upgrade traffic signal control equipment to enhance safety. Consider roundabouts as alternatives to new traffic signals.
- Promote and advance the use of roadway safety audits and vulnerable road user assessments in the Pioneer Valley.
- Develop appropriate educational resources to promote safety for drivers, bicyclists, transit users, and pedestrians. Identify and advocate for additional revenue sources to bring the regional transportation system into a state of good repair.
- Promote and advance projects that enhance resilient transportation infrastructure and reduce safety risks associated with extreme weather, environmental conditions, and system vulnerabilities in the Pioneer Valley Region.
- Collaborate with enforcement agencies and emergency medical services (EMS) to educate them on safety principles, safety programs, and design/engineering countermeasures.

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The Pioneer Valley MPO will use data-driven, equity-centered decision-making to prioritize investments in communities and corridors with the highest concentrations of fatal and serious injury crashes, particularly where historically underserved populations are disproportionately impacted.

Through collaboration with federal, state, local, and community partners, we will implement policies, programs, and projects that advance SS4A goals and move our region toward a transportation system where no loss of life is acceptable and everyone can travel safely, regardless of age, ability, or mode of travel.