

**PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC)**  
**Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee Meeting**  
**Wednesday, April 8, 2026, 10:00 a.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Daryl Amaral, MassDOT Highway District 2  
Maxwell Ballou, Palmer  
Mark Berman, East Longmeadow  
Paul Burns, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority  
Luis Capellan, Longmeadow  
Nicholas Dines, Williamsburg  
Doug Ellis, Chicopee  
Connie Englert, UMass Transit  
Alexis Hosea-Abbott, MassBike  
Betsy Johnson, Pedestrian Representative, Springfield  
Joseph Kietner, Westfield  
Connor Knightly, West Springfield  
Rebecca Lisi, East Longmeadow  
Carolyn Misch, Northampton  
Mark Moore, MassDOT Highway District 1  
Benjamin Murphy, Monson  
Diane Rossini-Smith, Easthampton  
Thomas Ruta, MassDOT Highway District 2  
Daniel Shearer, Barnes Airport  
Paula Simmons, MassDOT Highway District 2  
Matt Sokop, Holyoke  
Aaron Vega, WesternMass Economic Development Council

Guests:

Anthony  
Charles Arnold  
Benjamin  
Joan Barberich  
Ben Breger, Bowman  
Karen Cahalane  
Matt Chase, VHB  
Heather Craig  
Jim Czach, VHB  
Terry Di Giacomo  
Tina Ingmann  
Alex Kahn  
Deb Klemer, GLN  
Amir Kouzehkanani  
LC LeClair  
Melissa Maciborski, Support ALL Children  
Dan McCormack, BETA Group  
Lisa Modenos  
Jim Nash, Northampton  
Kayla Northup, VHB  
Mimi Odgers  
James Paleologopoulos, WAMC  
Joe Q. Public  
Quaverly Rothenberg, Northampton Ward 3

Randy Sailer  
Rachel Stavely Hale  
Chris Stratton, W6 City Council, Northampton  
Ken Walsh  
Daniel Wininger  
James B. Winston  
Zimno

PVPC Staff Present:

Carl Jackson, Principal Transit Planner  
Geoffrey Klafeta, Transportation Planner  
Andrew McCaul, Deputy Director of Transportation Planning  
Jeff McCollough, Chief Transportation Planner  
Khyati Parmar, Principal Transportation Planner  
Gary Roux, Director of Transportation Planning

1. Call to Order

The April 8, 2026, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Joint Transportation Committee meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Gary Roux, and everyone in attendance was welcomed. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Roux asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2026, Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) meeting.

MOVED BY PAUL BURNS, SECONDED BY JOSEPH KIETNER, TO APPROVE THE MARCH 11, 2026, JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH THREE ABSTENTIONS FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

3. Review, Discussion, and JTC Approval of a Vice Chair to the JTC

Mr. Roux noted that JTC Chair Carmen Rosado was unable to attend and that he would serve as Acting Chair for the meeting. Mr. Roux stated that Nicholas Dines of Williamsburg had volunteered to serve as Vice Chair of the JTC.

MOVED BY BETSY JOHNSON, SECONDED BY MATT SOKOP, TO APPROVE NICHOLAS DINES, WILLIAMSBURG, AS VICE CHAIR OF THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH ONE ABSTENTION FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

4. Opportunity for the Public to Comment on Transportation Issues

A motion was made by the Vice Chair to move the public comment period to agenda item 11 (after that last action item) to ensure the JTC would still have a quorum while it was needed to conduct business.

MOVED BY BEN MURPHY, SECONDED BY CONNOR KNIGHTLY, TO APPROVE THE CHANGE TO THE ORDER OF THE AGEND MOVING PUBLIC COMMENT. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

5. Update on Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)

Kayla Northup provided an update on Pioneer Valley's Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan work. Ms. Northup stated that the team is approximately halfway through plan development and is advancing the crash-based safety analysis, the High Injury Network (HIN), and a proactive safety risk analysis that considers roadway characteristics and crash-type risk factors (e.g., lane departure, pedestrian, bicycle, motorcycle, and speeding).

Ms. Northup reviewed recent milestones, including the February 2026 public meeting and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) adoption of a Vision Zero statement, which is a grant requirement. She noted that work is continuing on the regional Safety Compass update. Ms. Northup further described the HIN methodology, including the use of a sliding window approach. She reported that the crash analyses used the most recent five complete years of MassDOT data (2020 to 2024), excluding freeways.

She summarized upcoming engagement activities, including pop-up events, stakeholder interviews, a tentative in-person open house in mid-May 2026, and a follow-up meeting later in the spring/early summer of 2026 to review priority locations and countermeasures. Ms. Northup encouraged members and communities to participate, including through the project's digital mapping tool, which allows users to submit location-based safety concerns and improvement ideas.

Five communities (Chicopee, Holyoke, Springfield, Westfield, and Ware) are completing their own SS4A plans, and the regional plan is intended to coordinate with and incorporate, to the extent possible, recommendations from those standalone plans while avoiding duplication. In response to a question regarding regional consistency of bicycle facilities, Ms. Northup referenced available federal guidance and standards, including AASHTO bicycle guidance and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for markings/stripping. She noted that the plan's safety countermeasure toolbox could reference such materials to support consistency across municipalities.

6. Review, Discussion, and Recommendation to the MPO to Release FFY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment No. 1 for the Required 21-Day Public Review Period

Mr. Roux presented FFY 2026 UPWP Amendment No. 1. Mr. Roux explained that Task 3.8, Transit System Surveys and Route Implementation, would be amended to remove two planned work items, a Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) non-rider survey and a mobile ticketing usage survey, and replace them with alternative PVTA survey work that reflects updated priorities. Specifically, the amendment would begin the PVTA paratransit survey work earlier and initiate a PVTA southern system survey in October. Mr. Roux noted that the amendment does not change the total funding amount for Task 3.8.

Mr. Roux described an administrative adjustment within the Route 202 corridor safety study task: the study budget was reevaluated from \$60,000 to \$45,000, and the remaining \$15,000 would be converted to a direct cost for consultant services to help enhance the PVPC's regional transportation model. Mr. Roux requested a JTC recommendation that the MPO release the amendment for the required 21-day public review period.

MOVED BY PAUL BURNS, SECONDED BY MATT SOKOP, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE MPO RELEASE FFY 2026 UPWP AMENDMENT NO. 1 FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

7. Review, Discussion, and Recommendation to the MPO to Release Amendment No. 4 to the FFY 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Required 21-Day Public Review Period

Andrew McCaul presented proposed FFY 2026 TIP Amendment No. 4. Mr. McCaul reviewed proposed transit program

changes under review by MassDOT Rail and Transit, including adjustments to bus replacement procurements (60-foot articulated buses and 40-foot hybrid buses) and the reallocation of funding previously allocated for 35-foot hybrid buses. Mr. McCaul also summarized additional annual grant-funded transit items to be added to the TIP. On the highway side, Mr. McCaul reviewed the regional project advertisement schedule, noting upcoming advertising dates, including the Chicopee intersection improvement project and other projects in Springfield, Chicopee, and Agawam.

Mr. McCaul stated that three projects would be removed from the FFY 2026 TIP due to readiness/schedule changes – the Williamsburg reconstruction of Main Street, Northampton complete streets, and a Huntington bridge project – with the expectation that they would be proposed in later years of the FFY 2027 to 2031 TIP. Mr. McCaul noted that removing these projects would create approximately \$11 million of unprogrammed FFY 2026 highway funding that must be committed by September 30, 2026, to remain in the region. Two options discussed for potential use of the available FFY 2026 funds were: (1) advancing an interstate maintenance project on I-91 in West Springfield and Holyoke (currently programmed for FFY 2028, and reportedly at 100% design), and/or (2) supporting PVTA capital needs (including fleet replacement and facility needs such as the UMass facility).

JTC members provided initial feedback in support of both the PVTA capital needs and the I-91 interstate maintenance project; Mr. McCaul noted that the MPO will ultimately determine how to address the unprogrammed FFY 2026 funding and welcomed additional feedback from voting members.

MOVED BY ALEXIS HOSEA-ABBOTT, SECONDED BY PAUL BURNS, TO SEPARATE (1) THE VOTE TO RECOMMEND RELEASE OF FFY 2026 TIP AMENDMENT NO. 4 FROM (2) DISCUSSION OF HOW TO REALLOCATE APPROXIMATELY \$11 MILLION IN AVAILABLE FFY 2026 HIGHWAY FUNDS. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH ONE OPPOSED FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

MOVED BY AARON VEGA, SECONDED BY CAROLYN MISCH, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE MPO RELEASE FFY 2026 TIP AMENDMENT NO. 4 FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

8. Review, Discussion, and Recommendation to the MPO to Release the Draft FFY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the Required 21-Day Public Review Period

Mr. Roux presented the Draft FFY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), including preliminary funding estimates and proposed task allocations for the October 1, 2026–September 30, 2027 federal fiscal year. Mr. Roux noted that some figures were estimates subject to refinement, including a request for deobligated PL (planning) funds that MassDOT had not yet approved, and an estimate of remaining SS4A funds based on current grant expenditures.

Mr. Roux summarized the UPWP structure, including 3C process activities (e.g., TIP and UPWP development), data collection activities, federally- and state-required planning tasks, and work supporting development of the next Regional Transportation Plan update. Mr. Roux also noted that the PVPC received one formal request from the Town of Hampden for the inclusion of a planning study to examine two nearby intersections (East Longmeadow Road/Allen Street/Wilbraham Road/Somers Road and Somers Road/Main Street/Meadowbrook Lane).

Mr. Roux requested a JTC recommendation that the MPO release the Draft FFY 2027 UPWP for the required 21-day public review period.

MOVED BY ALEXIS HOSEA-ABBOTT, SECONDED BY PAUL BURNS, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE MPO RELEASE THE DRAFT FFY 2027 UPWP FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

9. Review, Discussion, and Recommendation to the MPO to Release the Draft FFY 2027 to 2031 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Required 21-Day Public Review Period

Mr. McCaul presented the draft FFY 2027 to 2031 TIP and reviewed the schedule for TIP development and MPO scenario selection. Mr. McCaul summarized the transit and highway components of the draft TIP. On the transit side, Mr. McCaul stated that the draft TIP programs the PVTA's capital needs, including vehicle replacements, facility upgrades, and other eligible capital activities over the next five years.

On the highway side, Mr. McCaul reviewed the MPO's Scenario 2 program, including known project schedule shifts discussed with municipal partners and MassDOT. Mr. McCaul noted that the PVPC and its partners will continue working to address unprogrammed funding in FFY 2027 and to avoid a similar uncommitted funding issue in future years. Mr. McCaul requested a JTC recommendation that the MPO release the draft FFY 2027 to 2031 TIP for the required 21-day public review period.

MOVED BY PAUL BURNS, SECONDED BY AARON VEGA, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE MPO RELEASE THE DRAFT FFY 2027 TO 2031 TIP FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

10. PVPC Regional Traffic Count Program

Amir Kouzehkanani provided an overview of the PVPC's Regional Traffic Count Program. Mr. Kouzehkanani stated that the PVPC conducts traffic counts at MassDOT-requested locations throughout the region each year using Automatic Traffic Recorders (ATRs), typically for two-day counts, with fieldwork occurring from mid-to-late May through October (weather permitting).

Mr. Kouzehkanani noted that ATR equipment certification for the 2026 counting season was completed and would be submitted to MassDOT. Mr. Kouzehkanani also described the PVPC's ongoing "COVID-19 locations" count program (29 locations tracked on a three-year rotation) that began in 2020 and is used to monitor longer-term changes in travel patterns; nine of the 29 locations are scheduled to be counted in 2026.

Mr. Kouzehkanani reminded members that each community may request two traffic counts per calendar year at no cost (in addition to MassDOT locations), with additional requested counts provided at cost; requests may be submitted via the PVPC website and are routed through each community's chief locally elected official. Mr. Kouzehkanani also highlighted the PVPC's pavement management services, including pavement distress data collection, Overall Condition Index (OCI) reporting, maintenance priority listings, and five-year budget scenarios.

11. Opportunity for the Public to Comment on Transportation Issues

Daniel Winger stated that the Picture Main Street project required compromise and urged consideration of an alternative design that was proposed approximately two years earlier. He argued that the current plan to reduce Main Street to one lane in each direction would create a permanent bottleneck, ignore traffic demand from multiple state routes, and lack a realistic bypass. He requested transparency on the cost of underground-utility replacement as distinct from the surface redesign and asserted that the alternative design would have improved bicycle and pedestrian access, incorporated raised sidewalks, better addressed accessibility for residents with mobility impairments, and cost substantially less than the project budget he cited (approximately \$37 million and increasing). He also disputed the characterization of most trips as discretionary, stating that Main Street functioned as Route 9 and was used primarily for necessary travel. He indicated that he would share a link to the alternative design presentation.

Melissa Maciborski, a Northampton resident, stated that she opposed the Picture Main Street project and noted that petitions opposing it had nearly 3,000 signatures, while the petition supporting it had approximately 180. She requested transparency, a public forum, and a ballot question, and said residents had waited to comment because they felt unheard. She referenced unresolved issues (including vaults and right-of-way) and questioned why decision-makers reportedly lacked a structural engineering report addressing them. She urged officials to review these issues before committing millions of dollars and warned that legal fees and municipal funds could be diverted from other community needs. She concluded by reiterating opposition and her requests for a forum and a ballot vote.

Mimi Odgers, a Northampton resident, expressed general support for downtown improvements, describing current driving conditions as confusing and unsafe and emphasizing that sidewalks were not ADA-compliant for wheelchair users. While noting she was not an expert on bicycle-lane design, she supported revitalization. She advocated for stronger PVRTA funding, stating that limited transit access made car use necessary for some residents. She added that she did not believe it was accurate to assume all residents opposed the project and supported using available federal and state funds to improve downtown.

Charles Arnold stated that he supported Picture Main Street and believed it would enhance downtown accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists and improve vitality. He said he had reviewed the plans and emphasized that opposition was not uniform in Northampton, noting that many residents supported the project and that some objections stemmed from misunderstandings about accessibility impacts.

James B. Winston, a Northampton native, stated that he agreed with prior opponents of the project and argued that Picture Main Street would not deliver promised safety or climate benefits. He criticized the bicycle component as limited and not truly protected, and warned of permanent changes to a historic Main Street. He cited a prior 2020 lane-narrowing effort that he said was removed after public backlash. He urged consultation with Main Street property owners and residents with disabilities, called for a trial run, questioned whether funding was secured, and urged the City to slow the project before proceeding.

Deb Klemer, Northampton Ward 2 City Councilor, stated that many constituents supported the project and that it would improve disability access and access to Main Street businesses. She stated that project funds would not be redirected to schools if unused and argued that opponents had not presented a workable, funded plan for a trial run. She added that the underground infrastructure was more than 100 years old and would require replacement regardless. She asserted that replacing it without the project's funding would cost the city tens of millions of dollars. She noted planned meetings and information-sharing with the Mayor and community groups and reiterated her support for proceeding.

Randy Sailer stated that he supported Picture Main Street and said planning had occurred over many years with multiple opportunities for public input. He asserted that the project would improve safety and help alleviate traffic issues, citing accident data he said was high in the area, and argued it would benefit businesses, visitors, pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. He added that a mode shift to bicycling would reduce traffic and support downtown revitalization.

Quaverly Rothenberg, the immediate past Ward 3 City Councilor in Northampton, stated that she was commenting on Picture Main Street amid heightened local political engagement and close recent election results. She linked opposition to concerns about underfunded schools and deferred maintenance and alleged that residents and some councilors had been denied access to financial information, including the general ledger. Ms. Rothenberg then alleged discrepancies in ARPA reporting and favoritism in contracting. She stated diminished public confidence in local government and cited petitions she said contained substantially more signatures against the project than in support. She urged due diligence and alleged ongoing federal scrutiny and litigation.

12. Other Business

- Grant Funding Opportunities – PVPC staff reviewed current grant funding opportunities, including SS4A (applications due late May), the Port Infrastructure Program, and the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program (applications due mid-July).

13. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Mr. Dines adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,