

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC)
Minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Zoom Meeting
Tuesday, May 26, 2026, 10:00 A.M.

Organization Members Present

William Dwyer, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Roger Fuller, Chesterfield Selectboard
Joshua A. Garcia, Mayor of Holyoke
Michael McCabe, Mayor of Westfield
Gina-Louise Sciarra, Mayor of Northampton
Paula Simmons, MassDOT Highway District 1
JM Sorrell, Chair of PVTA
James Whalen, Holland Selectboard
Stephen Woelfel, MassDOT OTP

Alternates/Non-Voting/Ex-Officio Members

Salem Derby, Easthampton
Sandra Sheehan, Administrator of PVTA

Guests

Daryl Amaral, MassDOT Highway District 2
Arnav Chatterjee, MassDOT
Carl Jackson, Principal Transit Planner
Timothy Keane, Longmeadow
Mark Moore, MassDOT Highway District 1
Benjamin Muller, MassDOT
Michelle Scott, MassDOT
Derek Shooster, MassDOT
Matthew Sokop, City Engineer, City of Holyoke
Sam Taylor, MassDOT OTP

PVPC Staff Present

Andrew McCaul, Deputy Director of Transportation Planning
Jeffrey McCollough, Chief Transportation Planner
Gary Roux, Director of Transportation Planning

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

The Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting on May 26, 2026, 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 April 28, 2026

MOVED BY JAMES WHALEN, SECONDED BY WILLIAM DWYER, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 28, 2026, METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MEETING AS PRESENTED. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH ONE ABSTENTION, FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

3. Public Comments

No public comments were made.

4. Presentation on the Development of the 2027-2031 MassDOT Capital Investment Plan

Michelle Scott, Manager of Capital Planning at MassDOT, provided a brief overview of the FFY 2027–2031 Capital Investment Plan (CIP), describing it as a five-year plan that funds transportation projects across the Commonwealth, including roads, bridges, transit, and other infrastructure. She explained that the CIP is guided by statewide goals such as safety, reliability, climate resilience, and connectivity, and highlighted that it represents a \$20.5 billion investment program. She also emphasized the connection between MPO TIP programming and the CIP, noting that regional projects play a key role in shaping the plan. Ms. Scott informed members that the draft CIP was currently out for public review and encouraged participation.

James Whalen noted that, as a representative of a small town such as Holland, his community is experiencing financial strain due to rising costs, including fuel and operating expenses. He explained that the town is shifting funds from stabilization accounts to operating budgets and urged the state to consider these challenges when planning investments.

Ms. Scott acknowledged the concern and stated that MassDOT is hearing similar feedback across the state and that such information is important for informing CIP development and supporting municipalities effectively.

5. Review, Discussion, and MPO Endorsement of Amendment #1 to the FFY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Currently out of the Required 21-day Public Review Period

Gary Roux presented Amendment #1, explaining that it involved modifying tasks within Task 3.8 (transit system surveys and route implementation) and reallocating \$15,000 from Task 3.2 to direct costs, without changing the scope of work. He noted that the amendment had been released for the required 21-day public review period, and no public comments were received, and that the JTC had recommended MPO endorsement.

MOVED BY JM SORRELL, SECONDED BY GINA-LOUISE SCIARRA, TO ENDORSE AMENDMENT #1 TO THE FFY 2026 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) – CURRENTLY OUT OF THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

6. Review, Discussion, and MPO Endorsement of the Draft FFY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Currently out of the Required 21-day Public Review Period

Mr. Roux presented the Draft FFY 2027 UPWP, noting it had been circulated for the 21-day public review period. He summarized key updates, including:

- Added tasks related to micromobility safety (e-bikes and e-scooters).
- Expanded Skyline Trail Scenic Byway planning work.
- Introduced GIS mapping of statutory speed limit areas.
- Added implementation work tied to the Regional Safety Action Plan.
- Removed certain items due to funding limitations and addressed formatting corrections.

MOVED BY JAMES WHALEN, SECONDED BY JM SORRELL, TO ENDORSE THE DRAFT FFY 2027 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) – CURRENTLY OUT OF THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

7. Review, Discussion, and MPO Endorsement of Amendment #4 to the FFY 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Currently out for the Required 21-day Public Review

Andrew McCaul presented Amendment #4, explaining that the Williamsburg Mountain Street reconstruction project and the Northampton Main Street corridor project were delayed due to readiness and design challenges. Funding from these delays was reallocated to I-91 pavement preservation in Holyoke/West Springfield, and PVTA capital support for bus replacement and facility maintenance. Transit adjustments included increasing the number of 40-foot buses and removing 35-foot buses.

Mr. McCaul reported that 33 public comments were received, with the majority supporting the Northampton project.

MOVED BY GINA-LOUISE SCIARRA, SECONDED BY JM SORRELL, TO ENDORSE AMENDMENT #4 TO THE FFY 2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) – CURRENTLY OUT FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

8. Review, Discussion, and MPO Endorsement of the Draft FFY 2027-2031 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Currently out for the Required 21-day Public Review

Mr. McCaul presented the Draft TIP, noting that approximately \$200 million in regional discretionary funding, plus substantial statewide investments, are included. Some funding remained unallocated due to project readiness issues, with plans to identify projects in the upcoming months, and transit funding focused on vehicle replacement and facility upkeep.

MOVED BY JAMES WHALEN, SECONDED BY GINA-LOUISE SCIARRA, TO ENDORSE THE DRAFT FFY 2027-2031 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) – CURRENTLY OUT FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

9. Review, Discussion, and MPO Approval to Release Amendment #5 to the FFY 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Required 21-day Public Review

Mr. McCaul presented Amendment #5, explaining that it proposed adding approximately \$622,000 for a vulnerable road user safety project in Chicopee, focused on crosswalk improvements at state signals.

MOVED BY JAMES WHALEN, SECONDED BY JM SORRELL, TO RELEASE AMENDMENT #5 TO THE FFY 2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

10. Updates from MassDOT Highway District 1 and District 2 on Relevant Transportation Issues and Projects

MassDOT Highway District 1 provided an update on District 1 projects, noting continued progress on several bridge and reconstruction efforts. He reported that coordination between MassDOT and CSX on rail-related projects was progressing well, with design submissions under review and environmental permitting complete. The Williamsburg Mountain Street reconstruction project, now scheduled for FFY 2027, had received its 100% design submission and was moving toward final design ahead of construction. Several bridge replacement projects, including those in Huntington and Russell, had been rescheduled to later years (FFY 2028) and were advancing through design stages. Additionally, bridge work in Williamsburg remained in the design phase with updated submissions pending.

MassDOT Highway District 2 provided updates on several active and upcoming projects. The I-91 pavement preservation project in Holyoke and West Springfield had recently submitted its plans, specifications, and estimates and was awaiting advertisement. The Chicopee intersection improvements project had already been advertised, with a bid opening scheduled for early June, and the I-291 guide and traffic sign replacement project had also been advertised, with a later bid opening in July. The Chicopee I-391 bridge replacement project, a design-build project, had issued a request for proposals to shortlisted teams, with technical proposals expected later in the summer. Updates were provided on projects advancing through design, including the Northampton downtown complete streets project, which is nearing final design, and the Westfield intersection improvements project, which recently completed its design hearing and is progressing toward final design submission.

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

Sandra Sheehan reported on PVTA's current transit operations and projects. She noted that April ridership was 6% higher than April 2025, indicating continued recovery and growth. She also reported that the PVTA Advisory Board had approved the FY 2027 budget, which maintains service levels and continues the fare-free program without introducing new service expansions.

Ms. Sheehan provided updates on recently implemented routes, stating that the Ware–Holyoke route (B49) had been operating for approximately eight weeks and was seeing steady ridership, while the Northampton–Southwick route (G47), launched more recently, was averaging strong daily ridership. She added that the Link 413 service between the Berkshires and the Pioneer Valley continued to show incremental growth in ridership.

Ms. Sheehan also reported that construction projects at the UMass Transit garage and the Springfield Cottage Street facility were ongoing, and she noted that PVTA would send 10 buses to assist with transportation during the World Cup, reflecting regional coordination efforts.

12. Other Business

Mr. McCaul reminded members of upcoming funding opportunities and application deadlines, including programs related to transportation safety and planning.

JM Sorrell raised a concern about a meeting access issue, noting that the previously distributed link had not worked, causing a delay in joining the meeting. Mr. McCaul acknowledged the issue and stated that there had been a problem with the distribution of the meeting link, confirming that it affected multiple participants and that steps would be taken to correct it in future communications.

The next MPO meeting is scheduled for June 23, 2026.

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

MOVED BY JM SORRELL, TO ADJOURN TODAY'S METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION MEETING. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED WITHOUT OBJECTION AT 10:53 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at the May 26, 2026, Meeting

1. Metropolitan Planning Organization, May 26, 2026, Presentation