

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

Committee Members Present:

Daryl Amaral, MassDOT Highway District 2
Mark Berman, East Longmeadow
Michelle Chase, Agawam
Nicholas Dines, Williamsburg
Doug Finn, Westhampton
Peter Frieri, MassDOT Highway District 1
Alexis Hosea-Abbott, MassBike
Betsy Johnson, Pedestrian Representative, Springfield
Van Kacoyannakis, VHB
Connor Knightly, West Springfield
Mike Kurker, BL Companies
Linda Leduc, Belchertown
Benjamin Murphy, Monson
Kayla Northup, VHB
Calvin Poitras, MassDOT Highway District 1
Diane Rossini-Smith, Easthampton
Thomas Ruta, MassDOT Highway District 2
Jason Skeels, Amherst
Matt Sokop, Holyoke

PVPC Staff Present:

Rana Al-Jammal, Principal Transportation Planner
Carl Jackson, Principal Transit Planner
Geoffrey Klafeta, Transportation Planner
Amir Kouzehkanani, Principal Transportation Planner/Manager
Jeff McCollough, Chief Transportation Planner
Gary Roux, Director of Transportation Planning

1. Call to Order

The June 10, 2026, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Joint Transportation Committee meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. by Nicholas Dines, and everyone in attendance was welcomed. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Dines asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 13 2026, Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) meeting.

MOVED BY BETSY JOHNSON, SECONDED BY DIANE ROSINI-SMITH, TO APPROVE THE MAY 13, 2026, JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES. THE MOTION CARRIED FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

3. Opportunity for the Public to Comment on Transportation Issues

There were no public comments.

4. 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. She reported that the project is approaching completion and that the draft Safety Action Plan is currently being finalized. She noted that a final public meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2026, after which the draft plan is expected to be released for public comment through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) at the end of June.

Ms. Northup advised that the overall goal of the plan is to reduce fatal and serious injuries on Pioneer Valley roadways by 2040. She noted that the effort was funded through the U.S. Department of Transportation's Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program and that current federal infrastructure discussions indicate the SS4A program is likely to continue.

Ms. Northup reported that the study evaluated all public roadways, excluding limited-access highways, and that crash data from 2020 through 2024 was analyzed to identify patterns and trends related to fatal and serious injury crashes. She noted that the municipalities of Chicopee, Holyoke, Springfield, Westfield, and Ware were excluded from the regional action plan because they are developing independent safety plans. However, coordination with those communities has occurred throughout the project to ensure consistency and regional alignment.

Ms. Northup reviewed extensive outreach efforts conducted during the planning process and explained that the engagement process was designed to gather both broad public input and more targeted feedback from key stakeholders. She presented the major themes identified from the engagements, including:

- Existing transportation infrastructure prioritizing automobiles over other forms of transportation
- Multimodal transportation needs
- Connectivity gaps due to deficiencies in pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
- Speeding and unsafe driver behavior discouraging walking and bicycling in certain areas

Ms. Northup reviewed the safety analysis methodology to identify safety priorities, including identifying locations where crashes have already occurred and examining concentrations of fatal and serious injury crashes, as well as evaluating roadway characteristics that increase crash risk. She noted that this approach allows planners to identify locations where serious crashes may occur in the future, even if a crash history has not yet developed. She further noted that the two analyses were combined to create a comprehensive safety prioritization framework.

Ms. Northup explained that a scoring methodology was developed to evaluate intersections and roadway segments throughout the region. She noted that a threshold score of 75 points was used to identify high-priority projects at the regional level. She further noted that a significant focus of the project was ensuring that rural communities received meaningful representation within the plan and that each municipality received at least five identified priority projects.

Ms. Northup reviewed a combination of engineering recommendations such as pedestrian infrastructure improvements, centerline rumble strips and improve signage, and non-engineering recommendations such as education programs. She reported on the next steps for the demonstration project.

The Committee discussed whether future SS4A funding opportunities might support project design activities, noting that many rural communities struggle to secure funding for design work even for simple projects. Ms. Northup stated that preliminary indications suggest future federal funding will focus heavily on implementation and demonstration. She noted that planning grants may continue and that project design costs may be eligible under implementation grants but acknowledged that local matches remain a challenge for many municipalities. Gary Roux noted that the BUILD America 250 Act is a transportation reauthorization bill that has not yet been considered by the Senate. However, he offered to provide the Committee with more information about the bill at a future meeting. He discussed

the importance of maintaining federal rural set-asides within future transportation funding programs.

The Committee asked about maps showing elevated lane departure and speeding risks in portions of Northampton while showing little risk data in Westhampton and Huntington. Ms. Northup explained that the analysis is based on roadway characteristics and risk factors rather than solely crash history. She indicated that roadway conditions may change across municipal boundaries and agreed that further review of the specific locations would be worthwhile.

5. Regional Freight Planning Industrial Analysis – Discussion of Ongoing Activities and Review of up to 10 Potential Count Locations

Geoffrey Klafeta provided an update on the regional freight planning industrial analysis. He noted that the analysis focused on identifying freight movement patterns throughout the region and determining future data collection needs. He reviewed the interactive web-based map showing traffic count locations and freight activity. He noted the 11 proposed sites for new traffic counts and stated that a traffic recorder will be installed at the 11th location. He advised that an update will be provided to the Committee in the fall of 2026.

Mr. Roux explained that future work will involve gathering additional truck movement data to better understand how freight travels between industrial areas and major transportation corridors. He noted that analysis seeks to identify existing industrial activity centers, areas with potential for future industrial growth, truck routing patterns, and transportation system constraints affecting freight movement.

Matt Sokop expressed interest in understanding truck movements within Holyoke, particularly how trucks access industrial areas from Interstate 91 and Route 391 due to low-clearance railroad bridges and restricted access. Mr. Roux acknowledged the value of examining freight movements at a finer level of detail and noted that future phases of the project may identify locations requiring additional study to help refine future freight planning efforts.

6. Review, Discussion, and Recommendation to the MPO to Endorse Amendment No. 5 to the FFY 2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Currently Out for the Required 21-Day Public Review Period

Mr. Roux presented Amendment No. 5, explaining that it was released for the required 21-day public review period and that no comments were received. He explained that the proposed project changes involve district-level statewide funding programs and do not affect the region's target funding allocation. He noted that the MPO previously approved its release and that the next step was to recommend endorsement.

MOVED BY DIANE ROSSINI-SMITH, SECONDED BY BENJAMIN MURPHY, TO ENDORSE AMENDMENT NO. 5 TO THE FFY 2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) CURRENTLY OUT FOR THE REQUIRED 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

7. Other Business

- MPO Approves FFY 2027 Documents – Mr. Roux noted that the PVPC FFY27 work program and the latest version of the TIP were endorsed by the MPO at the end of May, 2026. He stated that the final documents will be posted on the PVPC website.
- Current Grant Opportunities – Mr. Roux highlighted current grant opportunities and invited members to contact PVPC staff for more information or guidance on grant applications. He noted that the PVPC sent out information about MassDOT providing statutory speed limit signs. He advised that the deadline for requesting the signs is closing soon and encouraged the members to consider the opportunity to obtain free statutory speed limit signs from MassDOT.

8. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Mr. Dines adjourned the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,