

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC)
Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee Meeting
Wednesday, September 9, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members Present:

John Broderick, South Hadley
Paul Burns, PVTA
Sarah Cannamela, MassDOT Highway District 2
Michelle Chase, Agawam
Nicholas Dines, Williamsburg
Connie Englert, UMass Transit
Peter Frieri, MassDOT Highway District 1
Dena Grochmal, Wilbraham
Teddy Gronostalski, Stavros
Alexis Hosea-Abbott, MassBike
Betsy Johnson, Pedestrian Representative, Springfield
Tim Keane, Longmeadow
Joe Kietner, Westfield
Andrew Krar, Springfield
Mike Kurker, BL Companies
Allyson Manuel, Easthampton
Carolyn Misch, Northampton
Ben Murphy, Monson
Kayla Northup, VHB
Calvin Poitras, MassDOT Highway District 1
Thomas Ruta, MassDOT Highway District 2
Dan Shearer, Barnes Airport
Matt Sokop, Holyoke
Gregory Young, UMass Transit
BETA Group

PVPC Staff Present:

Rana Al-Jammal, Principal Transportation Planner
Carl Jackson, Senior Transit Planner
Geoffrey Klafeta, Transportation Planner
Peter Kuusisto, Senior Transit Planner
Andrew McCaul, Deputy Director of Transportation Planning
Jeff McCollough, Chief Transportation Planner
Gary Roux, Director of Transportation Planning

1. Call to Order

The September 9, 2026, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Joint Transportation Committee meeting was called to order at 10:00 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 August 12, 2026, Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) meeting.

MOVED BY PAUL BURNS, SECONDED BY JOE KIETNER, TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 12, 2026, JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH THREE ABSTENTIONS FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

3. Opportunity for the Public to Comment on Transportation Issues

There were no public comments.

4. FFY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Administrative Adjustment

Gary Roux presented an update regarding a proposed administrative adjustment to the FFY 2026 UPWP. The current program is scheduled to conclude on September 30, 2026. A review of the existing budget identified an opportunity to utilize approximately \$10,000 in excess funding. PVPC staff are proposing to transfer approximately \$10,000 from salary and overhead costs associated with CAS 3.7 Regional Safety Planning Studies to direct costs for computer needs within the Transportation Department.

Mr. Roux explained that the proposed transfer would require sign-off from the Office of Transportation Planning at MassDOT as well as approval by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). PVPC staff anticipate formally bringing the administrative adjustment forward for MPO approval at the September MPO meeting. The adjustment is expected to qualify as an administrative adjustment because the amount being moved is less than 25% of the total direct cost budget.

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

Kayla Northup reported that the Pioneer Valley Safe Streets plan was completed and the final plan was approved in July, 2026. The project is now moving into the non-construction demonstration project phase, which is expected to continue through the winter and spring of 2027, with substantial work occurring during the fall and additional documentation during the winter.

Ms. Northup explained that the demonstration project will focus on identifying traffic signals throughout the region and determining whether they comply with Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards. The project will develop a comprehensive inventory and assess individual locations. The assessment will also incorporate crash data evaluated as part of the Safe Streets action plan. This will allow the project team to examine whether there is a correlation between crash rates and non-compliance at individual intersections. VHB will also conduct a cybersecurity review of traffic signal infrastructure.

Ms. Northup noted that the team has already developed a regional inventory of traffic signals using previous work with MassDOT and information contained in the Model Inventory of Roadway Elements (MIRE) database. The MIRE database is federally required and is scheduled to be completed by the end of September, 2026. The existing information will be used for desktop reviews to confirm which locations remain signalized, as some locations identified in the existing data have subsequently been converted to all-way stops or modern roundabouts. The project will use Geographic Information System (GIS)-based tools and Street View for desktop reviews, supplemented by field assessments. The evaluation will examine a range of factors related to MUTCD compliance.

Ms. Northup noted that field assessments will be conducted at selected locations. The team will review signal cabinets, document installed equipment, and assess cybersecurity considerations. The project will also apply crash rates and crash analysis from the previously completed safety work. Up to 15 intersections will receive more detailed analysis to determine whether the existing traffic signals remain warranted and whether other countermeasures, such as roundabouts or all-way stops, should be considered. Members were encouraged to provide Mr. Roux with intersections they would like considered for inclusion in the detailed analysis.

Ms. Northup confirmed that the project deliverables will include:

- A GIS-based traffic signal inventory layer;
- A technical memorandum summarizing the relationship between signal compliance and crash rates;
- Cybersecurity best practices and recommendations; and
- A summary of the detailed intersection analyses and recommendations regarding signal warrants

Ms. Northup confirmed that the project includes all communities in the region and that the 15 intersections selected for analysis will also include those communities.

Regarding whether the inventory would include newer types of pedestrian-activated signals, including rectangular rapid-flashing beacons (RRFBs) and high-intensity activated crosswalk signals (HAWKs), Ms. Northup confirmed that the current project is focused on full traffic signalization and does not include RRFBs or HAWKs. Mr. Roux noted that these types of facilities were addressed through the original safety action plan and its recommendations. For communities that were not included in the regional safety action plan, members would need to refer to their individual community Safe Streets action plans.

Regarding the evaluation of pedestrian clearance times and whether the project would determine how much time pedestrians have to cross an intersection, Ms. Northup confirmed that the assessment would examine vehicle signal timing, including red and yellow intervals, as well as pedestrian walk and flashing do not walk intervals. The project would not necessarily document every specific timing value during the desktop review. Where an intersection has not been updated within the past five years, the team would make certain assumptions regarding whether the signal timing has been updated to reflect current standards. The team would also document, more generally, whether sufficient time is provided for pedestrians to cross.

6. Fall Update to the Pioneer Valley Public Participation Plan (PPP)

Jeff McCollough explained that the PVPC is updating the MPO's PPP as required in connection with federal funding sources. The update recognizes significant changes in how the public is engaged compared with traditional approaches. The approach has increasingly shifted toward using locations, technologies, and engagement methods that are more comfortable and accessible to the public. The updated plan will focus particularly on reaching underserved populations. Mr. McCollough emphasized the importance of listening to communities and evaluating whether the language and methods being used are appropriate and accessible to the intended audiences.

Mr. McCollough discussed challenges associated with changes to census data and the identification of language barriers. The PVPC has begun examining school data, including the languages being used to address student needs, as one way of gaining insight into changing demographics and potential language needs within communities.

PVPC staff anticipate returning to the MPO in one month with a draft plan for public comment and review.

7. Regional Congestion Management Process (CMP) – Dashboard

Geoffrey Klafeta presented the Regional CMP dashboard and the 2025 data analysis for the Pioneer Valley region. Mr. Klafeta explained that the PVPC tracks congestion metrics related to delay and travel time reliability. The information is summarized in an interactive dashboard that is available through the PVPC website. The primary data source is RITIS, a nationwide transportation data and analytics platform. The data can provide information concerning traffic volume, speed, classification, incidents, work zones, and other transportation conditions.

Mr. Klafeta demonstrated the CMP dashboard, which allows users to examine the region as a whole or apply filters to individual communities and roadways. Users can examine travel time index and vehicle speed information by time of day, and the travel time reliability section allows users to examine reliability by time period.

Andrew McCaul noted that the dashboard remains a work in progress and will continue to be refined as additional data and features are incorporated. The dashboard is intended to provide an accessible resource for understanding congestion in the region. The data is also used in the MPO's transportation evaluation criteria, including the congestion component. Mr. McCaul further noted that the reliability measures used in the dashboard correspond to federal performance measures that are required to be reported by the federal government and the state.

8. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Updates

Mr. McCaul reported that all projects funded in FFY 2026 have been advertised, effectively closing out FFY 2026 activities. Approximately \$235 million was invested in bridge projects in the region. More than \$36 million was allocated to roadway, Complete Streets, and safety projects, consisting primarily of regional target funds as well as some funding outside the regional target allocation for items such as interstate maintenance. Just over \$2 million was allocated to SS4A awards, including the regional award and awards received directly by other municipalities.

Mr. McCaul noted that the region is currently in a temporary TIP lull because the new TIP does not take effect until October 1, 2026. PVPC staff will then begin working on the next round of updates.

For FFY 2027, 12 projects or portions of projects are currently being funded in the region. The majority of the funding is directed toward bridge projects, with six bridge projects receiving funding and three representing significant investments. Roadway and safety projects account for nearly \$43 million in funding, including a significant amount of regional discretionary funding.

Mr. McCaul highlighted several projects, including:

- The north end bridge, which begins receiving funding in FFY 2027;
- The Williamsburg reconstruction project, with just under \$13 million in funding;
- The Northampton Complete Streets project, with just over \$4 million;
- The Westfield intersection improvement project, with more than \$8 million; and
- The West Springfield preservation project, which has funding from both regional discretionary and state sources

The north end bridge project currently has approximately \$29 million in FFY 2027 funding. The total project cost is estimated at approximately \$365 million. Additional information regarding the project start date, detours, and related impacts is still pending.

Mr. McCaul noted that approximately \$9 million is currently available in FFY 2027. As staff begin the next TIP update process, they will assess whether projects currently programmed for later years are sufficiently advanced to move forward into FFY 2027. Members with projects slated for FFY 2027 or later were strongly encouraged to stay in close contact with their consultants and MassDOT project managers. Consultants should be maintaining project schedules, ensuring designs are progressing, and making sure that current project information is available to MassDOT for review. Mr. McCaul emphasized that projects can only be advanced when sufficient and current information is available. Members were encouraged to work proactively with consultants and MassDOT to prevent project delays and, where possible, advance projects ahead of schedule.

9. Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Chair – Ongoing Recruitment

Mr. Dines has indicated that he is willing to continue serving in a Vice Chair or Alternate Chair capacity; however, the JTC continues to seek an individual willing to assume the role of full time JTC Chair. JTC staff, including the Transportation Department, provide support to the Chair and supply the information necessary to prepare for and conduct meetings efficiently. The Chair may also occasionally be asked to appear before the MPO and provide updates regarding matters being undertaken by the JTC. Mr. Roux invited anyone interested in the position to speak privately with staff regarding the responsibilities and requirements of the role.

10. PVPC Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) Dashboard

Peter Kuusisto presented the PVPC HSTP dashboard, a centralized resource for identifying transportation services and supporting transportation funding applications. The dashboard is accessible through the PVPC website and provides information on transportation resources, demographics, and available funding opportunities. The dashboard identifies various transportation services by community, including public transportation, paratransit, senior, private, and medical transportation. Users can also view demographic information for individual or multiple communities and access transportation inventories. The dashboard is intended for both organizations seeking transportation funding and residents looking for available transportation services.

Mr. Kuusisto highlighted Community Transit Grant Program 5310, which can fund new or existing transportation services. The current application deadline is October 30, 2026, with vehicle purchase grants typically available subsequently. Applicants can use demographic information from the dashboard, including census tract data, to support their applications.

Mr. McCaul encouraged members to suggest additional services for inclusion and noted that PVPC staff are available to assist with using the dashboard and preparing grant applications. Private entities interested in funding should first contact their municipality before working with PVPC staff.

11. Other Business

- Current Grant Opportunities – Mr. McCaul reported that staff are currently reaching out to state and federal partners to obtain information regarding funding opportunities expected to become available. The MPO will continue to update members as information becomes available. He reviewed a list of opportunities that were available during 2026 and encouraged members to take advantage of applicable programs.
- Feedback on New Technology – Mr. McCaul requested feedback from members regarding the new technology being used for JTC meetings.

12. Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Mr. Dines adjourned the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,