

Minutes of the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Zoom Meeting
 Wednesday, December 14, 2022

Present were:

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Daryl Amaral	MassDOT District 2	Alexis Hosea-Abbott	MassBike
Ben Breger	MassDOT	Betsy Johnson	Pedestrian Rep/WalkBike Springfield
Gary Briere	MassBike	Van Kacoyannakis	VHB
Paul Burns	PVTA	Timothy Keane	Town of Longmeadow
Matthew Chase	VHB	Chris Klem	MassDOT
Michelle Chase	Town Engineer, Agawam	Benjamin Murphy	Town of Monson
Robert Colson	Town of West Springfield	Dan Murphy	City of Easthampton
Nick Dines	Town of Williamsburg	Dawn Nims	City of Holyoke
Bill Dwyer	Town of Hadley, JTC Chair	Carmen Rosada	STAVROS
Doug Ellis	City of Chicopee	Charley Rose	Town of Worthington
Peter Frieri	MassDOT District 1	Tom Ruta	MassDOT District 2
Jennifer Gannett	Town of Agawam	Steve Savaria	Fuss & O'Neill
PVPC Staff			
Andrew McCaul	Senior Transportation Planner	Gary Roux	Principal Planner
Jeffrey McCollough	Senior Transportation Planner	Lynn Shell	Admin Support
Dana Roscoe	Principal Planner		

1. Open Meeting

Bill Dwyer, Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) Chair, opened the December 14, 2022 JTC meeting at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Dwyer reviewed the virtual meeting format, and he noted that the meeting is being recorded. PVPC Senior Planner Andrew McCaul took roll call and he confirmed that there was a quorum.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

Mr. Dwyer asked for a motion to approve the November 9, 2022 JTC minutes.

MOVED BY DAN MURPHY, CITY OF EASTHAMPTON, SECONDED BY BEN MURPHY, TOWN OF MONSON, TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 9, 2022 JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING MINUTES. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED BY ROLL CALL VOTE WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS.

Mr. Dwyer then moved to take up agenda item 3.

3. Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) Review Update

Mr. Dwyer noted that according to Robert's Rules of Order, technically there should be a motion and a second to take up an agenda article. He asked Mr. McCaul to provide a summary of the agenda item and to explain the approval that he is requesting. He noted that he will then call for a motion following any discussion. Mr. McCaul stated that the JTC had previously recommended that the MPO release the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) for public review, and it is currently out for public review and comment. Mr. McCaul stated that today he is looking for a recommendation from the JTC for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to approve the TEC.

Mr. McCaul then reviewed comments made by the JTC. He pointed out that a concern was raised by the MPO and the JTC regarding urban versus rural and he noted that rural projects do not score as well as urban projects. Mr. McCaul stated that they can make the TEC more flexible to ensure that certain parts of projects in rural areas get acknowledged. He felt that the proposed amendment will have a positive impact on the scoring of those rural projects. He also noted that there was a question from the MPO regarding rural roadway access to employment and how that is reflected in the TEC. He stated that the Roadway Functional Classification takes into consideration

the road and how it is used by residents in those rural areas and how those roads provide that access. Mr. McCaul also noted that as regards one of the definitions within the TEC, MassDOT District 2 commented that it might be more appropriate to say, “improves connections between housing and service facilities or retail establishments”. He noted that PVPC’s recommendation is “connections between housing and employment” and PVPC feels that by listing employment it does still include facilities and retail establishments.

Mr. McCaul then shared charts he prepared for three of the projects to show how the proposed changes impact the projects. He noted that these projects are currently programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and are at least at 25% design. Mr. McCaul referred to the Chesterfield project and he talked about what the scoring would look like under the proposed TEC amendment and the scoring under the current TEC, and he noted that Chesterfield would experience a one-point increase in their total score. He next talked about the South Hadley project which he noted would experience a short-term decrease in score under Livability and under Safety and Security, and he noted that the Springfield X project would experience a short-term decrease of 2 points. He then shared a summary of the proposed changes. Mr. McCaul stated that PVPC feels that these changes are making the scoring more concise with current federal and state standards, and he noted that PVPC also removed some of the redundancies. He stated that this is an estimate as of today and PVPC acknowledges that these scorings will change in February when reviewing the projects with the municipalities.

Mr. Dwyer called for a motion for the JTC to recommend the TEC to the MPO for endorsement.

MOVED BY DAN MURPHY, CITY OF EASTHAMPTON, SECONDED BY BEN MURPHY, TOWN OF MONSON, TO RECOMMEND THE TRANSPORTATION EVALUATION CRITERIA (TEC) TO THE MPO FOR ENDORSEMENT.

Mr. Dwyer asked if District 2 could speak to their comment about recommending a change to the language. Daryl Amaral stated that he felt that “retail establishment or service establishment” might clarify more of a destination. Mr. McCaul remarked that all three could be listed including housing, employment, service facility or retail establishment. There being no other comments, Mr. Dwyer called for a vote on the motion. At this point, Mr. McCaul noted that Paul Burns from the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) had joined the meeting.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

Mr. Dwyer then moved to take up agenda item 4.

4. Annual Title VI Report Update

PVPC Senior Planner Jeffrey McCollough stated that as a recipient of federal funds, the Pioneer Valley MPO is responsible for having a comprehensive Title VI Program which assures that no one is denied access or resources based on race, color, or national origin. He noted that every year PVPC updates this program and this year there is a more comprehensive update. He then referred to the major elements as outlined in a document he shared entitled Title VI Plan Components and Annual Report Content. He noted there are Federal Highway and Federal Transit requirements. Mr. McCollough then shared a map which defined low-income populations for our region. He stated that PVPC takes all the TIP projects and looks at how funds are distributed based on low-income and minority populations to be sure resources are being allocated equitably to the entire population. Mr. McCollough noted that PVPC created a Title VI web page, <http://PVMPO.PVPC.org/civil-rights-title-vi/>. He pointed out that when using the data, it is important to be aware that state and federal definitions for low-income and minority will be different from PVPC’s definitions.

Mr. Dwyer asked for a motion to recommend that the MPO release this report for public review.

MOVED BY DAN MURPHY, CITY OF EASTHAMPTON, SECONDED BY BEN MURPHY, TOWN OF MONSON, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION (MPO) RELEASE THE ANNUAL TITLE VI REPORT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

Mr. Dwyer then moved to take up agenda item 5.

5. FFY 2023-2027 TIP

Mr. McCaul stated that he is looking for a recommendation from the JTC for the MPO to release the proposed amendment to the FFY 2023-2027 TIP for the required 21-day review and comment period. He noted that the major changes are on the Transit side, which include: changing the project description from Northampton Maintenance Building Renovation to UMass Transit Maintenance Building Renovation; increasing funding for PVTA (5339) Bus and Bus Facility from \$3,600,000 to \$11,800,000; and, increasing (5339 Low/No) funding for electrical power upgrades – fleet electrification from the general line item of \$32,300,000 to the approved award of \$55,700,000.

Mr. McCaul stated that the second part of the proposed amendment is to increase Statewide HSIP funding for Springfield Project #608565 from \$6,766,702 to \$9,086,046, due to cost increases. In response to a question from Mr. Dwyer, Mr. McCaul stated that on the transit side, this is all new funding. He explained that the money was anticipated but the actual amounts were not known until the awards were put out. As regards the statewide project in Springfield, he noted that the state has allocated additional funding for this project. Mr. McCaul confirmed that at this point the TIP is not being amended to take money from another project.

Mr. Dwyer asked for a motion to recommend that the MPO release this document for public review.

MOVED BY PAUL BURNS, PVTA, SECONDED BY BETSY JOHNSON, WALK/BIKE SPRINGFIELD, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE MPO RELEASE THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE FFY2023-2027 TIP FOR THE 21-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT PERIOD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY FOLLOWING A ROLL CALL VOTE.

Mr. Dwyer then moved to take up agenda item 6.

6. FFY 2024 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) - Schedule

PVPC Principal Planner Gary Roux reviewed the FFY 2024 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) schedule, noting that outreach has been completed, including the focus groups, and PVPC is currently in the process of developing and summarizing the information to get a sense of how to use the content to adjust the vision and goals of the draft plan. He anticipated having a website link for the RTP prior to the January JTC meeting, and PVPC will continue to develop chapters and have content available for review prior to the actual draft being released in June. Mr. Roux then provided a summary of the Focus Group Polls. He noted that once he has the complete financial information, he will bring this back to the JTC to discuss. Mr. Roux then reviewed a slide outlining the chapters that PVPC anticipates developing which include Introductory Chapters, Public Participation, Existing Conditions, System Performance, and Conformity. He expected to have Chapters 1 and 2 available in draft form sometime in January.

There being no questions, Mr. Dwyer moved to take up agenda item 7.

7. Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (PVMPO) – Federal Certification Review Update

Mr. Roux stated that every four years the PVMPO's planning process is certified by Federal Highway and Federal Transit and per their request, PVPC has made available a lot of information on current reports and processes. Mr. Roux stated that a formal in person/hybrid review is currently scheduled for February 1st and once PVPC receives the agenda, it will be made available. He noted that there is a required public meeting component which is expected to take place after the February MPO meeting. He noted that PVPC will continue to provide updates on this process, and there will be a discussion about the findings once the review has been completed and a report has been issued.

Mr. Dwyer moved to take up agenda item 8.

8. PVMPO FFY 2024-2028 Performance Measures - Timeline

Mr. Roux stated that Performance Measures began a few years ago as part of the MAP-21 Legislation and they have continued under the FAST Act and the current Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). He noted that this requires that states and MPOs develop performance targets in three categories: PM1 Safety Measures; PM2 Pavement Bridge Performance Measures; and PM3 System Performance Measures. He stated that PM1 targets are set annually and PM2, PM3 targets are set every 2-4 years. Mr. Roux noted that as an MPO, we have chosen to adopt the state targets given that MassDOT takes care of the reporting.

Mr. Roux reviewed the PM1 Safety Performance Measures. He noted that PVPC received information on the updated targets for 2023 from MassDOT and there will be a presentation at the January JTC meeting. He then reviewed the PM2 measures required by State DOTs and MPOs, and he talked about the required PM3 measures including Reliability, Congestion, and Emissions. Finally, he shared the 2024-2028 STIP Performance Measures Timeline. Mr. Roux expected to receive information from MassDOT which he will bring to the JTC and MPO as it is available, adding that the safety information will be available at the January JTC meeting. Mr. Dwyer asked if all the Massachusetts MPOs adopt the state criteria. Chris Klem, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning, stated that he believed that is correct.

Mr. Dwyer moved to take up agenda item 9.

9. Draft FFY 2024-2028 TIP Development Schedule

Mr. McCaul shared a draft of the 2024-2028 Development Schedule for the TIP and the UPWP which he noted is based on the schedule that MassDOT provided. He then reviewed each of the proposed goals from January 11 through May 23, 2023. Mr. McCaul pointed out that MassDOT TIP Days is scheduled for February 7th and 8th and a TIP Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for February 9th to review updated TEC forms. He asked JTC members to put those dates on their calendars. He noted that in February the full JTC meeting will take place on the third Wednesday, which is February 15th, and tentatively following that meeting, the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration will hold a public hearing on the PVMPO Federal Certification Review. Mr. McCaul stated that he will send out the draft schedule following today's JTC meeting.

There being no questions, Mr. Dwyer moved to take up agenda item 10.

10. Other Business

Betsy Johnson commented that MassDOT is requiring a full environmental review for several projects including the X Project in Springfield. She pointed out that this is not budgeted into the project and will potentially cause delay. She asked if MassDOT is aware of the full impact on the local communities. Ms. Johnson stated that this requirement could penalize environmental justice communities, noting that the X project will not stay on schedule and may not happen. Mr. Roux explained that there is a new regulation in Massachusetts that enhances environmental justice outreach for any project that must go through the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) process and because the Springfield X Project is within a certain radius of an environmental justice population, it is required to do an environmental impact report. He pointed out that we had changed our TEC earlier this year to address scoring as part of the environmental review process to give points for projects as they go through stages of the process. Mr. Roux noted that PVPC shared concerns with MEPA about the potential impacts. Ms. Johnson asked if there could be a presentation of the projects being impacted. Mr. Roux suggested that PVPC could give an update at the February JTC meeting.

11. Adjourn

There being no further business to conduct, Mr. Dwyer called for a motion to adjourn.

MOVED BY CARMEN ROSADO, STRAVOS, SECONDED BY BEN MURPHY, TOWN OF MONSON, TO ADJOURN THE DECEMBER 14, 2022 JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (JTC) MEETING. THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:59 A.M. WITHOUT OBJECTION.

Relevant documents distributed at this December 14, 2022 JTC meeting:

- Joint Transportation Committee December 14, 2022 Meeting Agenda
- Minutes of the November 9, 2022 Joint Transportation Committee Meeting