











A scenic view of a river with autumn foliage reflected in the water, and a rocky foreground. The text is centered over the image.

**2011
Major Accomplishments
of the
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission**



Top Ten Resolves for 2011

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 Assist the Commonwealth and its partners to begin the \$72.8 million effort to rebuild our region's north-south Knowledge Corridor rail line from Springfield to the Vermont line beginning in 2011. Correspondingly, help MassDOT to launch a comprehensive feasibility study aimed at revitalizing the east-west "Inland Route" to allow intercity rail services connecting Boston, Worcester, and Springfield.
- 
 Co-chair and contribute to a special Innovation District Task Force responsible for developing a comprehensive, action-focused strategy that allows Holyoke and the region to leverage the economic development and job creation potential created by Holyoke's Green High Performance Computing Center to be developed by a higher education consortium comprised of MIT, Harvard, University of Massachusetts, Northeastern, and Boston University.
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 In collaboration with the Capitol Region Council of Governments based in Hartford, plus numerous other partners, launch the first phase of a three-year-long, bi-state project focusing on the Knowledge Corridor and integrating this interstate region's combined assets to achieve sustainable development policies and practices for its over 1.7 million residents. Begin development of a new online product to communicate achievements.
- 
 Complete and secure final approval of a comprehensive overhaul and updating of the 2007 version of the Pioneer Valley's federally mandated Regional Transportation Plan consistent with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations including new greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for 2020. Pursue in concert with member cities and towns alternative local transportation options that reduce single occupant vehicle trips and boost public transit modes and ridership.
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 Begin the first of a multi-year effort designed to receive, compile, and report on the results of the 2010 Federal Census as these data sets apply to the Pioneer Valley region and its 43 member cities and towns. Disseminate the results of the 2010 U.S. Census data through various means including data digests, informational forums, media releases, website postings, etc.
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 Under the auspices of the Plan for Progress, launch the "Leadership Pioneer Valley" initiative in 2011 as a region-wide leadership development program intended to develop and connect an expanding supply of leaders from throughout the Pioneer Valley and which fosters the skills, collaborative mind-set, and deep commitment that are essential to maintain a vibrant and healthy Pioneer Valley community.

-  Continue the PVPC's concerted efforts to provide technical assistance to member cities and towns which choose to pursue and achieve formal designation by the Commonwealth as "Green Communities" during the 2011 calendar year with at least 8 to 10 PVPC communities targeted for this PVPC support and assistance.
-  Document the protection and management of green space in the Pioneer Valley Region through the updating of the Valley Vision 2 regional land use plan. Provide information to member communities on land conservation funding options and available land use techniques that can help achieve established goals for the region.
-  Work in concert with the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) and affected PVPC member cities and towns on a three-year effort designed to plan, develop, and deploy affordable, high-speed, and reliable Internet services in 123 Massachusetts communities which are either not served or are significantly under-served, by high-speed broadband service using a middle mile network approach.
-  Work with both the Congressional delegation in Washington, as well as the Massachusetts Legislature and Governor Patrick, to shape and advance legislative initiatives at the federal or state level that support and/or benefit the Pioneer Valley and its member communities and people. Key areas of emphasis in 2011 include transportation funding, economic development/job creation, climate change, renewal energy, shared regional services, and zoning reform, among many others.



We're Helping Pioneer Valley Communities to Recover, Rebuild, and Renew Their Post-Tornado Futures



ORGANICS RECYCLING
In the Pioneer Valley

INTERESTED IN DIVERTING YOUR ORGANIC WASTE MATERIALS FOR COMPOSTING? OUR REGION-WIDE PROGRAM IS WORKING TO CONNECT THE DOTS BETWEEN FOOD WASTE GENERATORS, HAULERS AND COMPOSTING FACILITIES IN THE PIONEER VALLEY.

WHAT IS COMPOSTING?
Composting is a process by which organic waste materials originating from plant or animal sources is broken down by bacteria and other organisms and transformed into usable fertilizer products for gardening and farming.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF COMPOSTING?

- A cost effective and environmentally responsible way to dispose of your food waste
- Prevents most waste locally
- Turns food waste into finished compost products that can be used in agricultural operations
- Reduces the amount of trash you are sending to a landfill or incinerator
- Attract and retain customers with "green" products. There are many environmental benefits to composting that lead to positive public relations opportunities.

WHAT ABOUT THE "YUCK FACTOR"?

- Food waste is already waste that you are creating. The difference is that it goes into a different container.
- Well-managed programs do not attract vermin or create odors.
- We can help you start a program and provide assistance if issues arise.

WILL THIS FIT MY NEED?

- Programs can be tailored to every facility to make it work for them. We have helped to setup compost programs in schools, restaurants, supermarkets, coffee shops and food processors. We can help you.

PVTA Effective 9/12/11
RED 29
Amherst/Holyoke via Route 116

- Four roundtrips daily Mon - Thurs. Service to/from
- UMass Amherst (Haggin Hall)
 - Amherst Common (Yellow Info Booth)
 - Hampshire College (Crown Center)
 - Mt. Holyoke Stone Shuttle (Hodley Common)
 - Holyoke Transportation Center (200 Maple St)

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
Pavement Management System

Five College BUS

For Transit Information, Call 781-PVTA, or www.pvta.com

Overview

During 2011, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission undertook numerous projects and tasks on behalf of its 43 member communities and the region as a whole. As these work activities have significantly influenced our Valley's future economic prosperity, they have also protected its character and natural resources. These major accomplishments are highlighted in this report.

Increasingly, the commission engages in work projects that are interdisciplinary and collaborative, drawing upon the contributions of staff across the spectrum of planning and related areas of expertise. Such projects are listed under the subject categories that most closely define them.

Transportation

Worked in cooperation with federal, state, and local officials to develop and amend the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Pioneer Metropolitan Planning organization. This fiscally constrained document schedules all transportation improvement projects, defines funding sources, and lists regional project priorities. PVPC staff worked in consultation with local cities and towns to update the status of all projects included on the TIP. New projects were prioritized using the regional project evaluation criteria and updated project information was added into the TIP as necessary. PVPC staff worked with the Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) and Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to review and endorse the TIP.



Performed a total of 143 counts as part of PVPC's annual traffic counting program. The data collection effort included 78 vehicle counts for the member communities, 46 vehicle counts requested by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and 19 peak hour turning movement counts.

Updated pavement distress data on the federal-aid eligible roadways in all of the 43 communities in the region. A priority listing of roadway maintenance and construction projects was developed based on a benefit/cost ratio. This existing pavement distress information on all federally aided roadways was used to report on the region's backlog of repairs.

Finalized the draft Pavement Management System Report for the City of West Springfield. Pavement distress data and key roadway geometrics were collected and analyzed to prioritize roadway preventive maintenance and reconstruction projects.

Worked in cooperation with the City of Springfield to develop a series of three flood scenarios. PVPC staff analyzed the impacts of the flood scenarios on local roadway operations and developed a series of recommendations including evacuation detours, proposed signs, and a map of roadways that could be impacted by flooding.

Completed a report titled "Telecommuting Patterns and Trends in the Pioneer Valley." In an online commuter survey, PVPC invited residents and employees to respond to a series of questions about their commutes and their experience with telecommuting.

Completed the 2012 Update to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization. The RTP outlines the direction of transportation planning and improvements for the Pioneer Valley through the year 2035. It provides the basis for all state and federally funded transportation improvement projects and planning studies. The long-range plan concentrates on both existing needs and anticipated future deficiencies in our transportation infrastructure, presents the preferred strategies to alleviate transportation problems, and creates a schedule of regionally significant projects that are financially constrained. The 2012 Update to the RTP also incorporates sustainability and climate change into the transportation planning process.

Held monthly Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) meetings for discussing current transportation issues in the region. The JTC provides a mechanism for federal, state, and local input into the regional transportation planning process. The committee composed of locally appointed representatives of the 43 municipalities in the Pioneer Valley is designed to assist the MPO in incorporating citizen participation in transportation decisions

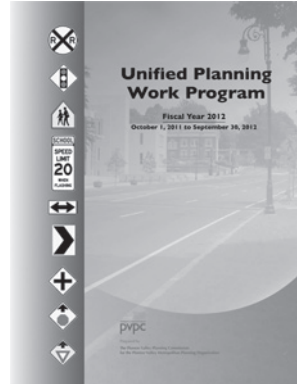
Finished Year Three and started Year Four of the four-year Travel Time data collection cycle. A data collection year is scheduled to correspond with an average academic school year beginning in early September and ending in late May. Data collection is restricted by factors including but not limited to inclement weather, federally observed holidays, and school vacations. The data is collected for each corridor on multiple days and in both directions during the a.m. and p.m. peak hours (7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.). Year Three included the collection of 21 corridors. This data will be used to update the Congestion Management Process (CMP) for the Pioneer Valley.

Began efforts to update the regional transportation model to reflect 2010 conditions. PVPC performed research on historic traffic count data for use in the development and calibration of the model.

Collected data and examined the existing conditions for three intersections along Locust Street (Route 9) in Northampton. A traffic signal warrant analysis and an exclusive left turn analysis was performed for the intersection of Locust Street (Route 9) and Hatfield Street. PVPC used the Synchro software to study the impact of different alternatives and identify improvements to improve safety and reduce congestion through the study area

Performed a build-out analysis for the Route 10 corridor for the City of Easthampton. PVPC worked in cooperation with the Easthampton Highway Business Committee to identify vacant and under-developed parcels prime for future development over the next 10 years. A hypothetical build-out scenario was proposed for the probable development, and two build-out scenarios were analyzed to estimate the potential number of new trips that could be generated. A modified gravity model was used for trip distribution, and a level-of-service analysis was performed at major intersections to determine the impact of the new trips on the existing transportation system. Based on the results, recommendations were summarized for the City to guide and achieve long-term sustainable development.

Developed the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for federal fiscal year 2012. The UPWP describes the annual technical work program, indicates regional short- and long-range transportation planning objectives, and identifies the funding sources for each work task to be undertaken through September 30, 2012.



Completed transportation and safety studies for the intersections of Federal Street (Route 9) and Bay Road in Belchertown; and Cottage Street, Robbins Road, and Industrial Avenue in Springfield. PVPC collected existing traffic operations data, analyzed the safety and congestion problems, and developed a set of short- and long-term recommendations to alleviate the situation.

Expanded the public participation planning effort for the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization. As part of larger transportation planning tasks and in recognition of changing demographics PVPC expanded outreach, cooperation, and consultation with community members including low income, minority, and limited English stakeholders. This effort resulted in several new initiatives and new partnerships including a “Fun on the Riverwalk” event that engaged residents of Springfield’s Brightwood neighborhood in health awareness and the benefits of physical activity. Coordination efforts were expanded with meetings and consultations in populations with limited English proficiency (LEP), and staff conducted interviews and expanded media outreach to new markets. Project-specific information was also provided to non-traditional partners, with staff providing one-on-one review of design plans for several roadway projects in Springfield. PVPC also worked with Holyoke representatives on sidewalk and bicycle facilities development and jointly participated in “complete streets” training with community officials and civic volunteers.

Working in cooperation with the University of Massachusetts Amherst, began a comprehensive review of the regional Environmental Justice and Limited English Proficiency definitions. A series of new indicators was developed and 2010 Census information was analyzed to assist in these definitions.

Participated in roadway safety audits (RSAs) for the cities of Agawam, Northampton, and Springfield. PVPC worked in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and local staff to identify the factors that contribute to existing safety problems and develop a series of recommendations to include as part of proposed roadway improvement projects.

Worked in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to assist in their evaluation of the transportation planning process for the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization. This evaluation is conducted every four years in order to certify the activities as the MPO for the Springfield Transportation Management Area (TMA).

Performed data collection and analyzed the intersection crash history at several locations in the City of Springfield in order to determine the eligibility of each intersection for federal funding under the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).

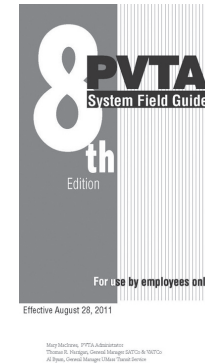
Convened meetings of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization during the 2011 calendar year. The Pioneer Valley MPO is a forum for cooperative transportation decision making and jointly develops, reviews, and endorses plans and programs that may be required by federal and state laws and regulations

Participated as part of the Project Advisory Committee to assist in the development of an intersection analysis and improvement design for the I-91 Exit 19 interchange by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. The study includes a detailed alternatives analysis and evaluation that reviews a number of build and no-build options with the goal of increasing mobility in the I-91 Interchange 19 area.

Conducted off-model Air Quality Conformity Analysis for proposed passenger rail service in the Pioneer Valley region. Calculated savings in vehicle miles travelled by anticipated system users due to the expansion of the passenger rail. PVPC also completed the necessary air quality analysis to assist in determining the eligibility of proposed transportation improvement projects under the Congestion, Mitigation, and Air Quality (CMAQ) category for several projects: Belchertown Main Street at Jabbish Street intersection improvements, Agawam bike loop, West Springfield bike path, Northampton park and ride lot, and Springfield Boston Road reconstruction.

Transit

Updated timetables, maps, customer information, and driver field guide publications for all PVTA bus routes. Oversaw production of a half-million print schedules and prepared a PDF version for Internet distribution. Produced schedules for two new Five College routes. Reduced quantity of print schedules ordered by one-third through new rolling inventory management. Produced and installed laminated schedules and informational signs along 10 bus routes and at key locations for special events, and updated system maps for terminals and transfer hubs. Produced graphic files and related products for the PVTA website.



Finalized the 2010 Pioneer Valley Non-Transit User Study, which included a regional telephone survey, intercepts at parking garages, and analysis of U.S. Census data. Key finding: an estimated 60,000 non-transit users in the region could take the bus for their most frequent trips. Top reasons for not riding the bus: need for a car during the work day, distance too great to nearest bus stop, infrequent service, and long travel times. The study offered targeted, detailed recommendations to address the non-rider concerns identified.

Conducted the 2011 PVTA Paratransit Users Survey, mailed to 3,000 PVTA senior and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) van riders (34% response rate). Preliminary findings show that more than 85% of customers say van service is "excellent or "good," 19% said it would be possible to take the fixed route service, and 71% would not be comfortable or able to use the Internet for booking van trips.

Conducted 250 unannounced service quality spot checks as part of the PVTA Mystery Rider program. The program expanded to include service animal testing. This also included 50 observations of paratransit van services.

Performed 1,200 field observations of PVTA bus routes for an on-time performance monitoring program and produced analysis reports.

Managed and facilitated a PVTA public involvement program. Revised the format for quarterly Bus Rider Forums to open house-style events held at major transit hubs, increasing the number of participants by at least tenfold. Attended monthly meetings of community public transportation groups in Northampton, Amherst, and Ware. Facilitated public hearings for the discontinuation of the Belchertown shuttle.

Facilitated quarterly meetings of PVTA paratransit riders to identify and discuss concerns to ADA and senior riders. Began developing a format and membership for a new PVTA Paratransit Riders Advisory Committee to replace quarterly meetings.

Facilitated meetings and a survey for the "Try Transit Week" partnership with Springfield Community Health Partners and PVTA.

Improved effectiveness of PVTA's Limited English Proficiency outreach with identification of Russian-speaking populations. Produced and distributed Russian language customer information and schedule posters. Partnered with community-based organizations to hold bus rider trainings with recent Russian immigrants and with Spanish, Somali, and Burmese residents with limited English proficiency.



Assisted PVTA with various route planning tasks and service assistance, including on/off analysis of B7, a survey of Ware Shuttle customers and community members, geospatial analysis of paratransit trips, and inventory of Springfield bus shelter locations.

Produced a PVTA bus safety walk-through video to familiarize emergency responders with vehicle safety features, equipment, and procedures.

Updated the scope for a PVTA system-wide efficiency study and participated in preliminary meetings with transportation planning consultants.

Prepared an employee survey for Bay State Medical Center employees as part of marketing outreach for the Sumner Express.

Prepared exhibits and support materials for grant submissions to the Federal Transit Administration State of Good Repair Bus Livability and TIGGER programs for six diesel-electric hybrid 60-foot articulated buses and 10 diesel-electric hybrid 40-foot buses.

Prepared the draft PVTA Capital Improvement Program 2011-2015.

Updated PVPC's Regional Coordinated Human Services Plan and PVPC's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program and annual goal.

Brownfields

Continued the ongoing development of an area-wide plan for cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields in the West End of downtown Chicopee, as funded by a \$175,000 pilot grant (awarded in 2010) from the US Environmental Protection Agency. Initial work has included study of existing environmental, infrastructure, and market conditions in the plan area. A final plan including detailed implementation recommendations is being developed, with completion expected in early 2012.

Continued to work with private and public landowners to identify potential cleanup sites for assistance through PVPC's EPA-funded brownfields clean-up revolving loan fund. The fund provides sub-grants and low-interest loans to eligible parties to assist in the clean-up of contaminated sites with redevelopment potential. Projects completed or ongoing this year include the former Chapman Valve in the Indian Orchard section of Springfield and the former Asylum Club site in downtown Springfield. The loan fund was awarded an additional \$500,000 in supplemental EPA assistance in 2011.

Began development of a regional brownfields plan as a component of PVPC's HUD-funded Knowledge Corridor plan. The regional brownfields plan will identify those areas of the



BROWNFIELDS
pvpc REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)
Since 1998, PVPC has received funding from the US Environmental Protection Agency to operate a Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund, or RLF. Through the RLF, PVPC's aim is to offer sub-grants and/or loans to eligible parties - private, public, or non-profit - to undertake pre-approved clean-up, site remediation and related activities at eligible brownfields properties. We are often able to take on projects that are rejected or too risky by commercial lenders. Past cleanup projects have ranged in cost from under \$200,000 up to \$500,000.

What's a "Brownfield?"
EPA defines brownfields as "real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant." Examples of former sites brownfields range from former auto or abandoned gas stations to old town municipal garages.

Recipient Eligibility
Private parties, municipalities (including redevelopment authorities), and non-profits may be eligible for assistance through the RLF. All qualified entities are eligible for loans, municipalities and non-profits may also be eligible for grants. Size and/or project requirements must meet the program's qualifications throughout the period of RLF involvement.

Parties who have closed or contributed to contamination on a site are ineligible for funding assistance. Parties that have acquired a brownfield without completing proper environmental due diligence (All Appropriate Inquiries - or AAI) under one year before purchase are also generally ineligible for assistance. Exceptions include municipalities or redevelopment authorities that acquire sites through eminent domain, for public health or abandonment.

Pioneer Valley that are impacted most intensively by known and suspected brownfield sites, and will recommend resources for site assessment and cleanup in these areas. The brownfields plan is expected to be complete in late 2011 or early 2012.

Prepared an application for \$400,000 in EPA brownfield assessment grant funds targeted for key brownfields-impacted neighborhoods in the Pioneer Valley's cities and mill towns.

Organized a brownfields advisory committee to provide public and local community input to PVPC's brownfields program, including the regional brownfields plan. As part of this enhanced outreach, PVPC created an updated brownfields website at www.pvpc.org/brownfields.

Municipal Development

Facilitated over \$6.0 million in public infrastructure, public facilities, housing rehabilitation, septic system repair, planning and design, and social/public services projects in the following communities:

Blandford—Initiation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Western Pioneer Valley Regional Community Development Program. Initiation of a housing planning assessment.

Brimfield—Continued support of a sub-regional domestic violence prevention planning program under the Tri-Town Community Assistance Program. Continuation of housing rehabilitation program for eligible residents. Implementation of Hitchcock Academy barriers removal design project.

Brookfield—Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Ware River Valley Community Assistance Program.

Chester—Completion of construction of the Prospect Street drainage improvements project and initiation of the Phase III Route 20 water main replacement project. As part of the Southern Hilltowns Community Assistance Program, continuation of housing rehabilitation for eligible residents; participation in the domestic violence prevention program, adult literacy, food pantry support, supplemental case management services, and other social service programs.

Easthampton—Continuation of the housing rehabilitation program for eligible residents.

Granville—Initiation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Western Pioneer Valley Regional Community Development Program. Initiation of a housing planning assessment.

Hardwick—Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Ware River Valley Community Assistance Program. Completion of infrastructure improvements (water main replacement, sewer line rehabilitation, drainage improvements, and street/sidewalk reconstruction) to Bridge Street, Grove Court, and Railroad Lane.

Holland—Continued support of a sub-regional domestic violence prevention planning program under the Tri-Town Community Assistance Program. Continuation of housing rehabilitation program for eligible residents

Huntington—As part of the Southern Hilltowns Community Assistance Program, continuation of housing rehabilitation for eligible residents; participation in the domestic violence prevention program, adult literacy, food pantry support, supplemental case management services, and other social service programs.

Leicester—Initiation of a housing rehabilitation program for eligible residents. Completion of building improvements to Leicester Housing Authority buildings. Completion of the ADA Transition Plan and Self-Evaluation Planning Project.

Middlefield—Initiation and completion of the senior center roof design project. As part of the Southern Hilltowns Community Assistance Program, continuation of housing rehabilitation for eligible residents; oversight of domestic violence prevention planning, adult literacy, food pantry support, supplemental case management services, and other social service programs.

Monson—Completion of infrastructure improvements (water main replacement, drainage improvements, and street/sidewalk reconstruction) to Park Avenue.

Montgomery—Initiation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Western Pioneer Valley Regional Community Development Program. Initiation of a housing planning assessment.

Russell—As part of the Southern Hilltowns Community Assistance Program, continuation of housing rehabilitation for

eligible residents; oversight of domestic violence prevention planning, adult literacy, food pantry support, supplemental case management services, and other social service programs.

Southampton—Initiation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Western Pioneer Valley Regional Community Development Program. Initiation of a housing planning assessment.

Spencer—Completion of the rehabilitation of housing units under the Spencer Community Development Program.

Wales—Continued support of a sub-regional domestic violence prevention planning program under the Tri-Town Community Assistance Program. Continuation of housing rehabilitation program for eligible residents.

Ware—Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Ware River Valley Community Assistance Program. Provision of adult literacy programs and family support services. Continuation of a domestic violence prevention program. Completion of infrastructure improvements to the Pine Street neighborhood and the Memorial Field planning project. Completion of the Park Street Improvements Project.

Warren—Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Ware River Valley Community Assistance Program. Continuation of the Domestic Violence Prevention Program. Continuation of in-town literacy and adult education services under the Ware River Valley Literacy Program. Completion of the Crescent Street improvements project and the senior center expansion project.

FFY 2011 CDBG Programs—Applied for and received nearly \$4.5 million in FFY2011 Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Community Development Block Grant Funds on behalf of the towns of Huntington, Russell, Middlefield, Hardwick, Ware, Brookfield, Warren, Southwick, and South Hadley. Specific programs include:

- **FY2011 Town of Ware** (Ware River Valley Community Assistance Program): \$754,217 for housing rehabilitation (16-18 units); adult literacy and basic education.

- **FY2011 Town of Huntington** (Southern Hilltowns Community Assistance Program): \$900,000 for housing rehabilitation (two units); Pine Hill Water Improvements Project (Russell)—water main replacement and relocation to benefit the Town of Russell water service area; funding for the Hilltown Elder Network (HEN) Program to serve Russell, Middlefield, and Huntington seniors; continuation of the Hilltown Social Services Project (elder services, case management, and support); continuation of the Southern Hilltowns Adult Education Center; continuation of the Huntington Food Pantry; continuation of the Southern Hilltowns Domestic Violence Services Project.

- **FY2011 Town of Ware:** \$800,000 for the Phase I Memorial Field Improvement Project—accessibility improvements and field lighting; continuation of the Ware Domestic Violence Services Program; continuation of the Family Support Services Program through Valley Human Services.

- **FY2011 Town of Warren:** \$695,545 for the Nelson Street Improvement Project—comprehensive infrastructure improvements including streets, sidewalks, water, curbing, drainage, guardrail, fencing, and streetscaping; Phase I Pleasant and Highland Street Improvements Project—design engineering for comprehensive sidewalk and street improvements; School Street Neighborhood Planning Project—comprehensive assessment and prioritization of required surface and sub-surface neighborhood improvements; continuation of the Warren Domestic Violence Services Project.

- **FY2011 Town of Southwick:** \$900,000 for the Senior Center Expansion Project—construction monies for a 1,900 square foot addition to the existing senior center; housing rehabilitation (approximately six units).

- **FY2010 Town of South Hadley:** \$406,450 for the Senior Center Improvements Project.

Housing Planning

Completed work with Ludlow and Southampton on a two-town Priority Development Fund grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development to develop Chapter 40R districts. Potential 40R districts were identified in each community and the two towns are working to send the final Chapter 40R application to the state.

Began work with the towns of Blandford, Granville, and Montgomery to develop a Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan for each town. The plans will be completed by June 2012.

Completed the Longmeadow Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan and continued work with the Longmeadow Housing Authority to implement some of the plan's top strategies.

Developed a series of maps that show the progress of Pioneer Valley municipalities in implementing affordable housing strategies. More than 200 copies of each map have been printed for distribution to municipalities throughout the region.

Began work on the development of a Regional Housing Plan, an element plan of the larger bi-state Sustainable Knowledge Corridor Project. The Regional Housing Plan will include a housing needs assessment and a strategic action plan.

Housing Rehabilitation and Development

Administered and implemented nearly \$2.0 million in Department of Housing and Community Development Community Development Fund housing rehabilitation and septic system improvements in the towns of Ware, Warren, Hardwick, Brookfield, Russell, Middlefield, Huntington, Chester, Southampton, Granville, Montgomery, Blandford, Brimfield, Holland, Wales, Easthampton, Leicester, and Spencer.

Continued to serve as the Region 1 service provider under the commonwealth's Home Modifications Loan Program for those with disabilities to administer and implement over \$500,000 in loan funds to remove private property architectural, and other health barriers in nearly 100 western Massachusetts communities. Received an additional \$200,000 in funding from the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation towards additional modification projects.

Administered and implemented nearly \$100,000 of Easthampton Community Preservation Act funds for housing rehabilitation improvements for eligible residents.

Administered and implemented approximately \$36,000 in USDA Housing Preservation Grant funds for gap filler housing rehabilitation assistance for residents in rural areas.

A 15-year, deferred payment and interest free loan for homeowners.
If you live in your home for 15 years, you owe nothing.



Qualified rental units are also eligible for either deferred payments or 0% interest loans.

Funding for this brochure is made possible from the Department of Housing & Community Development, Massachusetts Community Development Block Grant Program.

Social Services

Ware—Implemented domestic violence prevention project and coordinated the Ware Domestic Violence Task Force. Major projects included provision of direct services for victims including a weekly support group and advocacy services; development and implementation of new police protocol whereby police review all domestic violence calls weekly and contact a local advocate, who then contacts victims to offer support as part of an extended police response; implementation of an extensive healthy relationship prevention campaign at Ware High School; filming and broadcasting of a show and discussion on local TV regarding teen dating violence; service coordination of Ware based agencies through monthly Task Force meetings; and ongoing implementation of an extensive community education and outreach campaign through use of newspaper, town fairs, farmer's markets, and back-to-school nights.

Chester/Huntington—Implemented domestic violence prevention project and coordinated the Southern Hilltown Domestic Violence Task Force. Major projects included support of a task force-sponsored community-based non-profit agency that provides a local domestic violence advocate to follow up on police calls; development and support of a student-led group to provide leadership on healthy relationships and anti-bullying projects at Gateway High School including a two-day training for students and staff; a series of dating violence prevention projects and presentations at Gateway Middle School including a scholarship in honor of Karen Hart and a program that allows high school students to help lead trainings for middle school students; training for local and state police departments; service coordination through a semi-annual provider networking meeting and monthly task force meetings; and community education and outreach through public service ads featuring local residents, back-to-school nights, visits to health center staff meetings, and local cable.

Brimfield/Holland/Wales—Implemented domestic violence prevention project and coordinated the Tri-Town Domestic Violence Task Force. Major projects included the fourth annual walk to raise awareness about healthy relationships and relationship abuse; educational presentations and trainings with community groups and schools; distribution of brochures and bystander ads in tri-towns and surrounding communities; and collaboration with regional schools on community projects.

Warren—Implemented domestic violence prevention project and coordinated the Warren Domestic Violence Task Force. Major projects included collaboration with Quaboag schools on presentations and anti-abuse curricula materials; development of a plan to provide family support services to children and families experiencing domestic violence through a subcontract with the local school district; implementation of contract with Valley Human Services to provide support group and counseling services for Warren residents; and distribution of brochures and other outreach material in Warren and surrounding communities.

Historic Preservation Planning

Completed more than 1,000 new digital cultural resource inventory forms for the City of Northampton.

Completed a number of National Register nominations, including the School Street Barn in Agawam, the Hampden Park Historic District in Holyoke, the Frank Howard Building in Pittsfield, Middlefield Center, and a boundary extension to the Westfield Center Historic District incorporating more than 500 properties.

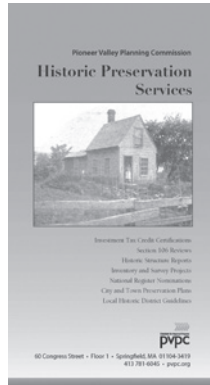
Continued the process of obtaining state and federal tax credit certification applications for two former Catholic convents, two former Catholic schools, a rectory, and a park in Holyoke.

Completed the state and federal tax credit certification applications for three buildings in Westfield.

Started Phase II of the Hadley barn and outbuilding inventory documenting about 100 barns and outbuildings, adding to this phase interior investigation of about 30 barns.

Started National Register nominations for three historic districts in Leverett.

Started a cultural resource inventory of 100 properties for Northfield.



Completed historic research and writing for Slate Memorial Library in Gill.

Took part in public meetings regarding the damage to historic properties in tornado-affected towns in the region.

Presented an historical overview of regional barns for the Winding River Land Conservancy.

Delivered a presentation on landscape preservation in Northfield to the New England Landscape Design Association in Boston.

Made a presentation on farm preservation to the Hadley Historical Society.

Conducted Section 106 reviews for Department of Housing and Community Development rehabilitation work in the towns of Ware, Leicester, Easthampton, Huntington, Chester, Middlefield, Russell, Granville, Southamptton, and Warren.

Scenic Byway Planning

Continued implementing a \$1.2 million scenic land protection program under a grant from the National Scenic Byway program for preservation efforts on the Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway. Identified a group of landowners to work with to protect important scenic land parcels along the Byway through selling agricultural preservation restrictions or conservation restrictions.

Secured two new national scenic byway grants for the Connecticut River Byway, including a grant to develop recreational trails and river access, and to update the corridor management plan. Also secured National Scenic Byway program grants to explore linking recreational trails in the Route 112 and Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway region and to establish an access drive and parking area for a newly completed trail system in the town of Lee along the Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway.

Collaborating with colleagues from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, began contracting for the Route 116 Corridor Management Plan and the Scenic Byways of Western Massachusetts marketing campaign. Both of these projects should be underway early in the coming year.

Regional Service Delivery

Hampden County Health Coalition—PVPC continued to serve as the fiscal and administrative agent for the Hampden County Health Coalition (HCHC), a group of municipal health professionals representing the 19 cities and towns in Hampden County focusing on public health emergency preparedness. Additionally, PVPC provided administrative and program oversight of county-wide Medical Reserve Corps and Special Populations Preparedness Planning consulting services. PVPC's emergency preparedness planner continued to develop emergency preparedness plans for all coalition communities; conducted discussion, communications, and exercise drills to test these plans; and presented components of the region's preparedness program throughout the region. These plans were put to the test in June of this year when a tornado ripped through Hampden County, directly affecting four coalition communities. Emergency shelters opened in six communities following the tornado, with the West Springfield shelter remaining open for 31 days. Coalition communities, in conjunction with the emergency preparedness planner and regional Medical Reserve Corps volunteers, provided round-the-clock service to these shelters and throughout the affected communities during the lengthy clean-up period after the storm. The County's emergency preparedness plans were tested again in August when flooding caused by Hurricane Irene necessitated the opening of emergency shelters in coalition communities for the second time this summer. The weather events of this past year have sparked a renewed interest in the work of this coalition, resulting in the engagement of many additional community partners in this work. In the coming year, PVPC's emergency preparedness planner will continue to work with the HCHC communities, Hampden County, and local Medical Reserve Corps coordinators and special populations consultants to reach out to these community partners and to further develop preparedness plans and community education throughout the region.

Western Massachusetts Regional Homelessness—Through PVPC's 501(c)3, the Pioneer Valley Regional Ventures Center, the commission became the administrative and fiscal agent for the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness, to aid with implementation of a \$1.1 million grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. This pilot project was designed to coordinate an innovative approach to addressing homelessness in Massachusetts by implementing a model of housing first, not shelter first. Through this funding, the Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness (the Network) was created. The Network is composed of over 50 individuals from Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin, and Berkshire Counties. The Network boasts a diverse membership, including homeless service providers, business and political leaders, university presidents, judges, and religious leaders. The Network was established to guide and oversee the work of the 11 homeless service organizations and two staff positions that were funded through this program. Although both state funding for this pilot program and PVPC's direct involvement ended in March of this year, the Network and two part-time staff persons (now supported through other funding) remain active. During the two-year pilot period supported by DHCD, 45 chronically homeless individuals were housed and 402 families were diverted or otherwise prevented from becoming homeless. In addition to this funding providing direct financial assistance to clients, the program was successful in fostering increased collaboration between state agencies and local non-profit service providers and between service providers in the region to prevent situations of housing loss. The program also created a centralized data collection system for the four counties of western Massachusetts, providing for a universal, inclusive, and accurate accounting of homeless and at-risk families and individuals throughout the area.

Environmental and Water Quality

Continued third year of work on a \$1.34 million EPA Targeted Watersheds grant for the tri-state Connecticut River Watershed Initiative. The grant, one of only 13 nationwide and the only one given in New England, includes ten major projects, from real-time water quality monitoring to stormwater management to Smart Growth tools for water protection. PVPC is managing this project with major partners including the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, Connecticut River Joint Commissions, Massachusetts Water Watch Partnership, and U.S. Geological Survey. Work has included:

- Coordinating third year of a volunteer water quality sampling program for bacteria pollution in the river and establishing a website to report results
- Working with Westfield to adopt plans for a stormwater utility
- Installing a green roof at the Holyoke River Access Center
- Working with property owners in South Hadley and Holyoke to disconnect roof downspouts and sump pumps from sewer systems
- Developing toolkit of Smart Growth strategies for public water supply protection
- Constructing LID best management practices for agricultural runoff at the UMass Farm

Continued to coordinate regular meetings and activities of the Connecticut River Clean-up Committee, including work to administer grants for clean-up of combined sewer overflows on the Connecticut River, which now total over \$20 million.

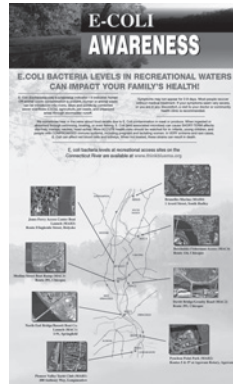
Continued work on a NOAA federal grant-funded project to develop a blueprint for bi-state cooperation on the lower Connecticut River in Massachusetts and Connecticut, including:

- Developing an intergovernmental compact to establish a new bi-state Lower Connecticut River Partnership
- Creating and administering a small grants program of over a dozen grants to improve recreational access and water quality in the Connecticut River
- Establishing a web-based riverfront recreation access mapping system for Massachusetts and Connecticut

Began work on a Green Infrastructure Plan, which is an element plan of the larger bi-state Sustainable Knowledge Corridor Project. The Green Infrastructure Plan seeks to improve water quality in the region's rivers and streams while also creating more appealing streets and neighborhoods throughout the region. The plan, which will be informed by an advisory committee as well as an important public process, will identify potential locations for introducing absorptive green spaces in urbanized locations to capture stormwater near where it falls. The plan will also identify municipal and state policies that can help promote green infrastructure.

Continued a fourth year of *E. coli* bacteria monitoring along the main stem of the Connecticut River at recreational access locations. Also performed bacteria monitoring and source tracking on five tributaries to the Connecticut River.

Continued to facilitate the Barnes Aquifer Protection Advisory Committee (BAPAC) and to comment on Developments of Regional Impact over the aquifer's Zone II recharge area in Westfield, Southampton, Holyoke, Easthampton, and Northampton.



Hired by the Belchertown Land Trust, PVPC identified funding sources for dam repair and dam removal as part of the effort to explore future alternatives for the Upper Bondsville Dam, which is rated by the state as a significant hazard and in poor condition. The Upper Bondsville Dam is located between Belchertown and Palmer on the Swift River and the impoundment created by the dam stretches into the Town of Ware.

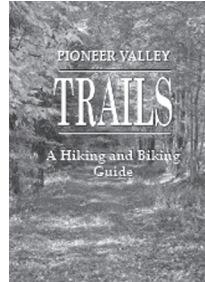
Continued the Think Blue public education campaign about stormwater pollution in the 11 towns and cities participating in the Connecticut River Stormwater Committee. Received a TURI Grant to develop organic land care program demonstration projects at municipal parks in Holyoke, Ludlow, Agawam, Northampton, and Longmeadow.

Greenways, Trails, and River Protection

Coordinated the development of 100 percent design and engineering plans for the 3.3-mile Agawam Bikeway Loop project, which is linked to the Connecticut River Walk.

Coordinated the completion of 100 percent design and engineering plans for the two-mile West Springfield segment of the Connecticut River Walk and Bikeway project.

Completed work on a new “Pioneer Valley Trails” regional trails map and hiking guide, which illustrates and describes hiking and biking trails across the Pioneer Valley region. This map was distributed free of charge to communities and interest groups across the region. It has subsequently made available for sale to the general public through retail outlets across the region, and has been extremely popular.



Worked with the Massachusetts Highway Department and Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game to resolve funding and right-of-way issues in order to seek re-advertising of the construction phase of Keystone Arch Bridges restoration in Middlefield, Becket, and Chester.

Worked with Chicopee and Massachusetts Department of Transportation to seek to restore funding to the Connecticut Riverwalk and Chicopee Riverwalk projects.

Coordinated the establishment of a regional Connecticut Riverwalk Advisory Committee, with representatives from Agawam, Chicopee, Holyoke, Springfield, and West Springfield.

Sustainability, Clean Energy, and Climate Action

Initiated work on the new \$4.2 million bi-state Knowledge Corridor Sustainable Communities project in cooperation with the Capitol Region Council of Governments in Hartford, Connecticut. The three-year project includes element plans for green infrastructure, housing, climate action, workforce development, food security, environment, land use, and transportation. The project also includes three catalytic projects, including Depot Square revitalization in Holyoke, Court Square redevelopment in Springfield, and the Connecticut Riverwalk in Chicopee.

Continued work to implement the Pioneer Valley Clean Energy plan, including providing planning assistance to 11 member municipalities to develop action plans to achieve designation as Green Communities. Four of 11 achieved certification, bringing the region to a total of 11 certified Green Communities out of 74 statewide, or 15 percent.

Secured work to serve as a local implementer and program manager for a U.S. Department of Energy-funded pilot project to catalyze the home energy efficiency market in Springfield and seven surrounding communities: Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, Palmer, Belchertown, Monson, Willbraham, and Hampden.

Assisted with tornado recovery focused on energy efficient rebuilding, providing local outreach for the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources.

Assisted the Town of Ludlow with development of a by-right bylaw for solar photovoltaic energy generation.

Continued development of a new Climate Change Toolkit on local strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and climate change impacts.



Continued to staff the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network www.pvsustain.org, a self-sustaining membership organization whose members envision a sustainable, just, and regenerative future for our region. Served as fiscal agent for the Pioneer Valley Transition Towns movement.

Master Planning and Zoning

Completed "Valley Vision Update," the third edition of the regional land use plan for the region. Worked with all Pioneer Valley communities to seek endorsement of the plan through an intergovernmental compact. Continued the implementation phase of Valley Vision and provided free technical assistance to help implement Smart Growth strategies in communities.

Continued to coordinate meetings of the Valley Development Council, the implementation committee for Valley Vision. Over the past year, the VDC has begun work on the Land Use Element for the Sustainable Knowledge Corridor project.

Worked with the Town of Worthington to successfully adopt the new Green Development Bylaw project, funded by the Highland Communities Initiative, including coordination of a communications strategy developed by Action Media, Inc.

Continued development of new Green Development Performance Standards bylaws with Northampton, Palmer, and Easthampton. This new bylaw will allow a community to integrate additional standards for environmental protection and address climate change concerns through a site plan review or special permit process.

Continued work on PVPC's Planning Board Assistance program, which is designed to offer part-time "town planner" services for communities without professional planning staff on a fee-for-service basis. Worked with the Hadley Planning Board for the seventh year to provide part-time town planner services under this program. Tasks completed for Hadley include Special Permit zoning language, research on LED lighting standards, revised signage bylaw, and development of an Open Space Residential Development bylaw with the Long Range Planning Committee.

Continued work with the Town of Ludlow to develop a comprehensive Master Plan to provide much-needed guidance on future development. The final draft of the plan is complete and under review by the Planning Board for the plan adoption process. The Town last completed a Master Plan in 1964.

Continue to work with the Town of Southampton to develop a comprehensive Master Plan to provide guidance on future development. The second phase of work focused on drafting chapters of the plan.

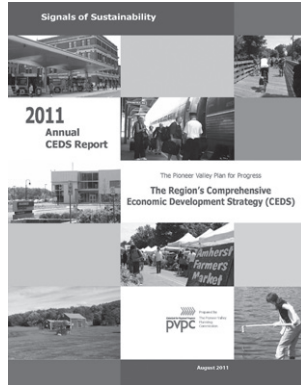
Held a visioning workshop for the Town of Monson to give residents the opportunity to express their vision for future rebuilding efforts for the downtown and neighborhoods affected by the June 1st tornado.

Community Design and Predevelopment Services

Continued outreach to communities in the Community Design and Predevelopment Services program to help them advance the implementation of a broad array of smart growth projects. Services offered in this area include site planning and design, green site design and building, community outreach, project bidding, financial planning, and grant writing. Potential projects include parks, conservation areas, affordable housing communities, commercial corridors, streetscapes, focal areas within comprehensive master plans, mixed-use developments, cluster subdivisions with open space protection, reuse of brownfields, transit-oriented developments, and other projects that strengthen and direct development toward existing communities and pursue innovative green development strategies.

Economic Development

Conducted the 2011 annual update of the Plan for Progress, the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which provides the most recent economic data and priority-ranked listing of potential projects for the region. Two of the projects listed in the 2011 CEDS, the Caring Health Center and the Holyoke Utility Upgrade, were awarded funds by the EDA this year. A new component of the report for 2011 included a detailed discussion of regional industry clusters.



Produced a descriptive brochure to accompany the CEDS and provide a snapshot and summary of economic initiatives in the region. The six-page color brochure presents a "report card" of progress in the Pioneer Valley and a list of major committed projects of regional significance, from transportation to redevelopment and new construction. Both the full report and brochure are available online at www.pvpc.org under "Core Plans."

Coordinated and co-facilitated regular meetings of the Plan for Progress Coordinating Council. This group represents the private, civic, and public sectors in the Pioneer Valley and oversees the implementation of the Plan for Progress.

Continued to convene and ultimately completed the mission of a Holyoke Innovation District Design and Development Task Force to leverage economic opportunities that will result

from the construction of a Green High Performance Computing Center (GHPCC) in downtown Holyoke by a university consortium of UMass, MIT, Boston University, Northeastern, and Harvard. Worked closely with the City of Holyoke, University Consortium representatives, GHPCC partners Cisco Systems and EMC, the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED), and consultants HDR, Inc. to develop an Innovation District in Holyoke that incorporates and connects with community initiatives and serves as a catalyst for economic growth in the city and the region. A set of final strategies with designated lead implementers was developed to pursue these goals and is available at www.InnovateHolyoke.com.

Continue to manage the website www.InnovateHolyoke.com, posting regular news updates about the GHPCC, the Innovation District Task Force, Cisco's Smart+Connected Cities Initiative, and other information about the city of Holyoke.

Developed and launched Leadership Pioneer Valley (LPV), a new regional leadership program for the 69 communities and nearly 700,000 residents of Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties. Hired a full-time program director, Lora Wondolowski, who worked with the established LPV steering committee of 25 leaders from throughout the Valley to launch the program. The program was created to fill a critical need for an emerging leadership development program encompassing the entire region and representing its diverse populations. Marketed LPV through media coverage and the website www.leadershippv.org to reach potential participants and their employers, culminating in the acceptance of 44 participants for the inaugural class. Daylong trainings will be held monthly until June 2012. The LPV curriculum was developed in consultation with the directors of Leadership Greater Hartford, a successful program with a 30-year history.

Assisted in obtaining funding for the Regional Sustainable Communities Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, including support for Leadership Pioneer Valley and for a regional workforce development plan.

Obtained \$50,000 in U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding for tornado recovery planning efforts in affected communities in the Greater Springfield area, including visioning, master planning, zoning, and redevelopment project oversight. Assisted the City of Springfield in obtaining \$250,000 of EDA funding for a comprehensive master planning effort for rebuilding the devastated areas.

Provided assistance to the cities of Springfield, Holyoke, Chicopee, Ludlow, and Northampton in support of their highest priority projects submitted for inclusion in the 2011 CEDS for potential EDA funding.

Participated in the new BusinessWest-sponsored Western Massachusetts Business Expo (formerly the Business Market Show) at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, a conference and exhibition that featured 160 exhibitors, guest speakers, and free business seminars. The PVPC booth featured major publications and information on recent projects, reports, and technical support provided by PVPC to the public and the business community.

Continued to serve on the Council of the Berkshire-Pioneer Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc., which operates the Massachusetts Farm Energy Program and Massachusetts Forest Stewardship Program.

Secured renewal of a planning grant from the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) to provide ongoing logistical and technical support to the Pioneer Valley's EDA-designated Economic Development District, including implementation of the Plan for Progress and other region-wide economic planning activities.

Regional Information & Policy Center

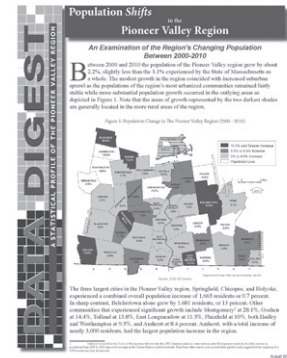
Responded to about 50 requests for information or data coming from the media, other government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector.

Completed analysis, writing, and publication of a topical data digest report on the shifts in population trends in the Pioneer Valley region based on the newly released 2010 Census data. The report, which explores geographic concentrations of population growth and density, race, and ethnicity, is available on PVPC's website.

Completed analysis, writing, and publishing of a topical data digest report on the shifts in housing trends in the Pioneer Valley region based on the newly released 2010 Census data. The report explored geographic concentrations of housing growth, occupancy and ownership status, and seasonal housing in the region.

Completed work on a data digest report examining the effects of the Community Preservation Act on communities in the region.

Completed work on a data digest report examining the economic impact of human, social, and health service organizations in the region in collaboration with the Human Service Forum.



Hosted two trainings focused on data availability and access through the U.S. Census Bureau website. These sessions were attended widely by local municipal officials, economic and community development professionals, and nonprofit organization staff throughout the region.

Participated in various follow-up evaluation tasks with the Massachusetts Census Equity Fund to examine the strengths and weaknesses of 2010 Census outreach efforts and the approach of the U.S. Census Bureau.

Revised and updated the socio-economic profile chapter for the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) annual report, along with updates about the Plan for Progress region-wide indicators accountability system.

Actively participated in a coalition of regional leaders dubbed the Cradle to Careers Design Team to develop a "Promise Neighborhoods" model program to improve education and economic outcomes for children and families in Springfield through a place-based, data driven, wrap-around services approach. This group submitted a "Promise Neighborhoods" grant application in September and will continue planning towards implementation regardless of award.

Assisted the Holyoke Youth Task Force with mapping and analyzing health and safety issues related to the location of liquor stores and public schools.

Conducted revisions of the State of the Region database and completed annual updates for indicators in the database, which includes economic, social, health, and demographic information for municipalities, counties, and the region annually. Municipal profiles, which were updated with 2010 Census data (among other sources), can be found at http://pvpc.org/resource_center/data-stats.shtml.

Worked with a group of regional foundations to produce a new update of the State of the People report which focuses on the health and well-being of the people in Pioneer Valley. Meetings with this group were held extensively throughout the summer. The published report is expected in the spring of 2012 and will be followed by a companion online version of

the data, which will be updated annually.

Worked with key staff at the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County and the Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts to develop a new partnership, Regional Organizations' Advanced Data Sharing (ROADS). The first task of this partnership will be to create a shared database to allow all partners to make use of each others' data, creating consistency and efficiency across organizations. Future projects will explore shared data licenses, additional partners, and joint economic development publications. A consultant has been engaged to create the online data portal required for this first task.

Participated in a special data and research workgroup through the United Way of Pioneer Valley and worked extensively on the production of an annual UWPV data report.

Led a team of staff from PVPC and Capitol Regional Council of Governments to develop a logo and website for the Sustainable Knowledge Corridor initiative. The website will be the public face of the Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Initiative in this region and will include a sustainable data report card, which is currently being developed.

Worked on initial implementation of Metroquest, a new online civic engagement tool purchased by PVPC in collaboration with the Capitol Region Council of Governments as a shared three-year license. This tool allows citizens to weigh competing priorities and share their opinions about development priorities in the region. The tool will be used first for the Sustainable Knowledge Corridor project, funded by the HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative, but will be integrated into many other planning and development projects in the future.

Continued to provide technical assistance and data support needs to all departments of PVPC.

Community Preservation Act Planning Assistance

Continued outreach to communities in the Community Preservation Act Planning Assistance program to help municipalities effectively use their CPA dollars to address community housing needs, protect open space, create recreation opportunities, and preserve historic resources. Services include inventories and assessments, development of plans, site selection and design, selection of consultants and contractors, development of zoning bylaws, and grant writing. PVPC can also assist with implementation of local recreation, housing, and historic preservation programs. Potential projects include trail wayfinding systems, preservation restrictions and easements, development of new recreation areas, affordable housing trusts, housing rehabilitation programs, historic register designations, historic tax credits, sign guidelines, and historic district zoning and design guidelines.

Continued work with the Town of Wilbraham to develop a watershed management plan for Sawmill Stream, a small stream system that encompasses two tributaries and two ponds in a thickly settled residential area. PVPC's work has entailed mapping existing conditions, conducting a shoreline surveys, and water quality monitoring.

Continued work with the Town of East Longmeadow to inventory and evaluate the opportunities of a 283-acre site for accommodating the Town's needs for passive recreation and trails, active recreation facilities, and affordable senior housing. Funded by East Longmeadow's Community Preservation Act, PVPC's work has included producing maps that show the opportunities and constraints of the site, concept plan alternatives, and recommendations for moving forward.

GIS Mapping and Graphics

Created a number of new video productions for the PVTA and the Holyoke Innovation District. Videos included a virtual tour of PVTA's new Gillig buses for use by first responders during emergency situations and US Census Bureau training sessions on how to use certain US Census data sets. Videos for public consumption are available for viewing on PVPC's YouTube channel.



In the aftermath of several federally declared disasters during 2011, prepared a number of GIS and photo-based maps for communities to use in post-disaster recovery operations. Maps were prepared for communities affected by the tornado, hurricane flooding, and the severe winter storm this past October.

Designed and published numerous documents, including the Unified Transportation Work Program, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy update, Data Digests, community development applications, traffic counts, traffic safety and transportation studies, MARPA and PVPC information kits, and planning services brochures, among others.

Completed several products for the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA). Updated the PVTA System Field Guide for bus operators, revised and reprinted all PVTA summer and fall route schedules, revised fixed-transit routes coverage for GIS, and prepared all PVTA route schedules for installation on PVTA's website. Completed a series of bus schedule signs for posting at select bus stops and shelters.

Collaborated with MassGIS, Massachusetts' regional planning agencies, and the Western Massachusetts GIS users group to promote the use of geographic information system technology among Pioneer Valley communities through coordination of users group workshops, distribution of digital spatial data, and provision of technical support.

Represented regional planning agencies on the Massachusetts Geographic Information Council, which is charged with working on ways to strengthen GIS activities throughout the commonwealth.

Provided mapping and spatial analysis for PVPC projects, including pre-disaster mitigation, renewable energy strategies, pavement management and parking studies, corridor management, scenic byway, traffic analysis, accident locations, transit service, environmental justice and ADA compliance, pedestrian and bicycle system development, best management practices for water supply and watersheds, municipal open space plans, and identification of subregional 40R Smart Growth districts. Findings were integrated into maps and analytical models to determine logical possibilities for future development, protection of resources, and delivery of services across our regional landscape.

Provided mapping, GIS, publication design, and publishing services to Pioneer Valley region communities, businesses, and organizations.

Communication and Outreach

Continued to promote PVPC as "catalyst for regional progress" via display advertising in *CommonWealth* magazine, a quarterly publication produced by MassINC with a statewide policymaker readership, as well as through local business advertising in the *Affiliated Chambers of Commerce of Greater Springfield* annual membership directory and community resource guide, the *Greater Springfield Convention and Visitors' Bureau* annual *Pioneer Valley Visitors' Guide*, and *BusinessWest's* annual resource guide, among others.



Provided public outreach and publicity support for PVPC projects and events such as the *Plan for Progress*; *Leadership Pioneer Valley*; *brownfields revitalization*; *annual Bike Week*; *hazard mitigation planning*; *Connecticut River clean-up and monitoring efforts*; *grant awards*; *solicitation of public input on transportation, community, and visioning plans*; *staff awards and recognition*; and *release of significant reports, maps, and other products*.

Created and distributed an updated *Writing and Style Guide* for PVPC staff, with a focus on specific in-house usage issues and questions, to ensure consistency of expression in documents, letters, and electronic communications. Worked with staff to maintain and improve internal quality control standards and procedures for written products and media contact.

Working with staff in PVPC's Graphics section, began to integrate social media channels into communication and outreach efforts. Continued to provide updates to the PVPC website through events listings, project announcements, public input solicitation, and other information.

Worked to enhance PVPC staff communication skills through in-house training, beginning with a seminar focusing on public speaking and presented by a professional trainer.

Provided writing, editing, and style services in support of numerous PVPC reports, plans, studies, publications, and other products, such as newspaper guest columns, informational and marketing copy, and specialized language and usage applications.

Provided creative and production services and support for various PVPC and partner projects and initiatives.

Continued to produce the Regional Reporter, PVPC's electronically distributed quarterly newsletter of agency news, events, meetings, information, and announcements.

Updated, produced, and distributed PVPC's information kit to media, public officials, civic leaders, member communities, and the general public. Updated, produced, and distributed the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies (MARPA) information kit to provide concise information about the association as a whole, as well as its 13 individual member regional planning agencies.

Expanded outreach efforts to local media to secure coverage of significant planning-related events, initiatives, projects, and partnerships.

Produced PVPC's 49th annual meeting in Springfield at the Lyman and Merrie Wood Museum of Springfield History at the Springfield Museums. This year's meeting highlighted innovation and invention in the Pioneer Valley during the Industrial Revolution, many examples of which are featured in the museum. Guest speaker Guy McLain, Director of History at the Springfield Museums, also conducted a guided tour of the museum.

District Local Technical Assistance

PVPC received \$166,000 in District Local Technical Assistance funding in FY11 through the state Legislature, with support of the governor. This funding allowed PVPC to offer free technical assistance to all member municipalities in two categories: Sustainable Development and Municipal Partnerships.

Under the Sustainable Development program, PVPC provided local technical assistance to 10 communities on 12 projects:

- Conducted a comprehensive zoning review for the Town of Agawam
- Conducted visioning workshops on the Route 47 Scenic Byway for the Towns of Hadley and South Hadley
- Developed new Special Permit and Site Plan Review bylaws for the Town of Holland
- Updated existing Open Space and Recreation Plans for the Towns of Longmeadow and Goshen
- Developed a new solar bylaw for the Town of Ludlow
- Researched and developed standards for Low Impact Development and Shared Streets for the City of Northampton
- Drafted an Economic Development chapter for the Town of Southampton
- Held multiple visioning workshops and drafted zoning recommendations for the Village Centers in Williamsburg

Under the Municipal Partnerships program, PVPC coordinated six regional projects to save communities money through regionalizing service delivery:

- Electronic Town/City Hall (Web-Based Permit Tracking): Collaborated with 22 interested cities and towns to improve efficiency and service, reduce costs, and save

businesses and residents time, money, and fuel through a regional initiative to secure services to develop electronic town/city hall functionality for participating municipalities.

- Shared Conservation Agent: Undertook a detailed analysis to determine if a regional conservation services officer can be an effective option for providing improved conservation services to the region's communities and land trusts, resulting in cost savings.
- Strategic Regional Solid Waste Management Assessment: Conducted a strategic assessment of current waste management practices, needs, issues and solutions and developed short-term and long-term action plans.
- Regional Highway Department / Stormwater Services: Worked with communities to determine services that could be regionalized to assist towns in meeting their new NPDES Stormwater Permit.
- Regional Dam Inspection Services: Worked in consultation with the towns of Longmeadow, West Springfield, and Easthampton to prepare a bid document that bundles together the Phase 1 Formal Inspection services for one dam in each of these towns.
- Regionalizing Dam Services: Worked with municipalities to explore and identify interest in specific services that might be regionalized, helping to reduce the financial burden of meeting the dam safety regulations.

Homeland Security and Natural Hazards Planning

Worked on behalf of the Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council (WRHSAC) to develop a regional sheltering plan for Hampden County; led development of a regional evacuation plan and assisted with shelter supplies planning.

Led a research and planning effort to enhance regional communication systems leading up to, during, and after disasters.

Secured funding to develop four new local Hazard Mitigation plans in Granville, Longmeadow, Montgomery, and Wales, and to update one existing plan for Southwick. Facilitated application for funds to update plans for Agawam, Easthampton, Hampden, and Ware, and to develop a new plan for Russell.

A Sampler of Local Technical Assistance

Agawam

Prepared the Town's FY2011 and FY2012 MA DHCD Community Development Block Grant applications. Provided analysis comparing Agawam poverty rates with those of West Springfield and the state for Economic Target Area application eligibility.

Amherst

Reviewed the Environmental Notification Form for the proposed Commonwealth Honors College Project. Performed seven daily traffic counts. Worked on planning efforts related to the rehabilitation of the Norwottuck Rail Trail, including the preparation of meeting notices/minutes coordination among committee members, DCR, and MassDOT. Provided information on affordable housing strategy and discussion on uses of Amherst CPA funds for historic preservation inventory work.

Belchertown

Reviewed the Environmental Notification Form for the proposed fishing area, ramp replacement, and shore stabilization project at Quabbin Gate 8. Performed seven daily traffic counts and two peak hour turning movement counts. Provided assistance on DEP grants for water quality improvements in the Tri Lakes area.

Blandford

Performed two daily traffic counts.

Brimfield

Developed a trail map for the Brimfield Trail Committee and visited several tornado-damaged sections of the trail in order to assess what future assistance PVPC might be able to provide. Reviewed estimates for bridge construction costs and met with representatives from the Army Corps of Engineers.

Chester

Performed one daily traffic count. Coordinated tri-town meeting of Boards of Selectmen and a public forum on Keystone Arch Bridges Project.

Chesterfield

Provided information on regulating small wind turbines and model bylaws. Provided assistance on completing work for Green Communities designation.

Chicopee

Performed one daily traffic count. Provided 2010 Census data for all Chicopee geographies.

Cummington

Provided information on vested rights and non-conforming uses. Provided assistance with by-right zoning bylaw for clean energy.

East Longmeadow

Coordinated with the Department of Public Works on several initiatives involving the Redstone Rail Trail, including assistance in reviewing flood damage related to the trail and the impacts of re-grading on neighboring parcels. Performed four daily traffic counts.

Easthampton

Reviewed the Environmental Notification Form for the proposed South Street Reconstruction Project. Performed four daily traffic counts. Assisted in coordinating expansion of the Manhan Rail Trail, including consultation on the Coleman Road expansion and coordination with MassDOT Right of Way. Provided information on construction standards for Energy Star. Provided assistance with correcting data inaccuracies in MassEnergyInsight, the municipal energy use-tracking software.

Goshen

Performed one daily traffic count. Worked on a local wind bylaw to develop site plan review standards for wind energy systems.

Granby

Performed one daily traffic count. Provided a summary of the functional classification status of Morgan Street. Assisted with submission of Green Communities application.

Granville

Performed three daily traffic counts.

Hadley

Worked on planning efforts related to the rehabilitation of the Norwottuck Rail Trail, including the preparation of meeting notices and minutes coordination among committee members, DCR, and MassDOT. Performed one daily traffic count. Performed research on school speed zones.

Holland

Performed one daily traffic count. Provided assistance with submission of Green Communities application. Assisted the Town with a mandated DEP training on the wetlands protection area for highway and public works officials.

Holyoke

Reviewed the Environmental Notification forms for the proposed rehabilitation of Pleasant Street, the proposed Mountain Road Firing Range cleanup, and the proposed Holyoke Community College South Access Road project. Performed 16 daily traffic counts and 13 peak hour turning movement counts. Reviewed two grant applications under Preferred Sustainability Status program for Holyoke Master Plan and HUD Choice Communities. Provided 2010 Census data for all Holyoke geographies. Provided data on Springfield Metropolitan Statistical Area income levels for a grant application.

Huntington

Assisted the town with the completion of a Project Needs Form for County Road. Successfully prepared a \$900,000 Community Development Fund I MA DHCD Community Development Block Grant.

Longmeadow

Assisted with tracking down data related to elderly residents in the town. Provided data about mortgage status for Longmeadow homeowners. Provided data on top employers in Longmeadow.

Ludlow

Performed one daily traffic count. Made a presentation on Ludlow 40R districts to the Board of Selectmen and town residents.

Middlefield

Assisted with submission of Green Communities application. Provided technical assistance in reviewing the notating of a wind bylaw to be presented to the town. Coordinated a tri-town meeting of Boards of Selectmen and a public forum on Keystone Arch Bridges project.

Monson

Performed seven daily traffic counts. Provided information on Right-to-Farm bylaws. Assisted with submission of Green Communities application. Facilitated a community meeting on tornado recovery for downtown Monson and provided a final report. Successfully applied for a \$75,000 DHCD grant to assist with tornado recovery planning.

Montgomery

Provide information on affordable housing strategies that the town could successfully employ.

Northampton

Reviewed the Notice of Project Change for the proposed Coca-Cola Facility Expansion/ Bradford Street Pumping Station Project. Performed eight daily traffic counts. Worked on planning efforts related to the rehabilitation of the Norwottuck Rail Trail, including the preparation of meeting notices/minutes coordination among committee members, DCR, and MassDOT. Provided data on population, housing units, and other indicators for all municipalities in the Pioneer Valley as well as Berkshire and Franklin counties. Assisted with extensive data collection for RFR to the state regarding the Hampshire County Health District.

Pelham

Reviewed the Environmental Notification Form for the proposed Amethyst Brook Restoration Project/Bartlett Rod Shop Company Dam Removal Project. Performed seven daily traffic counts. Provided information regarding amendments to Zoning Board of Appeals decisions. Attended a community meeting regarding the proposed Village Center area.

Plainfield

Performed two daily traffic counts. Assisted with submission of Green Communities application.

Russell

Performed four daily traffic counts.

South Hadley

Reviewed the Notice of Project Change for the proposed South Hadley Landfill Vertical Expansion Project. Performed 12 daily traffic counts.

Southampton

Performed 14 daily traffic counts.

Southwick

Assisted the Town with administration responsibilities associated with MassDOT District 2 Agreement 56183, a Transportation, Community, and System Preservation (TCSP) grant providing reimbursement for bike path design-related tasks on Phase II of the Southwick Rails to Trails project. Reviewed the Environmental Notification Form for the proposed Northampton Expansion Project. Performed two daily traffic counts. Successfully prepared a \$964,000 Community Development Fund II DHCD Community Development Block Grant for expansion of the senior center and housing rehabilitation.

Springfield

Performed 11 daily traffic counts and four peak hour turning movement counts. Supported Rails to Trails Conservancy efforts related to Springfield's Connecticut River Walk and Bikeway, including extensive outreach to local neighborhood groups and citizen councils. Worked with the New North Citizens Council and Baystate Brightwood Health center to

host a "Fun on the Riverwalk" event in Springfield's North End. Participated in guided tours of the Riverwalk. Hosted a meeting to discuss pedestrian and bicycle accommodations in Massachusetts bridge projects included as part of the Massachusetts Accelerated Bridge Program. Worked with planning staff and members of the Springfield Health Coalition to review opportunities for increased levels of walking and bicycling in the city and to identify barriers or obstacles in the built environment. Began work on a Complete Streets policy initiative. Worked with area students on increasing participation in Bike Commute Week activities. Responded to a Massachusetts Rail Division canvass for property abandonment. Assisted the City on a response to a "first right of refusal" for an abandoned railroad parcel in Springfield's Mason Square neighborhood. Reviewed two grant applications under the Preferred Sustainability Status program for Union Station Redevelopment. Reviewed two grant applications under the Preferred Sustainability Status program for Old Hill and South End projects under HUD Choice. Assisted the City in applying for and obtaining an EDA Tornado Recovery Planning grant. Provided data on poverty by block group for specific target area. Provided demographic and consumer expenditure reports for the Pioneer Valley by county as well as 30-mile radii reports. Provided demographic data reports for three ZIP codes in Springfield.

Tolland

Provided information on Cluster Developments.

Wales

Prepared the Town's FY2011 MA DHCD Community Development Block Grant application for housing rehabilitation and drainage improvements.

Ware

Performed one daily traffic count. Responded to requests for information on bike rack purchases and installation instructions. Successfully prepared two MA DHCD Community Development Block Grants for Ware (single) and Ware (Ware River Valley) totaling over \$1.5 million. Participated in the Ware Town Planner/Community Development Director screening and selection process.

West Springfield

Reviewed the Environmental Notification Form for the proposed West Springfield Transmission Main Replacement Project. Reviewed the Draft and Final Environmental Impact reports for a proposed ALDI grocery store. Performed one daily traffic count. Successfully applied for a \$56,000 DHCD grant to assist with tornado recovery planning. Provided extensive demographic and health data for grant application.

Westfield

Reviewed the Environmental Notification Form for the proposed Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation Maintenance Facility Expansion at the Barnes Municipal Airport. Performed four daily traffic counts. Provided information on emergency funds for dam repair due to failure of spillway at Granville Reservoir Dam with Hurricane Irene.

Westhampton

Performed one daily traffic count.

Wilbraham

Reviewed the Environmental Notification Form for the proposed Minnechaug Regional School Project. Provided extensive income, population, and poverty data for counties and municipalities in the region and surrounding area for a grant application connected with the Western Mass Enterprise Fund.

Williamsburg

Provided assistance completing work on Green Communities designation.

Regionwide Local Technical Assistance

Responded to about 50 requests for information or data coming from the media, other government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector.

University of Massachusetts

Responded to a university request for information about regional model development procedures. Participated as a member of the Advisory Committee for the Regional Traveler Information Center (RTIC).



Catalyst for Regional Progress

pvpc

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