

RTP PowerPoint Presentation Script

Slide 1 – 2016 Regional Transportation Plan

Hello, this brief video provides an overview of the Pioneer Valley Regional Transportation Plan or RTP for short. The RTP is a federal requirement that outlines the direction of transportation planning over a minimum of twenty years. It provides the foundation for all state and federally funded transportation improvement projects and planning studies. In the Pioneer Valley region, major transportation improvement projects such as the widening of the Route 9 Calvin Coolidge Bridge between Northampton and Hadley, the Great River Bridge in Westfield, the Holyoke Transportation Center, miles of off-road bikepaths, the ongoing construction at Union Station in Springfield, and the return of passenger rail service to the Knowledge Corridor Line all advanced through a conforming RTP.

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission or PVPC is currently in the process of updating the RTP. This video provides a summary of the contents of the RTP and information on how to assist in the development of the final product. Ultimately, the RTP is the region's blueprint to maintaining a safe and efficient transportation system for all modes of travel

Slide 2 – What is the RTP

The RTP is a long range planning document. As such it outlines the direction of other transportation planning documents such as the Transportation Improvement Program or T-I-P and the Unified Planning Work Program or U-P-W-P. This is done through the identification of existing and future regional transportation needs as well as the development of strategies to alleviate deficiencies in the regional transportation system. As a result the RTP advances both construction projects and planning studies that are financially constrained, demonstrate compliance with air quality conformity legislation and are equitable for all users.

Slide 3 – Vision, Goals, and Emphasis Areas

The Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization developed a vision to provide a framework for the development of the RTP.

The Pioneer Valley region strives to create and maintain a safe, dependable, environmentally sound and equitable transportation system. We pledge to advance performance based strategies and projects that promote sustainable development, healthy and livable communities, provide for the efficient movement of people and goods and advance the economic vitality of the region.

To support the realization of the Vision of the RTP, a series of thirteen transportation goals were developed to support and enhance the following areas:

Safety, Operations and Maintenance, Environment, Coordination, Energy Efficiency, Cost Effectiveness, Intermodal Access, Multimodal Choices, Economic Productivity, Quality of Life, Environmental Justice, Land Use, and Climate Change

A total of five emphasis areas were identified to assist in the development of regional transportation needs and strategies to assist in the achievement of the regional goals. These emphasis areas are not intended to be a replacement for the regional transportation goals. Instead, they were established with the recognition that many of the transportation improvement strategies included as part of the RTP can meet multiple regional transportation goals

The 5 emphasis areas are: Safety and Security, The Movement of People, The Movement of Goods, The Movement of Information, and Sustainability

Needs, Strategies, and Projects included in the RTP are summarized by their corresponding Emphasis Area.

Slide 4 – Our Region

The Pioneer Valley Region is comprised of 43 communities and is home to nearly 605,000 people based on the results of the 2010 census. Located in the Midwestern section of Massachusetts and bisected by the Connecticut River, the region is the fourth largest metropolitan areas in New England, covering an area of 1,179 square miles. The City of Springfield is the region's largest city, however, the region is incredibly diverse in that it is comprised of a mixture of urban, suburban and rural communities.

The Pioneer Valley regional transportation system is defined by a complex roadway network covering over 4300 miles. This includes a total of 678 bridges. Regional transit service is provided by the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority or P-V-T-A and the Franklin Regional Transit Authority. PVTA provides a total of 41 fixed transit routes and 4 community shuttle routes. They provided over 11,000,000 trips in the 2013 calendar year. The region also continues to build an extensive network of multi-use trails covering over 50 miles for bicycle and pedestrian use. Passenger Rail Service recently returned to the Connecticut River Line and serves the cities of Northampton and Springfield. Train service to the City of Holyoke is also expected to begin in the near future.

Slide 5 – Regional Transportation System

Transportation Planning covers a broad range of topics. The following slides summarize some of the areas in which transportation planning services are provided. The regional pavement condition is an important factor in assessing the potential useful life of the roadway as well as developing appropriate roadway improvement projects and maintenance plans.

Slide 6 - Safety

The vision of the RTP focuses on the attainment of a safe and dependable transportation system. PVPC tracks the history of crashes at regional intersections to determine which locations may require additional measures to improve safety. Locations with a history of safety problems also receive additional priority in the project evaluation process for the TIP. Site specific safety studies are developed for areas with a history of crashes to identify appropriate recommendations to improve safety and advance roadway improvements as necessary.

Slide 7 - Transit

Transportation services that carry passengers for a fare are generally known as transit. Transit includes a mix of public and commercial passenger carriers that offer alternatives to automobile travel. The RTP provides a summary of regional transit services, ridership trends, and an assessment of the accessibility of major activity centers using transit service.

Slide 8 - Congestion

No one likes to be stuck in traffic. The regional congestion management process collects actual travel time data from regional roadways to identify the severity of congestion in the region. The level of congestion is tracked over time to identify the effectiveness of transportation improvement projects in reducing congestion. Transportation planning studies are developed for key areas with no planned transportation improvement projects.

Slide 9 - Freight

The major interstate and rail lines in the Pioneer Valley region enable the delivery of goods to locations all across the United States. It is important to understand how freight is moved into and out of the region by truck, rail, air and pipeline in order to plan for the efficient movement of goods in the future. The RTP begins to identify some of the challenges faced by the freight industry and the long term needs and strategies required to continue to allow for the efficient movement of goods.

Slide 10 – Bicycle and Pedestrian

Bicycling and walking are linked to the quality of life in our communities and the Pioneer Valley region provides some of the best environments for walking and bicycling in the Commonwealth. It is also critical to provide a safe environment for bicycles and pedestrians through a network of on and off-road facilities. The RTP identifies gaps in the regional bicycle and pedestrian network and addresses the need for pedestrians and bicyclists to be accommodated in all transportation improvement projects.

Slide 11 – MAP-21

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century or MAP-21 is the federal transportation legislation that defines the content of the RTP and identifies the funding available for transportation improvements in the Pioneer Valley region. MAP-21 is comprised of seven national goal areas that must be

incorporated into the RTP. These goals are: safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, system reliability, freight movement and economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and reduced project delivery delays. The Vision, goals, and emphasis areas of the RTP do a good job of addressing these national goal areas. It will also be important to consider these goal areas as necessary transportation improvement projects are identified over the life of the plan.

Slide 12 – Performance Measures

MAP-21 requires a performance based planning methodology to improve decision-making through better informed planning and programming. As part of this process, each state and MPO develops goals and objectives to track the performance of key areas of the transportation system. Performance measures are tracked over time to determine the progress in meeting these goals. This tracking occurs through ongoing data collection and planning activities already performed by the PVPC. The development and tracking of performance measures allows the region to identify the areas in which they'd like to place additional emphasis through transportation improvement projects that may be necessary to ensure a safe and dependable regional transportation system for all modes of travel.

Slide 13 – GreenDOT Sustainability Initiative

Massachusetts launched the GreenDOT Sustainability Initiative on June 2, 2010. GreenDOT is a comprehensive environmental responsibility and sustainability initiative driven by three primary goals: reducing greenhouse gas, promoting the healthy transportation options of walking, bicycling, and public transit, and supporting smart growth development. The RTP will incorporate the vision and goals of GreenDOT into the long range plan. One way the RTP incorporates the goals of GreenDOT is by reporting the impact of all proposed transportation improvement projects on the production of greenhouse gas. Improvements that are found to have a negative impact on greenhouse gas receive a lower priority on the regional TIP.

Slide 14 - Funding

Projects must come from a conforming RTP in order to be eligible for Federal Funding. The RTP must demonstrate Financial Constraint. The 2012 RTP estimated a total of nearly \$2.8 billion available for transportation improvements over the life of the plan. As transportation construction costs continue to rise, it is becoming much more difficult to maintain the regional transportation system. Projects included in future years of the plan must also consider the impacts of inflation on the estimated project cost. As a result, the MPO factors a number of considerations into the selection of projects to include in the RTP such as project readiness, overall cost and how well the project advances the vision and goals of the RTP.

Slide 15 – Major Transportation Improvements

The following major Transportation Improvements were all advanced through a conforming regional transportation plan. The Interstate Route 91 Viaduct improvement project in Springfield, the rehabilitation of Union Station Intermodal Center in Springfield, the return of passenger rail service to the Connecticut river line, and the Holyoke Transportation center. Each of these projects will assist in providing efficient transportation services into the future and highlight the importance of the RTP in the advancement of regional projects from the conceptual stage to final construction.

Slide 16 – Transportation Challenges

The RTP also attempts to identify the major challenges for the region and their potential impact on the regional transportation system. Some of these challenges include:

- The potential impact of the MGM Casino Development in downtown Springfield on the regional transportation system
- The construction of a new PVTA Operations and Maintenance Facility in Springfield.
- The impact of the impending retirement and relocation of the Baby Boomer generation on the regional population and workforce.

- The impact of providing proper maintenance for the regional transportation system in light of rising maintenance costs.
- The development and integration of an appropriate program to track regional performance measures into the regional planning process.
- The development of appropriate and feasible Long Range Alternatives for the replacement of the Interstate I-91 Viaduct in downtown Springfield to assist in the efficient movement of people and goods through the region.
- The need for new and additional federal and state resources to fund transportation improvement projects into the future.

Slide 17 – For More Information

The Pioneer Valley is a large and diverse region, but it is also the place we call home. The development of a safe and efficient regional transportation system for all users is critical to get us to places where we live, work, and play. As we develop the draft RTP we welcome your input. Please visit our website at www.pvpc.org for more information on the draft RTP, updates to the project schedule, and links to additional resources. Please submit comments on the draft RTP in writing to the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104 or via email at gmroux@pvpc.org.

Slide 18 – Title VI Notice of Nondiscrimination Rights and Protections to Beneficiaries