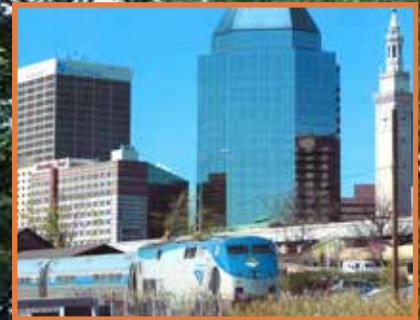







2013

Major Accomplishments

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission



Check the Record of Top Ten Resolves for 2013

-  Work in concert with a broad array of partnering organizations to support, guide, and complete a regionwide economic growth study targeted at 500 small and mid-sized Pioneer Valley firms demonstrating significant growth and job expansion potential with this study effort to be conducted by the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.
-  Participate in and contribute to a statewide transportation funding advocacy campaign which the Massachusetts Legislature and the Patrick-Murray Administration will propose, consider, and act on during the new legislative session beginning in January 2013 and strive to ensure that the priority transportation needs and projects of the Pioneer Valley are addressed in an effective, timely, and equitable manner.
-  Organize and undertake a regional effort designed to coordinate as well as provide technical assistance to potential casino host and surrounding communities that are located within the Pioneer Valley region working in concert with the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, affected municipalities, casino developers and other interested parties as appropriate.
-  Organize and launch the Planning Commission's scheduled ten-year review and overhaul of the Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress working in direct collaboration with the Plan for Progress Coordinating Council such that the next iteration of the Plan for Progress can be completed and released in final form by the fall of 2014.
-  Continue with support provided by the Commonwealth's District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) Program to pursue a variety of municipal shared-service initiatives and planning projects based on a regionwide solicitation process. Correspondingly, work with the 13 Massachusetts Regional Planning Agencies to publish, release, and broadly distribute a new Massachusetts Shared Services Manual early on in calendar year 2013 while simultaneously promoting the manual as well as a companion best practices website among cities and towns throughout Massachusetts.



Assist and support the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Federal Railroad Administration as these agencies jointly launch the long-awaited “Inland Route” rail passenger feasibility analysis to be conducted by the consulting firm HDR, Incorporated. Correspondingly, support MassDOT’s recent commitment to focus the “Inland Route” study on the Boston-Worcester-Springfield—east/west rail corridor and its potential to connect these cities and their surrounding metropolitan areas with New York City to the south and Montreal to the north including an assessment of the “Central Corridor.” This assessment would begin in Palmer where the NECR track (running north/south) intersects the CSX track (running east/west) and continue north to Amherst and on to Northfield where the NECR joins with the Connecticut River main line.



Prepare, refine, and issue, under the auspices of the interstate Sustainable Knowledge Corridor (SKC) Project, the draft and final versions of seven distinct element plans (e.g., food security, housing, climate change, etc.) which have been developed by PVPC staff in tandem with work groups that were convened to provide advice, expertise, and feedback. Use the final version of these element plans as the basis of an implementation program that will continue beyond the conclusion of the SKC Project in 2014.



Initiate, with ten project partners, a two-year, \$1.9 million Centers for Disease Control-funded Community Transformation Project aimed at improving the health of City of Springfield residents adversely affected by chronic diseases through healthy food and nutrition programs, physical activities, public health interventions, and infrastructure improvement projects, among others.



Continue efforts undertaken over the past two years to assist PVPC communities to recover from the damage and ancillary adverse impacts caused by the June 2011 tornado and pursue measures that could strengthen the level of community resilience to better address and respond to future natural and man-made disasters.



Work with the Congressional delegation in Washington, as well as the Massachusetts Legislature and state administration, to shape and advance policy and legislative initiatives at both the federal and state level that support and benefit the Pioneer Valley and its member communities and residents. Key 2013 emphasis areas will likely include statewide zoning reforms, state transportation finance, federal and state budget reform issues, municipal grant awards and local aid, regionalization enhancements, housing production incentives, and possible federal reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration, among others.

Overview

During 2013, 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.

The commission continues to engage 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.

Community Design and Predevelopment Services

Continued outreach to promote the Community Design and Predevelopment Services program to help communities 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.

T

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Worked in coordination with state agencies to participate in project advisory committees for a variety of initiatives, including the Statewide Evacuation Coordination Planning Project, the I-91 Exit 19 Interchange study, the statewide ITS Planning and Coordination Committee, and the Massachusetts 2013-2017 Strategic Highway Safety Plan Steering Committee.

Updated pavement distress data on the federal-aid eligible roadways in Westfield, Northampton, and South Hadley. 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 is used to report on the community's backlog of repairs.

At the request of the Town of Longmeadow, began to prepare a scope of work and cost estimate to update the Town's pavement management report from 2009. Staff has started to collect pavement distress data in town.

Performed a total of 153 counts as part of PVPC's annual traffic counting program. The data collection effort included 54 vehicle counts for member communities, 46 vehicle counts requested by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and 53 peak hour turning movement counts. Performed three bicycle and pedestrian counts along the Springfield Riverwalk. Staff also assisted with requests by communities for archived transportation data such as traffic counts, travel time data, bridge condition ratings, and crash data.

Completed a planning report for County Road in Huntington. The report will be reviewed by MassDOT when considering TIP eligibility of the proposed transportation improvements for County Road.

Worked in cooperation with federal, state, and local officials to develop the Federal Fiscal Year 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and amend the Federal Fiscal Year 2013-2016 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 and to provide information on the project development and implementation process. 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.



In conjunction with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, conducted a comprehensive analysis of each transportation improvement project for the purpose of calculating anticipated impacts on greenhouse gas emissions.

Completed the necessary air quality analysis to help determine the eligibility of proposed transportation improvement projects under the Congestion, Mitigation, and Air Quality (CMAQ) category for several projects: Chicopee—Connecticut Riverwalk; Northampton—Northampton Rail Station, intersection of Pleasant Street with Conz Street, and intersection of North King Street with Hatfield Street; Springfield—Union Station Regional Intermodal Transportation Center, North End and Brightwood infrastructure improvements, and signal and intersection improvements at

Roosevelt Avenue/Island Pond Road and Roosevelt Avenue/Alden Street; and Westfield—Columbia Greenway Trail.

Compiled a summary by House and Senate district of Pioneer Valley Region projects included in Governor Patrick's proposed ten-year transportation plan, "The Way Forward." This data was then provided to municipalities and local representatives.

Convened meetings of the Pioneer Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization during the 2013 calendar year. The Pioneer Valley MPO is a forum for cooperative transportation decision making that jointly develops, reviews, and endorses plans and programs that may be required by federal and state laws and regulations.

Held monthly Joint Transportation Committee 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

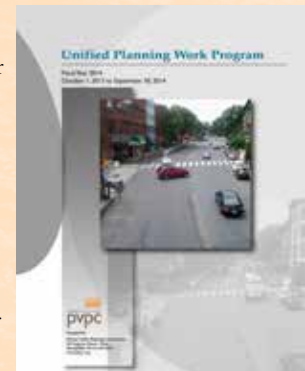
Collected travel time data throughout the region for use in transportation studies as well as the Congestion Management Process (CMP). A data collection year is scheduled to correspond with an average academic school year beginning in early September and ending in late May. Data collection is restricted by factors to include 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.). Monthly observations are also collected at all regional park and ride lots. Staff recently began using PVPC's greenhouse gas monitor to collect pollutant data on select CMP corridors.

Worked on planning efforts for rehabilitation of the Norwottuck Rail Trail including the preparation of meeting notices/minutes and coordination among committee members. PVPC submitted

comments on the project to MEPA and attended several conservation commission meetings.

Successfully applied for a Community Transformation Grant that included a significant transportation component under the new "Live Well Springfield" initiative. PVPC staff coordinated efforts to develop Springfield's first bicycle and pedestrian plan and initiated efforts to improve access to the Springfield Riverwalk and the development of the McKnight Neighborhood Trail. This effort included expanded meetings and consultations in populations with limited English proficiency (LEP) and expanded outreach to traditionally underserved neighborhoods.

Developed the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for federal fiscal year 2014. 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, 2013.



Obtained certification from the Federal Transit Administration for work and planning efforts to create an inclusive and engaging transportation planning process. PVPC's new Title VI and Limited English Proficiency programs recognize the strengths of the region's diverse population while addressing specific needs of those residents for whom English is not a first language, and where cultural or economic differences may create barriers toward participation. The new Title VI program has created new community partnerships and resulted in new initiatives including "Live Well Springfield: Eat Smart, Stay Fit," designed to combat chronic disease through healthy eating and physical activity. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control awarded a two-year community enhancement grant

that will target underserved populations in key Springfield neighborhoods while engaging the community in a wide range of transportation discussions. The Live Well program is a functioning extension of the PVPC Title VI program as it engages grassroots, organizational, and individual initiatives in support of a broader coalition that recognizes the connection between transportation and a healthy sustainable built environment.

Finalized the Top 100 High Crash Intersections Report for the Pioneer Valley. This report includes data from the 2007–2009 calendar years, the top 25 high crash roadway segments, and a detailed analyses of non-motorist crashes, fatalities, and driver statistics for crashes in the Pioneer Valley region.

Collected the necessary data to calculate the regional saturation flow rate for signalized intersections in the Pioneer Valley. This data will assist in developing more accurate level-of-service calculations at intersections in the region.

Participated in roadway safety audits (RSAs) for the City of Chicopee, the Town of Granby, the City of Northampton, and the City of Springfield. PVPC staff assisted in collecting traffic count and crash data to develop the RSA. Staff also participated in each site visit to identify factors that may contribute to crashes at each location.

Produced the Interstate Route I-91 Corridor Existing Conditions Study, which reviews previous corridor studies, updates transportation data, and analyzes traffic volumes and safety patterns along I-91 from the Connecticut state line to Exit 5. The South End Bridge and the Agawam rotary are also included, since they are integral to regional traffic flow and would provide a link to alternate routing for north/south traffic. Information from the existing conditions study will be used to assist MassDOT in their study of the I-91 Viaduct.

Collected the necessary data to review existing traffic volumes and travel speeds along a section of Pine Street in the Village of Florence. This data was used to develop recommendations the City of Northampton could consider to regulate traffic and enforce travel speeds in this area.

Performed a study of existing transportation conditions at the intersection of Sturbridge Road (Route 20) with North Main Street. Staff performed data collection to document the existing crash history in the study area and assess the existing pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the Hitchcock Academy. Recommendations were developed for consideration by the Town of Brimfield and MassDOT.

Worked with Springfield 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. The group began work on a “Complete Street” policy initiative. PVPC also worked with area students on increased participation in Bike Commute Week activities.

Transit

Conducted service quality spot checks as part of the Mystery Rider program, in which mystery riders board both fixed route buses and paratransit vans unannounced and monitor the performance of the drivers, taking note of cleanliness, driver's customer service skills, driver's handling of the bus, on-time performance, and other quality issues.

Monitored PVTAs buses for schedule on-time adherence at selected points throughout the service area, performing over 500 observations each quarter.

Updated and revised 37 of 43 of PVTAs printed bus schedules for Fall 2013. A total of 473,000 schedules were ordered. Updated and revised 13 PVTAs printed bus schedules for December 2013.

Continued availability of QR code information by PVTAs for every bus schedule at high ridership locations, including bus terminals, university campuses, and participating high schools. These QR codes can be scanned and a copy of the individual schedule can be downloaded to a phone with a data plan, helping to reduce the quantity of paper schedules and allowing individuals to keep digital copies of schedules. Testing has begun to upgrade QR codes to provide real-time information instead of scheduled information.

Participated on the selection committee for PVTAs Comprehensive Service Analysis, which will conduct a complete review of bus operations and system design.



Responsibilities from PVPC to the consultant during this process include providing data sets, surveys, major employers listing, transportation modeling database, and GIS/mapping files, as well as regular meetings and phone calls with the consultant.

Assisted the cities of Holyoke and Chicopee in adopting new bus stop bylaws by providing complete listings of bus stop locations and other information requested by the cities.

Undertook a stop warrant analysis to identify daily ridership at PVTAs bus stops based on the amenity available at the stop (shelter, bench, no shelter or bench) in order to develop a process for investing in amenities and to identify locations requiring amenities. This analysis was done for the entire PVTAs service area.

Facilitated meetings with PVTAs paratransit riders to identify and discuss the concerns of ADA and senior riders. PVTAs also conducted hearings on changes to the advance reservation policy. Ultimately, the problematic 14-day advance reservation window was reduced to a seven-day window after PVTAs conducted a pilot program with a five-day window and heard public comment.

Partnered with community-based organizations to hold bus rider trainings with recent Russian immigrants as well as Spanish, Somali, and Burmese residents with limited English proficiency.

Assisted PVTAs in the production and reporting of quarterly reports of their fixed route performance measures for the entirety of FY13. Staff also developed a process for PVTAs reporting these performance measures to MassDOT.

Conducted a survey of Ware residents about their travel needs and their current use of the Ware Shuttle. The Town of Ware sent out the survey with the annual town census, and 1,133 surveys were completed and returned. A report was completed and outreach occurred within the Town. Paratransit data was also analyzed for this report.

Brownfields

Began implementation of a regional brownfields site assessment program awarded by EPA in late 2012. Under the \$400,000 program, two environmental consultants were procured and site assessment activities were initiated and/or completed at eight sites in six communities.



Completed a regional brownfields plan as a component of PVPC's HUD-funded Knowledge Corridor plan. The plan identified the 20 Areas of Brownfield Interest (ABIs) within the Pioneer Valley that are impacted most intensively by known and suspected brownfield sites, and recommended resources for site assessment and cleanup in these areas. The Pioneer Valley Regional Brownfields Plan received a 2013 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations.

Continued to work with private and public landowners to identify potential cleanup sites for assistance through PVPC's EPA-funded brownfields revolving loan fund. The fund provides subgrants and low-interest loans to eligible parties to assist in the cleanup of contaminated sites with redevelopment or green space potential. Began a new \$247,000 cleanup project at the former Hart Wool Combing site on Appleton Street in downtown Holyoke.

Participated in the MassDEP-led Brownfields Support Team for the Ludlow Mills redevelopment project. Collaborated with several state and federal agencies to provide technical assistance to WestMass Development in its cleanup and redevelopment of this large-scale former industrial site.

Municipal Development

Facilitated over \$5.0 million in public infrastructure, public facilities, housing rehabilitation, septic system repair, planning and design, and social/public services projects in the following communities:

Belchertown—Continuation of the rehabilitation of housing units under the Belchertown Regional Community Development Fund Program. In conjunction with the project consulting engineer, completion of the design phase of infrastructure improvements to the Belchertown, Granby, and Hadley Housing Authorities under the FY 2012 Community Development Fund Program.

Blandford—Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Western Pioneer Valley Regional Community Development Program.

Brimfield—Continuation of housing rehabilitation program for eligible residents.

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

Chester—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.

Granby—Continuation of the rehabilitation of housing units under the Belchertown Regional Community Development Fund Program. In conjunction with the project consulting engineer, completion of the design phase of infrastructure improvements to the Belchertown, Granby, and Hadley Housing Authorities under the FY 2012 Community Development Fund Program.

Granville—Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Western Pioneer Valley Regional Community Development Program.

Hadley—Continuation of the rehabilitation of housing units under the Belchertown Regional Community Development Fund Program. In conjunction with the project consulting engineer, completion of the design phase of infrastructure improvements to the Belchertown, Granby, and Hadley Housing Authorities under the FY 2012 Community Development Fund Program.

Hardwick—Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Ware River Valley Community Assistance Program. Initiation of the High Street and Taylor Street infrastructure improvements project, oversight of the Prospect Street-Broad Street infrastructure improvements engineering and design project, and oversight of the Senior Center planning project.

Holland—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.

Middlefield—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.

Montgomery—Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Western Pioneer Valley Regional Community Development Program. Completion 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. Completion of the Phase I Pine Hill Water Improvements Project.

South Hadley—Completion of the Senior Center Roof and Related Improvements Project.

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

Southwick—Completion of the Senior Center Expansion and Improvements Project. Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the FY11 CDF Housing Rehabilitation Program.

Spencer—Completion of the Mechanic Street Infrastructure Engineering and Design Project and Southside Neighborhood Infrastructure Revitalization Planning Project, and continuation of the Spencer Housing Rehabilitation Program.

Wales—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 the Phase I Memorial Field Accessibility and Field Lighting Improvements Project. Initiation and substantial completion of the School Street infrastructure improvements project (streets, sidewalks, curbing, water, sewer, drainage), completion of the High Street infrastructure improvements engineering and design project, initiation of the property assessment and re-use planning project; and the continued implementation of a domestic violence prevention program.

Warren—Continuation of rehabilitation of housing units under the Ware River Valley Community Assistance Program. Continuation of domestic violence prevention program. Continuation of in-town literacy and adult education services under the Ware River Valley Literacy Program.

FFY 2013 CDBG Programs—Applied for and received nearly \$6.0 million in FFY2013 CDF, FFY13 Reserve, and FFY2012 EDF Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Community Development Block Grant Funds on behalf of the municipalities of Hatfield, Sturbridge, Russell, Chester, Middlefield, Wales, Ware, Hardwick, Warren, Spencer, North Brookfield, Agawam, and East Longmeadow. Work on these projects and programs was initiated in the fall of 2013. Specific programs include:

- **FFY2012 EDF**—Town of Hatfield: \$50,000 for a building assessment, market analysis, and reuse study for the former Center School Building.
- **FFY2013 Reserve Funds**—Town of Sturbridge: \$640,000 for Phase II improvements to the Sturbridge Retirement Cooperative Corporation (SRCC) waste water treatment facility (WWTF).

- **FFY2013 CDF**—Town of Russell (Chester, Middlefield): \$1,000,000 for the Phase II Pine Hill Road (Russell) water improvements project, Middlefield Senior Center Roof Replacement project, approximately five units of housing rehabilitation, and social services (case management and support services, food pantry, adult education center, domestic violence prevention).
- **FFY2013 CDF**—Town of Wales: \$900,000 for the Woodland Heights storm drainage and roadway improvements project and the rehabilitation of approximately six units of housing.
- **FFY2013 CDF**—Town of Ware (Hardwick, Warren): \$1,000,000 for rehabilitation of approximately 20 units of housing, the initiation of a distressed properties assessment and re-use planning study in Warren and Hardwick, and social services (adult literacy, domestic violence prevention, and family support services).
- **FFY2013 CDF**—Town of Spencer (North Brookfield): \$876,900 for the rehabilitation of approximately 17 units of housing, the initiation of a distressed properties assessment and re-use planning study in Spencer, and the initiation of a neighborhood infrastructure planning project in North Brookfield.
- **FFY2013 CDF**—Town of Chester: \$636,889 for the Maple Avenue/Maple Street roadway and sidewalk improvements project and oversight of the Healthy Homes Program for seniors.
- **FY2013 CDF**—City of Agawam (East Longmeadow): \$900,000 for the rehabilitation of approximately ten units of housing, oversight of engineering and design for Springfield Street (Agawam) sidewalks and crosswalks, oversight of the initiation of ADA Self-evaluation and Transition plans for Agawam and East Longmeadow, and housing authority improvements at Colonial Haven in Agawam (electrical upgrades and window replacement) and Quarry Hill in East Longmeadow (door replacement and security upgrades).

Housing Rehabilitation and Development

Administered and implemented nearly \$1.0 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, Southamptton, Granville, Montgomery, Blandford, Brimfield, Holland, Wales, Easthampton, Leicester, Spencer, Belchertown, Hadley, Granby, and Southwick.

Continued to serve as the Region 1 service provider under the commonwealth's Home Modifications Loan Program for those with disabilities. Over \$400,000 was loaned to borrowers to allow them to remove private property architectural and other health barriers to their homes. To date, PVPC has lent nearly \$4 million to eligible and qualified borrowers under this program since 2005.

Provided construction monitor services to homeowners under the CEDAC/MRC Home Modifications Loan Program.

Completed the administration of Easthampton Community Preservation Act funds for housing rehabilitation improvements for eligible residents.

Completed implementation of approximately \$36,000 in USDA Housing Preservation Grant funds for gap filler housing rehabilitation assistance for residents in rural areas resulting in assistance to three homeowners.

Continued with administration of \$564,000 of Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development Tornado Response Rehabilitation funds to assist the June 1, 2011 tornado-affected homeowners. A total of 49 homeowners were assisted with 100 percent of the funds being committed.

Scenic Byway Planning

Kicked off a marketing campaign for the seven scenic byways of Western Massachusetts, the slogan for which is "Slow Roads, Great Adventures." The campaign involves advertising throughout the Northeast and includes the new website www.bywasywestmass.com, a brochure, logos for each of the byways, and a single logo for the collection of byways. Roadway and interpretive signs are in development. PVPC collaborated with the Franklin and Berkshire Regional Planning Commissions, local byway advisory groups representatives, MassDOT, tourism bureau partners in western Massachusetts, and consulting firm New Arts Collaborative on this project.

Completed work for the Town of Plainfield in developing the Route 116 Corridor Management Plan with the Franklin, Berkshire Regional Planning Commissions, MassDOT representatives, and scenic byway advisory group representatives from other Route 116 towns including Deerfield, Conway, Ashfield, Savoy, Cheshire, and Adams.

Initiated work on a collaborative Tri-state Bike Map project to identify and map the best bicycle routes for various level riders along the Connecticut River Byway in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. Bike racks are being procured for various locations along the Byway in Hadley and South Hadley.

Secured MassDOT contracts and initiated work for three new national scenic byway projects: developing recreational trails and river access for the Connecticut River Scenic Byway; updating the corridor management plan for the Connecticut River Scenic Byways, and exploring recreational trail linkages in the Route 112 and Jacob's Ladder Trail Scenic Byway region.

Continued work toward securing a contract 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.

Domestic Violence Prevention

Ware—Implemented domestic violence prevention project and coordinated the Ware Domestic Violence Task Force. Major projects included development of a new collaboration with Mary Lane Hospital designed to improve screening and referrals for patients who have experienced domestic violence; implementation and support of new police protocol whereby police calls are followed up by a local advocate who contacts victims to offer support as part of an “extended police response”; provision of direct services for victims including a weekly support group and advocacy services; implementation of an extensive healthy relationship prevention campaign at Ware High School including educational theatre, classroom-based activities and workgroups, and student writing prompts; service coordination of Ware-based agencies through monthly Task Force meetings; and ongoing implementation of a community education and outreach campaign through use of newspaper, cable, and back-to-school nights.

Russell/Middlefield/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 agency that provides a local domestic violence advocate to follow up on police calls; development and implementation of a community-wide survey on domestic abuse to be used for community education and outreach; support of a student-led group to provide leadership on healthy relationships and anti-bullying projects at Gateway High School; a series of dating violence prevention presentations at Gateway Middle School; implementation of a scholarship in honor of domestic violence victim Karen Hart; 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 back-to-

school nights, visits to health center staff meetings, brochures and public service ads throughout the community, and use of local cable.

Warren—Implemented domestic violence prevention project and coordinated the Warren Domestic Violence Task Force. Major projects included provision of direct services for victims including a weekly support group and advocacy services; development of a new collaboration with Warren Police that allows a local advocate to follow up on police calls; collaboration with Quaboag schools on abuse prevention presentations and curricula materials; and distribution of brochures and other outreach material in Warren and surrounding communities.

Historic Preservation Planning

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

Continued the process of determining the eligibility of a federal tax certification project for a former mill complex in Easthampton.

Completed National Register nominations for three historic districts in Leverett: East Leverett, Moore's Corner, and North Leverett, and presented nominations at meetings in Leverett and at the State Review Board.

Completed National Register nominations for East Wilbraham Cemetery, Glendale Cemetery, and Adams Cemetery in Wilbraham.

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, Warren, Southwick, Holland, and Brimfield.

Continued a multi-phase project in Amherst to potentially expand two historic districts, create two new historic districts, survey two cemeteries, and survey 100 agricultural outbuildings.

Met with numerous historic commissions throughout the region to evaluate their preservation priorities and to offer technical assistance.

Provided local technical assistance on historic preservation issues to the towns of West Springfield, Blandford, Southwick, and Granby.

Assisted Granby in obtaining a \$10,000 Massachusetts Historical Commission survey and planning grant for a comprehensive historic resources survey.

Completed a Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund grant application for the Town of Agawam.

Attended a Section 106 course taught by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference to keep abreast of compliance requirements as it relates to federally funded projects throughout the region.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Natural Hazards Planning

Continued to serve as the fiscal and administrative agent for the Hampden County Health Coalition (HCHC), a group of municipal public health professionals representing the 19 cities and towns in Hampden County focusing on public health emergency preparedness.

Continued to provide administrative and program oversight of county-wide Medical Reserve Corps program and several Special Populations Preparedness Planning efforts, including the development of standard operating procedures for first responders and an ongoing effort to link faith-based organizations with emergency personnel to increase awareness and communication in preparing and responding to emergency situations.

PVPC's Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Planner continued to develop emergency preparedness plans for all coalition communities, including the development of a regional sheltering plan; conducted discussion, communications, and exercise drills to test these plans; presented components of the region's preparedness program throughout the region; and provided trainings and educational materials to enhance the region's capacity to respond to emergencies.

Engaged in ongoing interaction with the HCHC communities, local Medical Reserve Corps coordinators, and special populations consultants to further develop preparedness plans and community education throughout the region. With the assistance of PVPC's transit representative, the PHEP Planner arranged a small marketing advertisement that adopted the state's emergency preparedness month slogan on the PVTA buses to further build residents' awareness around individual and community preparedness.

Collaborated with local emergency preparedness and response professionals and with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to assess and report on the number of people that could be "received" and sheltered in our region in the event of a major disaster affecting population centers around the region.

Collaborated with local emergency management directors, departments of public works staff, and other concerned municipal officials and volunteers to facilitate development of local Hazard Mitigation plans—five new (in Granville, Longmeadow, Montgomery, Russell, and Wales) and five updates (in Agawam, Easthampton, Hampden, Southwick, and Ware). Having a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan is required to apply for hazard mitigation grant funds.

Wrote a Natural Hazard Mitigation plan for the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Environmental and Water Quality

Continued fifth 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 included:

- Coordinating sixth year of a volunteer water quality sampling program for bacteria pollution in the river
- Continuing to expand the new Connecticut River website, which includes water quality monitoring data, river recreational access maps and data, and regional hiking trails information at www.connecticutriver.us
- Completing installation of stormwater Best Management Practices at the South Hadley Post Office
- Working with communities on adopting zoning tools such as Green Development Performance Standards and Transfer of Development Rights.

Celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the creation of the Connecticut River Clean-up Committee with a special event at the Holyoke River Access Center. Continued to coordinate regular meetings and activities of the CRCC, including work to administer grants for clean-up of combined sewer overflows on the Connecticut River, which now total over \$20 million. Worked with state legislators to seek state funds in the new Environmental Bond bill.

Received funds through a Clean Water Act settlement to initiate a new project to develop rain gardens in Springfield.

Completed and began implementation of a Green Infrastructure Stormwater Management Plan. The plan, part of the larger bi-state Sustainable Knowledge Corridor Project, explores the benefits of and opportunities for capturing rain near where it falls with green infrastructure stormwater management facilities, including bioretention systems/rain gardens, infiltration systems, green roofs, and porous asphalt. The plan also recommends programs and policies to help promote green infrastructure practices. Implementation to date includes conducting a review of municipal regulations in two municipalities, working with U.S. EPA to continue a series of workshops for municipal officials and developers, and working to connect funding sources with green infrastructure projects throughout the region.

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 Easthampton, Southampton, Holyoke, and Westfield. As part of this work, revised and updated the BAPAC website and pursued land protection priorities for water supply protection.

Continued the Think Blue public education campaign about stormwater pollution in the 11 towns and cities participating in the Connecticut River Stormwater Committee.

Continued work with the Town of Belchertown to identify and assess stormwater pollution sources to Arcadia and Metacomet lakes and to undertake preliminary design and programming to address sources. The project is made possible by a grant from MassDEP with federal funding from the Environmental Protection Program 604(b) Water Quality Management Planning program.

Sustainability, Clean Energy, and Climate Action

Completed the second year of work on the three-year, \$4.2 million bi-state Knowledge Corridor Sustainable Communities project in cooperation with the Capitol Region Council of Governments in Hartford, Connecticut. Accomplishments included:

- Completing a new regional action plan, “Our Next Future,” which has been formally adopted by PVPC
- Completing new regional element plans for green infrastructure, housing, climate action and clean energy, brownfields, food security, environment, land use, and sustainable transportation
- Advancing work on three catalytic projects, including Depot Square revitalization in Holyoke, Court Square redevelopment in Springfield, and the Connecticut Riverwalk in Chicopee
- Initiating work on a bi-state action plan with Connecticut
- Initiating work on implementation strategies for all eight element plans.

Managed and advanced the Live Well Springfield initiative in Springfield to promote healthy eating via expanding mobile markets, providing nutrition education, and helping to bring a full-line grocery store to Mason Square, as well as encouraging healthy behavior with an emphasis on walking, bicycling, and rowing, and including the development of a bicycle and pedestrian plan.

Continued a collaboration with HAP, Inc. in Springfield to implement the Vibrant Neighborhoods initiative in two Springfield neighborhoods, Old Hill and Six Corners. This Barr Foundation-funded project is intended to enhance sustainability and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by facilitating energy-efficient affordable housing, community gardens, pedestrian and bicycle activity, and improved traffic flow.

Continued to staff the Pioneer Valley Sustainability Network (www.pvsustain.org), a self-sustaining membership organization whose members work for a sustainable, just, and regenerative future for our region.

Continued running the annual Pioneer Valley Bay State Bike Week, nine days of events in May that celebrate bicycle riding and commuting. This year expanded the number of participants to over 1,400 and the number of events to 50. Participation was also greatly increased in Springfield with assistance from the Pioneer Valley Riverfront Club.

Continued work to implement the newly updated Pioneer Valley Climate Action/Clean Energy plan, assisting with the region's transition to clean, safe, sustainable energy sources and working to reduce the impacts of climate change. Provided Green Communities certification assistance to the towns of Williamsburg and Longmeadow. Our region has 15 designated Green Communities,

Collaborated with the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources on a U.S. Department of Energy pilot project to assist homeowners in eight municipalities—Longmeadow, East Longmeadow, Palmer, Belchertown, Monson, Wilbraham, Springfield, and Hampden—to receive no-cost home energy assessments and to implement retrofit work to save them money while also reducing energy use and concomitant greenhouse gas emissions.

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

Secured a grant from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center on behalf of the towns of Amherst and Hadley and the cities of Easthampton and Holyoke Clean Energy Center pilot project on Community Energy Strategies.

Greenways, Trails, and River Protection

Sold more than 1,700 copies of 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 was subsequently made available for sale to the general public through bookstores and retail outlets across the region, and has been extremely popular. Established a new regional trails map webpage that contains more detailed trails information.

Worked with Chicopee and an engineering consultant to coordinate completion of 25 percent design/engineering plans for the Connecticut Riverwalk, Chicopee segment.

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

Housing Planning

Completed the City of Springfield's Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, which was funded under the 2013 District Local Technical Assistance program.

Assisted the City of Westfield in developing a strategy for encouraging market rate housing development in its downtown, which was funded under the 2013 District Local Technical Assistance program.

Assisted the towns of Amherst and Southampton with development of inclusionary housing provisions to encourage future mixed income developments.

Completed the Regional Housing Plan, an element plan of the larger bi-state Sustainable Knowledge Corridor Project. The Regional Housing Plan includes an assessment of demographic, housing, and land use trends as well as a recommendations chapter for strategic action.

Convened and facilitated the Pioneer Valley Housing Forum, which celebrated the completion of the Pioneer Valley's new regional housing plan and offered a forum for discussing how the region can implement its recommendations.

Master Planning and Zoning

Developed the Healthy Community Design toolkit in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Made presentation to Mass in Motion coordinators and provided technical assistance on implementation to two communities.

Continued to provide technical assistance to communities to develop and implement smart growth strategies from Valley Vision, the region's land use plan. Provided targeted technical assistance to Hatfield on mixed use development zoning and reviewed the zoning bylaw in terms of the relationship between open space developments and multi-family/townhouse developments; to Southampton on mixed use and smart growth zoning; and to Tolland on river protection and ridgeline zoning. Worked to update and expand the Valley Vision toolbox.

Continued to coordinate meetings of the Valley Development Council, the implementation committee for Valley Vision. Worked to involve members in the new regional housing plan in developing a model medical marijuana facility zoning bylaw and in maintaining involvement in state zoning reform legislation.

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 and Long Range Planning Committee for the ninth year to provide part-time town planner services under this program. Tasks completed for Hadley included a revised table of use regulations, updated subdivision regulations including performance guarantee process, and development of commercial design guidelines for the Village Center Overlay District.

Completed the Town of Southampton's Master Plan.

Worked with the Monson Planning Board on implementing portions of the recently completed Community Plan for Monson Center by developing zoning bylaws for mixed use and mixed residential/business uses, parking, commercial design and landscaping standards, and a Mill Adaptive Reuse Overlay District.



District Local Technical Assistance

PVPC received District Local Technical Assistance funding in FY13 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 nine communities:

- Agawam—Prepared a Mixed Use Development bylaw to support village center development and economic development, including maps.
- Easthampton—Worked with the Open Space Advisory Committee to update the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan, including maps.
- Granby—Prepared six new zoning bylaws, including Mixed Use Development Overlay district, Village Center Mixed Use district, Professional Office Overlay district, Research and Development Park Overlay district (including maps), new sign bylaws, and Age Restricted Housing Community, as well as revisions to the Schedule of Use Regulations, Commercial Design guidelines, and a Building and Property Maintenance bylaw.
- Middlefield—Prepared a new Village Center Mixed Use zoning district (including maps), revised the Table of Use Regulations, and developed Commercial Development Design guidelines.
- Plainfield—Prepared a Land Use Chapter of a community Master Plan, including conducting a community survey and forum.
- South Hadley—Prepared new zoning bylaws (and mapping) creating a Smart Growth Overlay district, a Compact Neighborhood district, and two Mixed Use Development districts.

- Springfield—Completed an Analysis of Impediments to fair housing (AI), including civic engagement and online survey.
- Ware—Worked with the Open Space Advisory Committee to update the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan, including maps.
- Westfield—Completed a study of market rate housing barriers in downtown neighborhoods.

For a summary of work completed under the DLTA Municipal Partnerships program, see the Municipal Shared Services Program category in this report.

Municipal Shared Services Program

Developed this program to initiate projects and coordinate ongoing efforts in developing municipal partnerships and regional programs. Formerly titled “Regional Services and Innovations,” this program was developed in response to increasing community requests for assistance in identifying opportunities for efficiency and economy of scale, and to recent state program policies and resources encouraging and incentivizing municipalities and schools to pursue collaboration, partnerships, and shared service opportunities. PVPC member communities have expressed interest in shared service collaborations covering a range of services including e-permitting/e-government, collaborative fiscal planning, shared inspections and animal control, shared municipal support services opportunities, shared grant writing, regional recycling and waste disposal programs, shared information technology services, bulk purchasing and procurement services, shared public health services, and equipment sharing.

In the first year of this program in 2012, projects of note include studies of school regionalization, shared emergency dispatch operations, and shared local public health services, as well as working with towns in a regional school district desiring opportunities for working more collaboratively on school budget and related matters. Throughout 2013, new projects were developed and previous projects from 2012 were expanded and are ongoing efforts within the region.

- **Gateway Towns Advisory Committee (GTAC)**—Continued to work with GTAC (Blandford, Chester, Huntington, Middlefield, Montgomery, Russell, and Worthington) in the Gateway Regional School District in collaborating on development of the regional school budget and related matters. Through GTAC, PVPC has identified a need for regional municipal support services

on an as-needed-basis, including administrative support (Treasurer, Collector, Town Manager, etc.), procurements services, and inspectional services. Currently, PVPC is applying for the Community Innovation Challenge (CIC) grant to assist with the development and implementation of this program.

- **Hampden County Shared Public Health Nurse Assistance Program**—Continued to work with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and member municipalities to identify needs and opportunities for increasing the responsiveness and service delivery levels of local boards of health. With modest funding from the CIC grant, PVPC established a program that makes available a part-time shared public health nurse who provides services for eight different communities that often have a difficult time providing public health education, disease surveillance and reporting on MAVEN (Massachusetts Virtual Epidemiologic Network), and other public health nursing services. Participating communities of this expansive service delivery effort include the cities of Holyoke and West Springfield, and the towns of Southwick, Blandford, Palmer, East Longmeadow, Granville, and Ludlow.
- **Shared Sealers of Weights and Measures for Holyoke and Hadley**—Worked with the Town of Hadley and the City of Holyoke to identify opportunities for increasing the responsiveness and service delivery of the Sealers of Weights and Measures program within its communities. Using District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA), A statutory and regulatory review discovered that the City of Northampton employs a part-time Sealer to provide this service for four different municipalities; Northampton, Granby, Southampton, and Amherst. Presently, PVPC is working with Northampton to expand its current capacity and become the Regional Sealers of Weights and Measures provider for the Hampden and Hampshire counties.

- **Shared Human Resources Project**—Worked with the towns of East Longmeadow and Ludlow to examine the feasibility of sharing a human resources department. Through DLTA, PVPC interviewed officials and studied the human resources structures of both communities to assess and identify needs and opportunities for improving human resources service delivery efforts. Ultimately, it was suggested that both municipalities share a benefits manager and an assistant as a first step toward building a full-service shared human resources department.
- **Regional Roundtables**—Hosted a Regional Roundtable luncheon featuring keynote speaker John Robertson, Deputy Legislative Director of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, which focused on legislative updates and DLTA for 2014. This event brought together local officials to hear what's happening at the state level and to discuss how we can work together to meet local needs. Attendees also learned about EfficientGov, an online tool for grant finding that PVPC subscribes to and will make available at no cost to member municipalities.



Regional Information and Policy Center

Responded to about 40 requests for information or data coming from the media, other government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector.

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.

Provided data management and strategy development support for the Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation's Reading Success by 4th Grade campaign focused on their work with the Results Based Scorecard. Supported Springfield-focused strategy teams in the areas of school readiness, summer learning, and school attendance.

Conducted revisions and technical upgrades 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 2012 Census data (among other sources), can be found at http://pvpc.org/resource_center/data-stats.shtml. Upgrades have allowed more convenient access to data by partners.

Worked with web consultant to create public access to the PVPC regional database. Users will be able to query the database, combining data from many sources into one PDF or excel spreadsheet for download.

Released the award-winning State of the People of the Pioneer Valley Report in early 2013, in collaboration with a group of regional foundations. The report focuses on the health and well-being of the people in Pioneer Valley and was the winner of the 2013 Medium Metro General Achievement Award by the National Association of Regional Councils. Staff spent extensive time bringing the report to various social, health, and funder groups to help them consider how the information can be used in their work. Worked with partners to begin planning for a companion online version of the data, to be updated annually.



Continued to work with ROADS partners to fine-tune the ROADS portal, a shared database that allows all ROADS partners to make use of each others' data, creating consistency and efficiency across organizations. This constituted the third year of the Regional Organizations' Advanced Data Sharing (ROADS) partnership, a collaboration between key staff at the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County and the Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts. This year, the Franklin Regional Council of Governments joined the partnership. Future projects will explore shared data licenses, additional partners, and joint economic development publications.

Continued to maintain the website for the Sustainable Knowledge Corridor initiative. The website is the public face of the Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Initiative in this region and includes a sustainable data report card. Continued to maintain data on the section of this website focused on the question of “How are we doing?” which engages visually interactive tools to examine sustainability indicators.

Continued to work extensively with PVPC's GIS and design staff to develop more centralized, effective, and efficient use and delivery of data and GIS products internally and externally. Communication and coordination between these staff members has increased tremendously.

Served as a judge for the Massachusetts Municipal Association's Municipal Website contest, which recognizes excellence in customer service, functionality, convenience, and government transparency delivered by a municipal website in four population categories.

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

Community Preservation Act Planning Assistance

Continued reaching out 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, and began identifying how PVPC can help municipalities with expanded requirements and opportunities under recent CPA changes. PVPC services cover all CPA project categories: historic preservation, open space, outdoor recreation, and community housing.

GIS Mapping and Graphics

Provided Search and Rescue Grid maps at the request of several communities for use in their central dispatch offices and field command operations. Maps included large and small maps with coordinate grids, with general base map and aerial photo backgrounds.

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, among others.

Completed several products for the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTa). Updated the PVTa System Field Guide for bus operators; revised and reprinted PVTa seasonal route schedules. 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.

Provided continued support and website development for Southamptown Master Plan, Ludlow Master Plan, Sustainable Knowledge Corridor, Think Blue MA, ConnecticutRiver.us, and HomeMPG.org.

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, and municipal open space plans. 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.

C Communication and Outreach

Produced PVPC's 51st annual meeting at the Garden House at Look Park in Florence. This year's meeting highlighted the innovative work of Soldier On, Inc., the Leeds-based organization dedicated to ending homelessness among veterans by providing emergency and transitional housing with supportive services to veterans in need. Regional Recognition Awards were presented to Soldier On President and CEO John F. "Jack" Downing, who also served as guest speaker, and to Jim Czach, Chair of the Pioneer Valley Joint Transportation Committee.

Provided public outreach and publicity support for projects and events such as the Plan for Progress; Leadership Pioneer Valley; Bay State Bike Week; Springfield Fair Housing study; Connecticut River clean-up and water quality monitoring efforts; Sustainable Knowledge Corridor; meetings, workshops, and forums; grant awards; solicitation of public input on open space, economic development, community, and visioning plans; staff awards and recognition; and release of significant reports and other products.

Initiated work on developing an innovative strategic communications plan to harness a broad spectrum of communications platforms to support PVPC's mission and projects.

Working with PVPC staff, continued to integrate social media channels into communications and outreach efforts. Continued to provide updates to the PVPC website through events listings, project announcements, public input solicitation, and other information.

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.

Spoke at a seminar on "New Ways of Using PR to Disseminate Your Message" for the Boston Leadership Series, organized by the Center for Nonprofit Success, a nonprofit organization that specializes in bringing highly relevant information that nonprofit leaders need to run their organizations successfully.

Served as a judge for the Massachusetts Municipal Association's Annual Town Report contest, which honors communities that produce the most impressive town reports, recognizing excellence in design, content, and presentation across three population categories.

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.

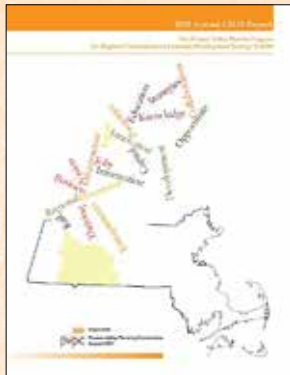
Distributed an updated Writing and Style Guide for PVPC staff, with a focus on specific in-house usage issues and questions, to ensure consistency of expression in documents, letters, and electronic communications. Worked with staff to maintain and improve internal quality control standards and procedures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

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.

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

Economic Development

Conducted the 2013 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. The CEDS update also describes accomplishments of the fifteen Plan for Progress strategies throughout the previous year.



Produced a six-page color brochure to accompany the CEDS and to provide a snapshot and summary of economic initiatives in the region. The 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.”

Completed the second full year of Leadership Pioneer Valley (LPV), recruiting and enrolling another 39 participants for the Class of 2014. The program offices moved to the Scibelli Enterprise Center in Springfield, and LPV is becoming a separate non-profit agency.

Secured a \$600,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA) for disaster recovery activities for Pioneer Valley businesses in the wake of the natural disasters of 2011, including a revolving loan fund operated by Common Capital, technical assistance

and support from the Scibelli Enterprise Center, and disaster resilience planning.

Conducted a Pioneer Valley growth business study in collaboration with six other partners and the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute. The work is intended to support the needs of growth-oriented companies by identifying industry sectors and businesses that are growing, their key characteristics and challenges, and the most helpful financing and business assistance approaches.

Worked with the City of Springfield to conduct two market rate housing studies, with EDA funding, for the downtown and South End areas that were devastated by the 2011 tornado.

Continued to work with the implementers of the Innovation-Based Economic Development Strategy for Holyoke and the Pioneer Valley Region to leverage economic opportunities that result from the new Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center (MGHPCC) in downtown Holyoke. The strategy is an action-oriented agenda with eight key elements, including entrepreneurship, education, economic development services, and site readiness, and the digital/IT, clean energy, urban agriculture and manufacturing clusters.

Provided assistance to the cities of Springfield, Holyoke, Chicopee, Ludlow, and Northampton in support of their highest priority projects submitted for inclusion in the 2013 CEDS for potential EDA funding.

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 a ten-year update of the Plan for Progress in 2014.

Participated in the BusinessWest-sponsored Western Massachusetts Business Expo at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, a conference and exhibition that featured over 100 exhibitors, with guest speakers and free business seminars.

Sampler of Local Technical Assistance

Agawam

Provided data and technical assistance for the Agawam Connector Loop Project. Successfully prepared the Agawam/East Longmeadow \$900,000 FY2013 DHCD Community Development Fund application for housing rehabilitation, the development of an ADA self-evaluation and transition plan, Housing Authority improvements, and engineering/design plans for sidewalks and crosswalks along Springfield Street.

Amherst

Assisted with development of inclusionary housing provisions to encourage future mixed income developments. Provided inventory of Community Preservation Act projects. Provided data and information about population projections for a housing study. Provided information on bike share programs, assisted the Transportation Committee on bicycle path alternatives adjacent to local roads, and reviewed a bicycle roundabout assessment. Reviewed an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) for a proposed project. Performed eight daily traffic counts.

Belchertown

Assisted with PARC grant application for the purpose of reconstructing four tennis courts and possibly two basketball courts at a recreation area on State Street.

Blandford

Provided assistance to complete and update a historic preservation planning summary, a document designed to identify the highest priority survey needs should the town undertake a comprehensive historic resources survey. Assisted with a grant application to MEMA for an emergency generator. Performed one daily traffic count.

Brimfield

Provided information on bike lane development on Route 20 for the Brimfield Trail Committee.

Chester

Successfully prepared the town's \$636,889 FY2013 DHCD Community Development Fund application for infrastructure improvements to Maple Avenue and Maple Street and the development of a Healthy Home Program for seniors. Performed two daily traffic counts.

Chesterfield

Provided technical assistance for Green Communities program administration and compliance.

Chicopee

Provided data on population by age and race for specific block groups in the city for Community Development Block Grant application. Performed one daily traffic count.

East Longmeadow

Successfully prepared \$900,000 Agawam/East Longmeadow FY2013 DHCD Community Development Fund application for housing rehabilitation, development of an ADA self-evaluation and transition plan, and housing improvements. Performed one daily traffic count.

Easthampton

Provided extensive data for Town of Easthampton and target area for Community Development Block Grant application. Performed a before and after study of the impact of traffic related to the new high school.

Granby

Provided assistance in writing a successful grant application to the Massachusetts Historical Commission's Survey and Planning grant program. This grant has allowed the Town to hire a consultant to survey historic resources in Granby, a process that has never been undertaken. Performed four daily traffic counts and two peak hour turning movement counts.



Granville

Assisted with development of Hazard Mitigation plan. Performed one daily traffic count. Delivered custom search grid maps and emergency response map books for field operations and planning.

Hadley

Assisted in procuring bike racks for various locations along the Route 47 Scenic Byway. Performed eight daily traffic counts.

Hatfield

Assisted Planning Board in developing zoning bylaws for large-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic facilities. Successfully prepared the Town's \$50,000 FY2012 Economic Development Fund planning grant application for reuse of the former Center School Building. Provided mapping for open space planning.

Holland

Performed one daily traffic count.

Holyoke

Reviewed an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) for one proposed project. Reviewed the draft of the Holyoke Bicycle Community Assessment and participated in public meetings. Performed two daily traffic counts.

Huntington

Performed two daily traffic counts.

Longmeadow

Assisted with a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program application for the purchase of a backup emergency generator for a municipal emergency shelter funded by FEMA and MEMA. Prepared and submitted application to Green Communities program, including municipal 20 percent energy reduction plan. Reviewed trip generation estimates for a proposed new apartment complex. Performed two daily traffic counts and one peak hour turning movement count.

Ludlow

Revised Ludlow Action Plan maps.

Middlefield

Successfully prepared FY2013 Southern Hilltowns \$1.0 million DHCD Community Development Fund application including housing rehabilitation, social services, and rehabilitation of the Middlefield Senior Center roof.

Monson

Performed two daily traffic counts.

Montgomery

Provided technical assistance on county roads and discontinued roads to the Planning Board. Developed a current map of all roadways and their current roadway inventory status.

Northampton

Reviewed the Environmental Notification Form (ENF) for four proposed projects. Reviewed student pick-up and drop-off procedures for the JFK Middle School. Continued assistance for planning efforts related to the rehabilitation of the Norwottuck Rail Trail. Performed 20 daily traffic counts and 14 peak hour turning movement counts.

Palmer

Reviewed an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) for one proposed project and a Notice of Project Change for one proposed project.

Pelham

Performed one daily traffic count.

Plainfield

Completed work with representatives from the Town of Plainfield in developing the Route 116 Corridor Management Plan with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, MassDOT representatives, and scenic byway advisory group representatives from other towns through which Route 116





passes, including Deerfield, Conway, Ashfield, Savoy, Cheshire, and Adams. Provided Planning Board with copies of sample master plans from other communities.

Russell

Successfully prepared the FY2013 Southern Hilltowns \$1.0 million DHCD Community Development Fund application including housing rehabilitation, social services, and Phase II of the Pine Hill Road Water Improvements Project. Performed one daily traffic count.

South Hadley

Assisted Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee on efforts related to planning and visioning new infrastructure and programs related to walking and bicycling. Performed four daily traffic counts. Assisted with procurement of bike racks for locations along the Route 47 Scenic Byway.

Southampton

Assisted with development of inclusionary housing provisions to encourage future mixed income developments. Delivered custom search grid maps and emergency response map books for field operations and planning. Assisted the town with revisions to the Chapter 40 bylaw. Provided assistance with trails mapping and planning.

Southwick

Provided assistance to the Historical Commission to evaluate a Memorandum of Agreement and determine how mitigation funds can be used. Assisted with development of hazard mitigation plan. Performed two daily traffic counts. Provided assistance with trails planning and funding.

Springfield

Provided planning assistance for redevelopment of the former Chapman Valve in Indian Orchard and the former Asylum Club site downtown. Provided data on businesses, consumer expenditures, and average rent within the city. Reviewed Environmental Notification Forms (ENFs) for two proposed projects. Installed three trail traffic counters on the Springfield

Riverwalk. Assisted City staff in preparing job description and scope of work for new Healthy Design Coordinator position. Presented a class lecture on bicycle infrastructure to the Springfield Renaissance School. Responded to a Massachusetts Rail Division canvass for property abandonment. Assisted in responding to a first right of refusal for an abandoned railroad parcel. Reviewed historic crash data along the I-91 corridor during the Eastern States Exposition. Performed eight daily traffic counts and 20 peak hour turning movement counts.

Tolland

Performed one daily traffic count.

Wales

Successfully prepared the Town's FY2013 \$900,000 DHCD Community Development Fund application for the Woodland Heights storm drainage and roadway improvements project and for housing rehabilitation. Performed four daily traffic counts. Delivered custom search grid maps and emergency response map books for field operations and planning.

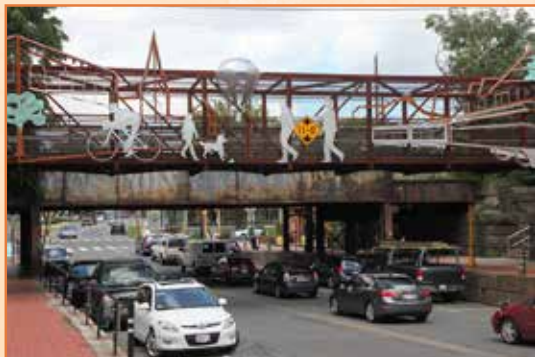
Ware

Successfully prepared the FY2013 Ware River Valley \$1.0 million DHCD Community Development Fund application for housing rehabilitation, a planning project, and social service programs. Prepared Ware Bike Trail map. Prepared large-format wall maps for coordinated town departments.

West Springfield

Provided data about housing unit types and housing affordability. Provided unemployment and major employer data. Provided assistance to research the boundaries of the City's two existing historic districts, develop a new Certificate of Appropriateness, and develop an informational brochure and letter to be sent to current property owners within the districts. Performed one daily traffic count. Assisted in advancing project plans for Connecticut Riverwalk.





Westfield

Assisted in developing a strategy for encouraging market rate housing development downtown. Reviewed an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) for one proposed project. Performed six daily traffic counts and 14 peak hour turning movement counts.

Westhampton

Performed one daily traffic count.

Wilbraham

Assisted Town with development of Hazard Mitigation plan. Performed two peak hour turning movement counts. Reviewed Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan and provided letters of consistency.

Williamsburg

Assisted Planning Board and Energy Committee with work to earn Green Communities designation, including development of bylaw for large ground-mounted solar installations and assistance in preparing the application documents. Coordinated recommendations to MassDOT as part of the Village Center Pedestrian Safety Study.

Regionwide Local Technical Assistance

- Responded to approximately 40 requests for information and data from the media, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector. Provided grant writing and resources presentation for the Small Town Administrators of Massachusetts.
- Participated in the consultant selection process for an alternatives analysis for the I-91 Viaduct. Reviewed an Environmental Notification Form (ENF) for one proposed project (All-Electronic Tolling System Implementation Project). Provided support information to various municipalities for MassWorks applications.
- Provided ongoing assistance to the Western Massachusetts Casino Task Force and to surrounding communities of proposed casinos in Springfield and West Springfield.
- In collaboration with Preservation Massachusetts, the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments, coordinated and held the first Western Massachusetts Historical Commission Coalition meeting.



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