



**3. Update Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) currently out for public review**

Mr. Roux explained that the Transportation Projects Survey was used to obtain the public’s input in the updating of the Transportation Evaluation Criteria (TEC) by providing the survey participants with an opportunity to identify the transportation projects that were the most important to them. Mr. Roux reported that Jim Czach increased the marketing for the survey and as a result 642 responses were received. Mr. Roux directed the JTC members’ attention to the document entitled *Summary Percent Ranked #1 by Project Type* which reflects in a pie chart the percentage of the 642 responses received in the 8 categories as listed below and also displays in a table the maximum number TEC points that can be earned for each of the categories as listed below:

Rank	Transportation Improvement Project	Percentage Ranking the Project #1	Maximum Points
1	Roadway Surface Improvements	27.88%	19
2	Enhancements to Alternative Modes	25.08%	12
3	Bridge Projects	14.33%	0
4	Reducing Traffic Congestion	9.66%	17
5	Improving Safety	8.57%	16
6	Environmental Resources	5.45%	12
7	Promoting Growth and Development	5.30%	11
8	Preserving Regional Assets	3.74%	10

Mr. Roux noted that if the *Bridge Projects* category was not included in the list, the percentages might have changed for other categories such as the *Enhancements to Alternative Modes* might have received a higher number of points. Mr. Roux stated that the next chart in today’s handout entitled *Top Responses by Community* reflects the percentage of the 642 responses that were submitted by each of the communities listed below and he underscored that Northampton had the most responses by far.

Community	Response Per Community
Northampton	28.50%
Westfield	11.21%
Springfield	10.12%
Amherst	9.35%
Easthampton	5.30%
Holyoke	3.43%
Belchertown	2.34%
Southampton	1.56%
All Other Communities	30.84%

Mr. Roux reported that a meeting of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) subcommittee was held on September 3<sup>rd</sup> for the purpose of ranking projects and he referred the JTC members to the document entitled *TEC Comparison: Current TEC vs. Proposed TEC*. Mr. Roux stated that the subcommittee reviewed six projects in the design process that are currently on the TIP and three TIP projects that were constructed or advertised for construction prior to 2014 as reflected in the document. He indicated that the column labeled “Current TEC” is divided into a “TEC” column and a column labeled “100%.” Mr. Roux explained that the “TEC” column reflects the score the project has received based on the current scoring system. He explained that the “100%” column converts the current TEC scores which are based on a 1 to 18 point scale to the new

proposed TEC scores which are on a 1 to 100 scale in order to illustrate how the current TEC score for a project compares to the score that project would receive based on the new, proposed TEC criteria. Mr. Roux stated that the next column entitled "JTC Reviewed" under the title "Proposed TEC" consists of the scores determined by staff at the September 3<sup>rd</sup> subcommittee meeting. Mr. Roux reported that the subcommittee was asked to evaluate the proposed TEC criteria based on the project scores at the end of the meeting. He said at the end of the meeting, the subcommittee was asked to evaluate the new proposed TEC criteria based on what was working, what wasn't working and what needed improvement. Mr. Roux reported that as a result of the subcommittee's evaluation, a modified, automated spreadsheet is now available that will score a project based on the information inputted and changes to four TEC scoring criteria were recommended.

Mr. Roux reported (1) that the scoring for *Improving Substandard Pavement* originally consisted of 8 points or 4 points or one point based on the current pavement condition. Mr. Roux said the subcommittee members asked one another if it made sense for this project, that's strictly an intersection improvement project, to receive potentially 8 points and they agreed that it doesn't make sense so a fourth criteria was developed that states if the pavement condition is ranked greater than 85, no points are received under the pavement category and if there is less than a ½ mi of pavement associated with an intersection improvement project, no points are awarded.

Mr. Roux indicated that (2) it was felt that the scoring for *Improving Peak Level of Service* at 6 points was too high and that to obtain 6 points multiple locations need to be improved and if it's a single location, the maximum number of points to be awarded will be 5. Mr. Roux gave another example of a change by citing that (3) *Improves Emergency Response* within the *Safety and Security* criterion has been changed so that 2 points are awarded if it's an Regional Evacuation location and 2 points if response time is improved as long as it's documented as being part of the local plan. Mr. Roux delineated the points awarded by *Regional Evacuation Routes* established for Homeland Security purposes: a primary route would receive 2 points; a secondary route would receive 1 point and a tertiary route would receive a ½ point.

Mr. Roux said that last modification concerns the *Environment and Climate Change* criterion which had two separate categories: *Improving Air Quality* and *Reducing Greenhouse Gases*. He reported that instead of the same score of 2 points being given to each of the categories, the two categories were combined and information was provided on the qualification for scoring 2 points for the combined category or one point or a ½ point commensurate with the degree to which the project improves air quality and reduces CO<sub>2</sub> with projects having negative air quality impacts still losing one point.

Mr. Roux stated that the Transportation Evaluation Criteria document will be presented to the MPO next week in order to obtain their feedback. Mr. Roux underscored that it will be more difficult to score points with the new TEC because supporting information will be required but he added that scores will increase once a project has completed its MassDOT design review because that process will provide more information.

Mr. Roux reminded the JTC members that the Project Selection Advisory Council meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Roux recommended that since the advisory council's draft report isn't due until October, it makes sense to wait until then to learn how closely aligned their Transportation Evaluation Criteria is with the Pioneer Valley's. Mr. Roux concluded his presentation by saying that hopefully the proposed TEC will be adopted and ready for use on the TIP next year. Mr. Roux then asked if any of the JTC members had any questions or comments about the proposed TEC.

After a short discussion regarding the TEC, Mr. Czach asked Mr. Roux to move on to agenda item #4.

#### 4. 2016 Update to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Regional Performance Measure

Mr. Roux reminded the JTC members that on February 27, 2014, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) designated the Joint Transportation Committee to provide guidance in the development of regional performance measures. Mr. Roux stated that the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* (MAP-21) requires state-wide performance measures to be adopted first and then regional performance measures need to be adopted six months after the states have adopted theirs. Mr. Roux reported that states have up to a year to adopt their performance measures but he added that performance measures don't need to be adopted until the final U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) planning rule has been completed. Mr. Roux indicated that the draft planning rule is currently out for public comment and comments will be accepted until October 1st.

Mr. Roux stated that the JTC members need to develop a draft plan that addresses the performance measures required by MAP-21 but he underscored that first, performance measures need to be written in draft form. Then, Mr. Roux emphasized, when the final **statewide** performance measures are available, they need to be examined for comparison purposes. In addition, Mr. Roux stated that because the performance measures formulated by the JTC members will be in draft form when the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is being endorsed, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) may need to be amended once the regional performance measures have been finalized.

Mr. Roux called the JTC members' attention to the first of two handouts pertaining to the RTP entitled *RTP Update for the Pioneer Valley MPO*. Mr. Roux explained that an endorsed RTP is needed by September 30, 2015 but the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) want the RTP sooner. Mr. Roux underscored that the goal is to have the RTP endorsed sometime in August 2015 which means that a draft RTP will need to be released by the MPO for public comment sometime in June 2015. In preparation for the 2015 RTP, Mr. Roux indicated that a core group of representatives will be invited to participate in two-hour Focus Group discussions facilitated by PVPC staff that will address the goals and objectives of elements of the draft RTP such as: (1) Infrastructure; (2) Bicycle and Pedestrian; (3) Transit; (4) Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change; and a proposed new focus group, Freight.

Calling attention to the second RTP handout entitled (*DRAFT*) *Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) GreenDOT Goals*, Mr. Roux stated that these GreenDOT goals need to be integrated into the RTP but since it seems as though some of the GreenDOT goals don't tie in with transportation, Heather Hannon from the MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning has volunteered to give a presentation to the JTC members to explain the GreenDOT goals.

In the past, Mr. Roux said, PVPC staff members have presented elements of the draft RTP at six public meetings geographically spread across the region (Amherst Chesterfield, Northampton, Springfield, Ware and Westfield) and the attendance at these meetings has been low. Instead, Mr. Roux suggested that an online presentation be made available on the PVPC website in various languages. Mr. Czach interjected that a virtual presentation could be submitted to public access channels and communities could link the presentation to their community websites. Mr. Czach then appealed to the JTC members asking them to communicate any ideas they might have about how to obtain public feedback on the RTP.

Mr. Czach moved on to agenda item #5 and introduced Josh Ostroff of Transportation for America.

**5. Informational Forum – Question 1 – Repeal of 2013 Law that Automatically Increases Gas Taxes According to Inflation**

Josh Ostroff, a selectman in Natick and a member of Transportation for America, reported that the *Massachusetts Automatic Gas Tax Increase Repeal Initiative, Question 1*, is on the November 4, 2014 statewide ballot as an initiated state statute and if approved by voters, the measure would repeal a 2013 law that ties gas tax increases to inflation and allows automatic annual increases in the state's gas tax. Mr. Ostroff reported that the Massachusetts Legislature approved a law that increased the gas tax by 3 cents a gallon to 26.5 cents a gallon on July 30, 2013 for the first time in over two decades. While Question 1 does not repeal the 3.5-cent gas tax increase, he said, it sets the framework for having to wait for years for the legislature to increase the gas tax again. Mr. Ostroff stated that a YES vote would eliminate the requirement that the state's gas tax be adjusted annually based on the Consumer Price Index and a NO vote would make no change in the laws regarding the gas tax.

Mr. Ostroff explained that Transportation for America is an alliance of elected, business and civic leaders from communities across the country that have united to ensure that states and the federal government invest in smart, homegrown, locally-driven transportation solutions. Mr. Ostroff reported that the Transportation Finance Act of 2013 generates new funding to fix our roads and bridges and through this law, the Commonwealth generates \$600 million in annual revenue for transportation. Mr. Ostroff stated that roads and bridges in Massachusetts are deteriorating and need significant repairs after years of neglect and repealing the gas tax would be a big step in the wrong direction. Mr. Ostroff explained that cutting transportation funds impedes economic growth and a safe, reliable transportation system is the backbone of our economy. He underscored that this funding is in jeopardy because of Question 1 which will repeal this law that links the gas tax to the consumer price index.

Mr. Ostroff urged the JTC members to vote NO on Question 1 and he asked them to consider joining with 75 organizations that are participating in the effort to defeat Question 1.

Mr. Czach moved on to agenda item #6.

**6. Western Mass Health Equity Summit October 2 at UMass Amherst.**

Andy McCaul, Transportation Planner, announced that the Western Massachusetts Health Equity Summit is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on October 2, 2014 at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Mr. McCaul explained that a coalition of public health leaders is organizing the first-ever Western Massachusetts Health Equity Summit in order to bring western MA practitioners and community leaders together to take steps to achieve more health equity in western MA by working, learning and taking action together. Mr. McCaul said he will send out a hyperlink so that those interested can attend the event.

**7. Presentation – Bicycle Accommodations on Roadways – Lou Rabito, MassDOT**

Mr. Rabito stated that part of his job responsibilities is working to improve pedestrian and bike conditions in cities and towns and he shared a PowerPoint entitled *Complete Street Design*. Mr. Rabito explained that a complete street is a facility that accommodates all users and as a planner and an engineer, he has a responsibility to promote public health, reduce traffic congestions and make places safer and more livable. Mr. Rabito spoke about functional classification which is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of service they are intended to provide. He explained that there are three

highway functional classifications: local roads; collector roads which move traffic from local streets to arterial roads; and arterial roads which are high-capacity roads.

Mr. Rabito indicated that another design parameter used in a Complete Street Design is speed. Mr. Rabito stated that 65% of pedestrians involved in an accident occurring at a speed of 20 miles per hour are injured with deaths at 5%; and at a speed of 40 mph, 15% are injured but 85% lose their lives. He explained that in 2012, 4,743 people were killed in pedestrian/motor vehicle crashes, which is more than 12 people every day of the year, and there were 76,000 reported pedestrian injuries in the United States. Mr. Rabito reported that 73% of pedestrian fatalities occurred in urban areas and 32% of the pedestrian fatalities occurred between 8:00 p.m. and midnight. Mr. Rabito added that also in 2012, 726 lost their lives in bicycle/motor vehicle crashes, fewer than two people every day of the year in the U.S.

Mr. Rabito completed his presentation by saying that Complete Street Design improves safety, reduces congestion, provides multi-modal options such as walking, biking and transit and reduces green house gas emissions.

## **8. Other Business**

Mr. Czach asked if there was any other business. There being no other business items, Mr. Czach called for a motion to adjourn

## **9. Adjourn**

MOVED BY DICK GRANNELLS OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHWICK, SECONDED BY DAVID DESROSIERS OF THE TOWN OF GRANBY, TO ADJOURN THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2014.

This JTC meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

### **Relevant documents distributed at this meeting:**

- Joint Transportation Committee September 10, 2014 Meeting Agenda
- Joint Transportation Committee August 13, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- *TEC Comparison: Current TEC vs. Proposed TEC*
- *Summary Percent Ranked #1 By Project Type* (pie chart)
- *RTP Update for the Pioneer Valley MPO – Draft Development Schedule 9/10/2014*
- *(DRAFT) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) GreenDOT Goals*