

SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (SRPEDD)
JOINT TRANSPORTATION PLANNING GROUP MEETING
Wednesday, May 13, 2020 – 2:00 PM

DRAFT MINUTES

Held Remotely via Zoom due to the State of Emergency in Massachusetts due to Covid-19.

AGENDA

The following were in attendance:

John Woods	Town of Carver
Joe Callahan	Town of Berkley
Thomas Ferry	Town of Dighton
Paul Foley	Town of Fairhaven
Lee Azinheira, Chair	Town of Mansfield
Leeann Bradley	Town of Middleboro
Manuel Silva	City of New Bedford
Stephanie Crampton	City of New Bedford
Mark Hollowell	Town of North Attleborough
Paul DiGiuseppe	Town of Norton
Ed Buckley	Town of Raynham
Alan Slavin	Town of Wareham
James Hartnett	Town of Westport
Fred Cornaglia	City of Taunton
Janine Peccini	Taunton At-Large Commissioner
Jamie Pisano	VHB
Phil Viveiros	McMahon Associates
Kien Ho	Beta
Mary Ellen Defrias	MassDevelopment
Barbara Lachance	MassDOT
Ben Muller	MassDOT
Omar Mejia	Safe Routes to School
Grant King	SRPEDD
Paul Mission	SRPEDD
Angela Constantino	SRPEDD
Guoqiang Li	SRPEDD
Lisa Estrela-Pedro	SRPEDD
Lilia Cabral-Bernard	SRPEDD
Jackie Jones	SRPEDD
Lizeth Gonzalez	SRPEDD

Handouts:

DRAFT JTPG 4.8.2020 Minutes

DRAFT 2021 UPWP Condensed

- 1. Call to Order and Roll Call:** Chairman Azinheira called the meeting to order at 2:03PM and requested Ms. Lilia Cabral-Bernard call the roll.

Town of Berkley	Yes
Town of Carver	Yes
Town of Dighton	Yes
Town of Fairhaven	Yes
Town of Mansfield	Yes
Town of Middleboro	Yes
City of New Bedford	Yes
City of North Attleboro	Yes
Town of Norton	Yes
Town of Raynham	Yes
City of Taunton	Yes
Town of Wareham	Yes
Town of Westport	Yes
Taunton At-Large	Yes
MassDOT District 5	Yes

- 2. Public Comments - Opportunity for the public to address the JTPG:** Chairman Azinheira opened the floor to public comments. Ms. Mary Ellen DeFrias of MassDevelopment announced her presence, but provided no additional comments.

3. Approval of Minutes – April 8, 2020 (Materials Attached and Roll Call Vote needed)

Chairman Azinheira noted that the JTPG received comments on the minutes and the group would entertain a motion to amend. Ms. Lisa Estrela-Pedro read the amendment, which addressed the status of the Rehoboth at Route 118 Project from MassDOT. The status of the project should be noted at 75% and not PS&E as in the draft minutes.

Chairman Azinheira called for a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion was made and seconded. Ms. Cabral-Bernard called the roll:

Town of Carver	Yes
Town of Berkley	Yes
Town of Dighton	Yes
Town of Fairhaven	Yes
Town of Lakeville	Yes
Town of Mansfield	Yes
Town of Middleboro	Yes
City of New Bedford	Yes

Town of North Attleboro	Yes
Town of Norton	Yes
Town of Raynham	Yes
City of Taunton	Yes
Town of Wareham	Yes
Town of Westport	Yes
Taunton At Large Commissioner	Yes

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

- 4. Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) Report:** Chairman Azinheira moved to the next item on the agenda and noted that neither of the RTAs were in attendance, but that Ms. Angela Constantino would present updates.

Ms. Constantino discussed some actions that both RTAs have taken as a result of COVID-19. GATRA and SRTA have reduced service due to COVID-19 and suspended fare collection in an effort to minimize contact with the bus driver. Additionally, the RTAs are now requiring anyone on-board vehicles to wear face masks or coverings, in addition to maintaining social distancing.

GATRA continued to run dial-a-ride service for essential trips, including the grocery store and doctor’s appointments. The fixed route systems in Taunton, Attleboro, Wareham, and Plymouth are all running, but ending early. The following routes have been adjusted or suspended:

- Route 140/Wheaton Shuttle has been suspended, with dial-a-ride service to fill the gaps
- Middleboro Downtown Shuttle and Taunton Connection, Pembroke Shuttle, Wareham to Plymouth, Wareham to New Bedford, and Boston Hospital have all been suspended
- Scituate service is running on a reduced schedule from 9:30-3:40
- Franklin and Norfolk area fixed routes have also been suspended, but these have been supplemented with dial-a-ride services for the general public.

RTA fixed routes are all running on a Saturday schedule. Demand response is still available for critical trips. Their Boston Hospital shuttle has also been suspended. SRPEDD is currently conducting outreach through social media to alert the public of all these changes.

AECOM is conducting the Regional Transit Plan for the RTAs in Massachusetts, and the deadline has been extended through December 2020. Contracts have also been modified to accommodate public outreach for the RTP, which will take place in June in the GATRA service region. Regarding the Community Transit Grant Program, Ms. Constantino provided a brief description and updates. The primary goal of the grant program is to improve transit for seniors and those with disabilities, though it may be open to the public. Non-profits, municipalities, RTAs, and COAs are eligible for the funding. The application is open until June 26, 2020.

Lastly, MAPC in partnership with MassDevelopment has provided emergency funding for a taxicab, livery, and hackney transportation partnership. The applications are accepted and reviewed on a

rolling basis, but should be submitted by June 12, 2020. Discussion ensued regarding the RTAs intention to apply for the Community Transit Grant Program and distribution of the presentation.

5. FFY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Update:

A. Update on Data collection and ongoing studies

Mr. Paul Mission prefaced that SRPEDD has a number of updates for consideration of the JTPG. Regarding SRPEDD's data collection activities, including traffic counting, Mr. Mission expects the hold on this work to continue due to social distancing orders. Some counts will commence in the hopes to monitor traffic as we return to work. National Transit Data collections is also on hold and this will be suspended until further notice.

All this has presented other opportunities at the same time, which you'll hear about shortly.

B. Presentation of the Draft Transit Site Plan Review Study

Ms. Lizeth Gonzalez provided background and findings of the Site Plan Review Study. She highlighted the characteristics of both MEPA and Site Plan Review, while contrasting their differences. Most notably, she discussed the required collaboration and communication required under MEPA, but absent in all Site Plan bylaws of the region. Additionally, Ms. Gonzalez discussed the analysis of the Site Plan bylaws in the region, noting the discrepancy between the goals of improving transit and circulation and the lack of requirements for submission. The study also features discussions with both regional transit authorities that highlight the challenges and solutions associated with communication and enforcement. Lastly, Mr. Gonzalez summarized the templates of a comprehensive Site Plan Review and the addendum that mimics the MEPA Transit Impact Assessment for cities and towns to customize to their needs. The study will also be presented at the SMMPO to be released for a 21-day comment period. Attendees were invited to ask any questions, though none were presented.

C. Presentation of the Proposed Covid-19 Outreach Study

Ms. Gonzalez presented information regarding the purpose and objectives of the COVID-19 Outreach Study. The pandemic presents municipalities with unprecedented challenges related to transit, sidewalks, and public spaces. To respond to this, SRPEDD will conduct a survey to assess the challenges faced by cities and towns, as well as explore potential solutions. From this survey, SRPEDD staff will craft a public outreach campaign that will address the topics of the survey with the most interest.

D. Presentation of the Proposed Trails Mapping Study

Ms. Jackie Jones and Mr. Gregory Guertin presented updates to the Trails Mapping Study. Ms. Jones explained that this study is part of a larger statewide effort to get a better understanding of unpaved trails in the region. Several data sources currently exist, but these are largely limited to location with few standard details about parking or trail conditions. The goal is to create a unified and detailed trail database, which would help the regional bike plan to let people know what exactly is out there. This also ties into the travel and tourism element of our region's assets. Currently, we are compiling data, and identifying other sources. During the summer, the team hopes to collect field data independently, through municipalities, and potentially, volunteers.

Mr. Gregory Guertin explained that SRPEDD has collected about 2611 data points, which show 414 miles of trails within the region. This is not a complete list, some of the data is

outdated and trails have been changed or altered. Much of the data has come from the public and the data reveal inconsistencies, which explains the reasons for in-person field work. For example, our data suggests there are trails running through the Amazon facility in Fall River.

Mr. Alan Slavin inquired whether this mapping study would only entail public lands. The data collection process will highlight both public and private trails, but they clarified that this effort would only map trails that are open and accessible to the public. Mr. Ben Muller inquired whether this would be integrated at some point with MAPC's metro Boston Map. Ms. Jones said that this effort will contribute to the creation of a statewide database through MassGIS. Mr. Paul Foley requested to see trails in his town so they may be verified. Ms. Jones emphasized that this will be a collaborative effort with cities and towns.

E. Presentation of the Proposed Freight Action Plan

Mr. Guertin presented the scope of work for the Freight Action Plan, which will analyze global, national and statewide trends, while remaining sensitive to the needs of our communities. This assessment will enable communities to prepare for and mitigate impacts, and leverage economic growth and resilience in the region. This plan is meant to build on the 2009 study. Notably, the plan will consider a Freight-Advisory Task Force for the region and consider actions taken from the previous study to offer input on freight policy and public-private freight issues as well as data sharing. Building on that, the Plan will establish freight performance measures, while highlighting green technology and impacts of automation. The plan will produce a final report with story map, a map of freight generators, in addition to an update of the evaluation criteria for freight mapping.

6. Presentation and discussion of the FFY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), Materials Attached

Mr. Mission described the purpose of the UPWP, emphasizing that the program follows the federal fiscal year from October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021. The UPWP follows legislative guidance, FASTACT and builds on MAP-21 and SAFETEA-LU. There are three main sources of funding for the UPWP; they are FHWA, MassDOT and FTA which funds contracts for the regional transit authorities. The UPWP is made of up four major elements, (1) Management and Support of the Planning Process, (2) Regional Data and Modeling, (3) Transportation Plan Studies, (4) Special Projects.

Element 1 – Entails the 3C process, Public participation, Environmental Justice and Title VI as well as the development of this program and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Element 2 – Allows for the data collection, management and modeling for SRPEDD, transit authorities, as well as member cities and towns. This includes the regional traffic count program, pavement management, and community technical assistance. The work here assists with the TIP evaluation criteria and performance measures.

Element 3 – Building on the COVID-19 outreach efforts, this element enables Continuous Transportation Public Engagement in preparation for the 2024 Regional Transportation Plan. Additionally, this element enables Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning, Intermodal Coordination, Freight Movement, and ITS. Mr. Mission pointed to a pavement management program, which Ms. Jones is

developing for bicycle and shared use paths. Flood hazard mitigation will continue with consideration for culvert replacement and other drainage issues. The mobility management allows us to coordinate transportation services with the Southeastern Coordinating Council on Transportation (SERCCT), including the bus stop capital investment program and the bus stop inventory, which assists RTAs and the development of the TIP.

Element 4 – Considers the projects and activities SRPEDD collaborates with local RTAs and the mobility needs of the region’s communities. This might include route analysis, schedule adjustments, public outreach, translation, mapping and other activities.

The Draft UPWP will also be presented at the next MPO meeting and will be released for a 21-day comment period. SRPEDD will accept comments via email.

7. Draft FFY2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update

Ms. Lisa Estrela-Pedro presented updates for the Draft FFY2021-2025 TIP. Since the final submission of the Draft TIP, SRPEDD received two comments in writing and a budget update regarding a project. On April 30, 2020 we received one comment via e-mail from Bill Kenney, Fall River who stated he “approved as presented”. The additional comments were received via e-mail from MassDOT on May 5, 2020 with requests to update the financial plan for project 605888 Route 24/140 Interchange, which includes a cost increase and reorganization of funding sources. This cost increase will be presented at the next SMMPO meeting. SRPEDD received a request to update to Transit Lists from GrantsPlus, which became available shortly after release of the draft document and a request to include language connecting project evaluation and selection process to the adopted performance targets.

SRPEDD held a remote public meeting on April 6, 2020 via Zoom. There was one participant from Rehoboth and the projects in that town were reviewed, but the participant offered no comments on the draft TIP. Ms. Estrela-Pedro noted that cost increases for Raynham and New Bedford projects will lead us to reevaluate the total costs. She then welcomed any comments with preference for written comments for inclusion in the document, of which there were none.

8. SRPEDD Staff Updates: Mr. Mission announced the recent hire of two new technicians which will work on the traffic count program and flood hazard mitigation. They will begin on June 1, 2020. Julianne Griffiths was an intern at SRPEDD last summer and Emily Ann Doors is a physics major, with a civil engineering background.

9. Other Business: Next Tuesday at 6PM, May 19, 2020 SRPEDD will be hosting the Capitol Investment Plan meeting. Following this meeting, we will distribute the flyer for the CIP meeting.

The next JTPG meeting will take place on June 10, 2020 at 2PM. As of now, this meeting will take place virtually.

Mr. Omar Mejia introduced himself as a coordinator for the Safe Routes to School. He wanted to share a recent webinar and wanted to encourage online parent travel surveys. Mr. Mejia

encouraged anyone with questions to contact him directly.

10. Adjourn: Chairman Azinheira made a motion to adjourn at 3:08PM. The motion was made and seconded.