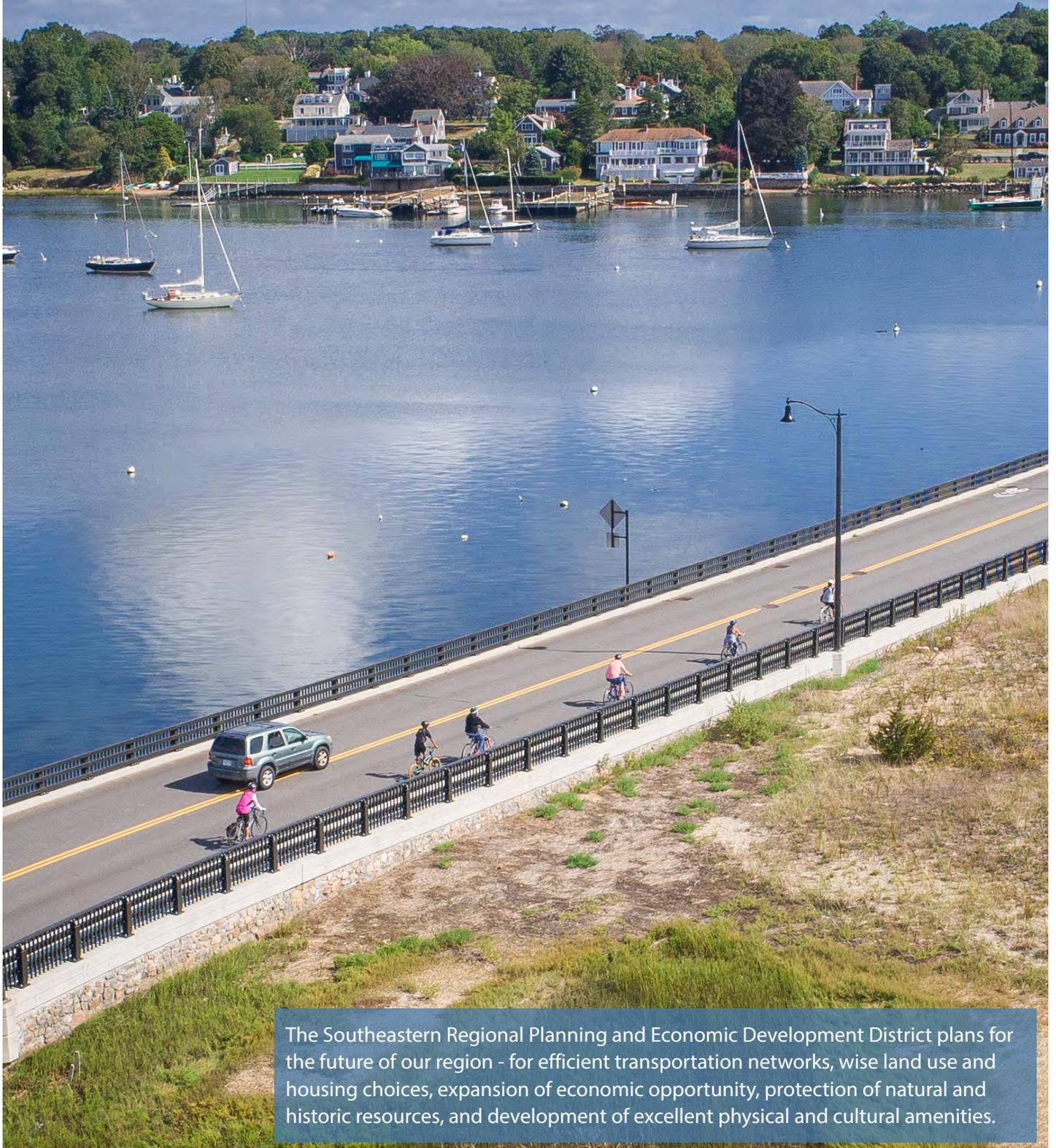


# 2021 SRPEDD ANNUAL REPORT



The Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District plans for the future of our region - for efficient transportation networks, wise land use and housing choices, expansion of economic opportunity, protection of natural and historic resources, and development of excellent physical and cultural amenities.

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Cover image: Padanaram Bridge, Dartmouth by Kevin Ham

*It is the policy of the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) to uphold and assure full compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 13166, Executive Order 12898, and related federal and state statutes and regulations. SRPEDD also upholds the Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law, M.G.L. c 272 §§92a, 98, 98a, and the Governor's Executive Order 526, section 4. For a complete policy statement, please visit <http://www.srpedd.org/title-vi-compliance>.*

# Letters to the Region



## Chair's Report

Alan Slavin, Commission Chair

This has been a Zoom year with virtually no in-person gatherings. I am, nevertheless, amazed at how much SPREDD has been able to accomplish.

The organization has continued to grow during the pandemic, adding further highly qualified staff, expanding its core services, and addressing area needs.

I have once again felt very privileged to work with such a great group of people: staff and Commissioners; local, state, and federal officials, across the region.

I look forward to the organization's many further successes!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alan Slavin".



## Welcome from the Executive Director

Jeffrey Walker, AICP, Executive Director

No different from the region that we serve, the agency has risen to the challenges of the past unprecedented year, and it has been great to see the extent to which all have been willing to step up.

The following pages, which highlight an ever more robust annual planning program, attest to this; made possible, thanks to the shared commitment of a uniquely talented Board and staff.

From competitive applications for outside funding, and timely completion of first-rate deliverables, to federal re-certification of transportation programs, and continuing progress with regard to outreach and participation, it is owing to the collective dedication of everyone affiliated with the agency that the organization has continued to grow and advance, in spite of the pandemic.

Indeed, I would not trade the opportunity to partner with such a team, nor go back on the myriad challenges of the past year if it meant having to miss out on being a part of such a remarkable, resilient community.

It is one of the reasons many of us went into planning—the incredible people one gets to serve, co-create and collaborate with, who make it all worthwhile.

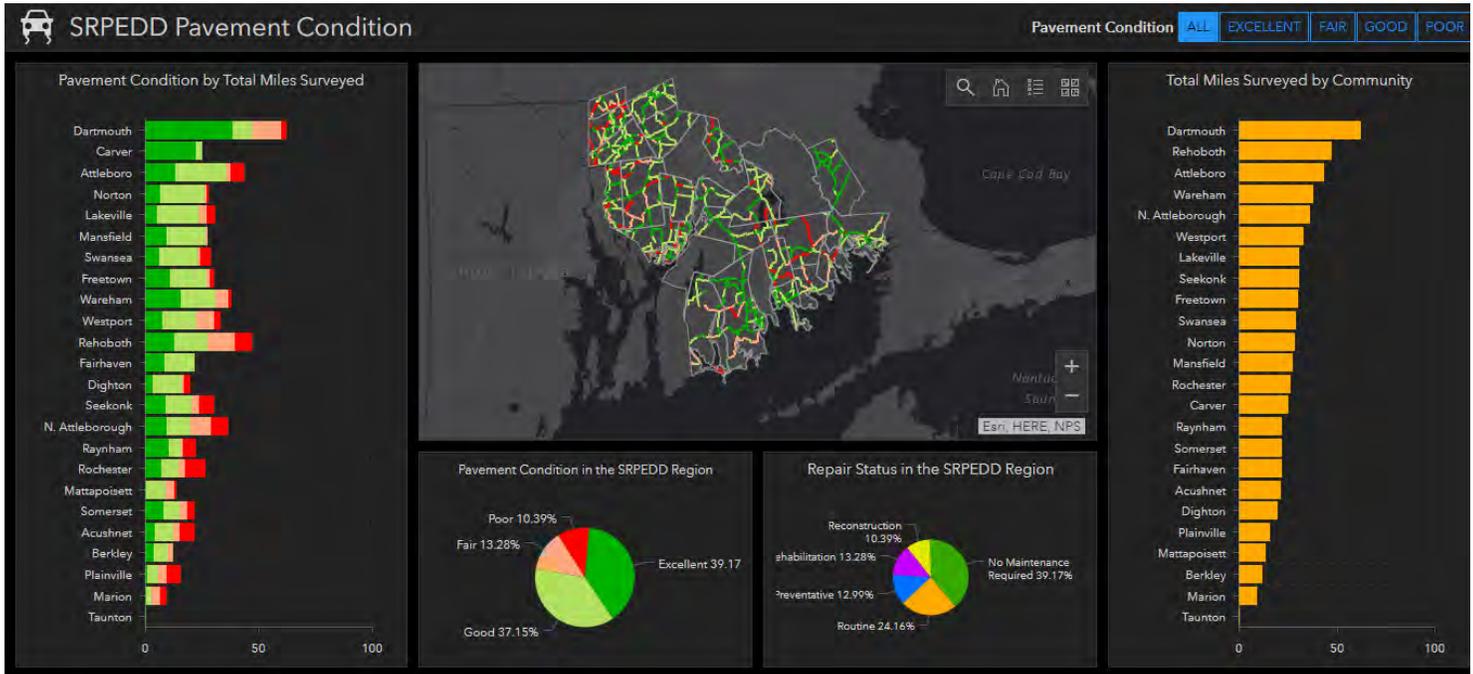
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Walker".

# Transportation Planning

## Pavement Management

Pavement Management is a process in which a network of roads is evaluated and rated to determine a schedule of maintenance to keep the roads in good to excellent condition. The ultimate goal of a pavement management program is to maintain these good to excellent road conditions into the future in the most cost-effective manner. SRPEDD’s Pavement Management Program is an ongoing effort to evaluate pavement conditions on federal-aid-eligible roads in the region. Staff completes windshield surveys to evaluate criteria such as potholes, cracking, bleeding, surface wear, drainage and other conditions. Collected data is then input into the Road Manager Software to rate the pavement conditions. The collected data is used for various studies and planning purposes and to assist communities. SRPEDD’s website includes an [interactive dashboard map](#) of pavement conditions in the region.

During 2020, surveys were completed throughout 18 communities. The communities surveyed were Berkley, Carver, Dighton, Dartmouth, Freetown, Marion, Mattapoisett, North Attleborough, Plainville, Rehoboth, Raynham, Rochester, Swansea, Somerset, Seekonk, Wareham, Westport and the remainder of Fall River from the previous year.



SRPEDD’s Pavement Conditions Dashboard

## Traffic Count Program

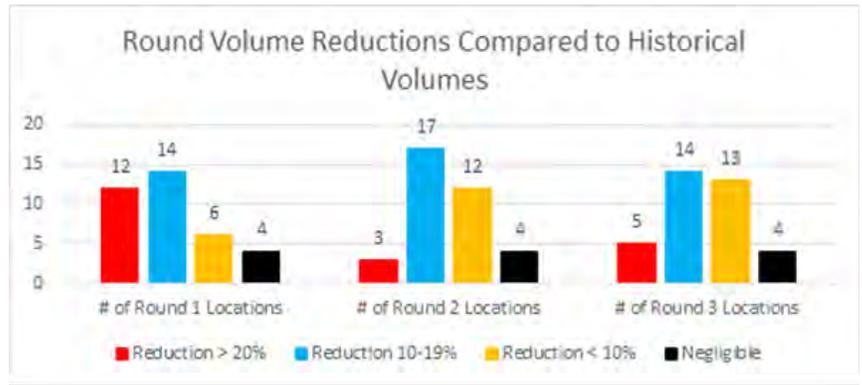
SRPEDD collected traffic count data at 79 locations, completing a total of 151 counts throughout the region during the 2020 season. This data is used for a variety of planning purposes, including safety and congestion studies, as well as using volume data to project conditions into the future, providing the opportunity to identify potential problems before they develop. Counts included 44 MassDOT assigned counts, 2 requested counts, and 36 (3 of which were also MassDOT counts) were part of SRPEDD’s COVID counting program. The COVID counts were each completed three times throughout the count season to monitor traffic patterns and changes (See the following article). Staff determined the average number of vehicles per day, average speed, and classification of vehicles (motorcycles, passenger cars, buses, and light and heavy trucks) at each location.

SRPEDD did not conduct any Turning Movement Counts (TMCs) due to the traffic pattern changes caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. See MassDOT’s Transportation Data Management System and SRPEDD’s Traffic Count Program for more information.

SRPEDD continued maintenance of its Signalized Intersection Database for every signalized intersection in the region using collected data and a software analysis tool which was then updated on SRPEDD’s website.

## SRPEDD’s COVID-19 Traffic Monitoring

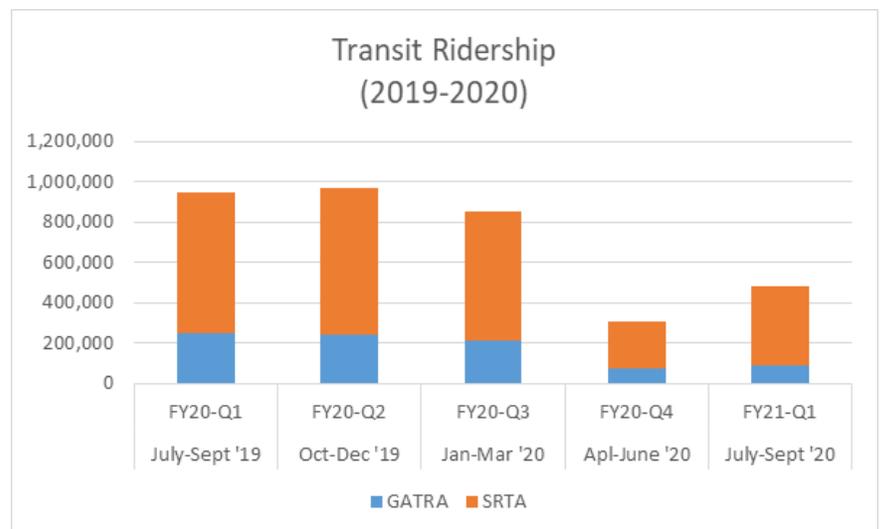
SRPEDD conducted a monitoring count program from June to November of 2020 to track the continuously changing traffic patterns during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the approval of MassDOT, a total of 36 locations were counted, a minimum of one location per each SRPEDD town, with additional locations within the 4 SRPEDD cities. Each location was counted on three separate occasions throughout the count season.



The analysis of the first-round counts revealed that at 12 out of the 32 locations with historical data, traffic volumes had dropped more than 20%. The second-round counts revealed that at 3 out of the 32 locations with historical data, traffic volumes were still 20% lower than normal. The third-round counts showed that the volume at 19 of the 36 locations, over half of the locations, were still reduced by 10% or more when compared to historical data. For more information about these and other area traffic counts, please contact Luis de Oliveira at [ldoliveira@srpedd.org](mailto:ldoliveira@srpedd.org).

## Transit Planning

Transit services were severely impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic which in turn, affected our transit planning activities. For both GATRA and SRTA, ridership plummeted beginning in March of 2020 when the Governor closed down the state to non-essential travel. As shown in the graph, the total ridership for GATRA and SRTA combined for Fiscal Year 2020 and the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2021 was a little over 3.5 million riders for all transit use (Fixed Route, Demand Response, shuttle services, etc.) with an average of 922,000 riders per quarter (25.9%). However, that total number dropped to 310,000 (8.7%) in the fourth quarter of FY 2020 with a slight increase of 385,000 (13.6%) in the first quarter of FY 2021. As a result, both RTAs pursued funding through the CARES Act to maintain operations in addition to providing options for their customers such as free fares and rear entry to the bus in order to maintain social distancing. However, temporary service cuts were necessary in order to reduce operating costs during the pandemic.



## Pre-timed Signal System Tech Memos

In 2020, SRPEDD evaluated the operation of pre-timed signal systems at six intersections; three in New Bedford and three in Fall River. In Fall River that included South Main Street at Pocasset Street and Sullivan Drive; Sullivan Drive at Third Street; and Fourth Street and Troy Street at Henry Seneca Drive and Pleasant Street. In New Bedford that included County Street at Elm Street; Coggeshall Street at County Street; and Acushnet Avenue at Wood Street.

The intersections were studied to see if the pre-timed nature of these signal systems caused unnecessary delay and greenhouse gas/carbon emissions, safety issues, and insufficient operation at the intersection. Each intersection underwent analysis to examine existing and future intersection operations and conditions, crash data, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Issues highlighted at the intersections included lack of ADA compliant bicycle and pedestrian facilities, geometric and lane layout challenges, outdated signal equipment and timing, and in some locations the need for improved bus stop infrastructure. Recommendations for improvement were provided to the communities via technical memorandums in November of 2020.



Pre-timed signals in New Bedford on County at Coggeshall



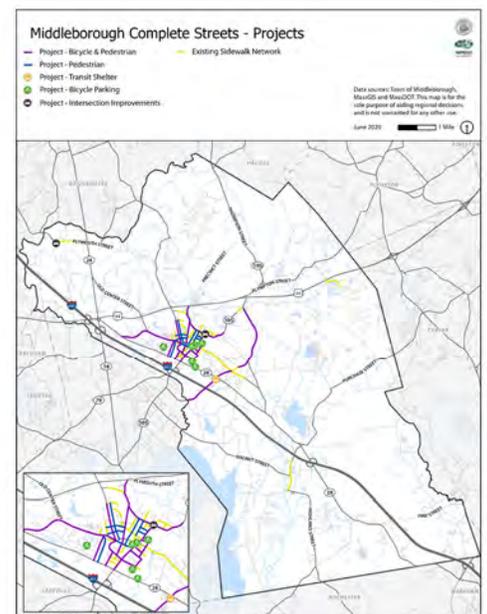
Pre-timed signals in Fall River on Sullivan at Third

## Complete Streets

Over the past 4 years, working with MassDOT’s Complete Streets Funding Program, SRPEDD has helped position many of our member communities (Dighton, Norton, North Attleborough, Plainville, Middleborough, and Carver) for state construction funding.

In 2020, SPREDD’s Complete Streets Program included: Completing the town of Middleborough’s Complete Streets Needs Assessment and Prioritization Plan and advancing the town of Carver’s Complete Streets Planning efforts.

Now and moving forward, SRPEDD is poised and ready to help member communities understand and navigate the MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program process. Please visit SRPEDD’s Complete Streets program webpage ([link here](#)) for more information and contact Jackie Jones at [jjones@srpedd.org](mailto:jjones@srpedd.org) with any questions or concerns.



Middleborough Complete Streets Projects Map

## Federal Certification Review

Every four years, the Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO) which is supported by SRPEDD, must go through a review process by our Federal partners of the U.S. Department of Transportation, to ensure we are meeting the guidance and strategies establish in national transportation bond bills. In January 2021, members of the review team from the Federal Highway and Transit Administrations met with the SMMPO board, SRPEDD Staff and members of the public to discuss planning efforts and practices for transportation planning and project development. Although a full report will be released in May 2021, the draft report recommended some improvements and a corrective action needed for the planning process. The report also commended the SRPEDD staff with efforts associated with public outreach and Title VI guidance. The SMMPO process is certified pending the recommendation and corrective action associated with this review. This certification is necessary for continued flow of transportation planning funds from the federal level through MassDOT to support transportation planning activities in southeastern Massachusetts.

## State and Federal Transportation Funding

SRPEDD staff works with communities and MassDOT to guide potential transportation projects through the system of scoring and project readiness assessment to get them onto the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) list for federal and state funding and ultimately, for implementation.

The TIP is the official 5-year document that lists all transportation projects in the region by federal funding category, including roads, bridges, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. It is prepared annually and has to be fiscally constrained, which means that it cannot exceed our annual assigned budget, known as our regional target. Our region of 27 communities was awarded \$21,370,281 in federal & state funds in FY2020. Although \$21 million seems like a lot of money, only four projects were able to be funded with regional target funds. The table below displays the federal obligated amount for both regional and statewide projects in our region that were awarded funding in FFY2020. Over \$54 million dollars was programmed for our region.

SRPEDD's Transportation staff is available to assist any community in navigating the Transportation Improvement Program's (TIP) planning process to fund improvements in their city or town. Please contact Lisa Estrela-Pedro at 508 824-1367 x236 or [lestrela@srpedd.org](mailto:lestrela@srpedd.org) with any questions or concerns.

FFY 2020 TIP Projects	Communities	Obligation
Interchange improvements at Routes 24 and 140, Including Replacing T-01-045 and T-01-046	Taunton	\$34,245,374
Intersection improvements at Hathaway Road, Mount Pleasant Street and Nauset Street	New Bedford	\$2,990,741
Corridor improvements & related work on Broadway (Route 138), from Leonard Street Northerly to Purchase Street (Phase 1)	Taunton	\$6,212,478
Intersection improvements & related work at John Glass Square	Middleborough	\$2,127,795
Resurfacing & related work on Route 44	Dighton & Taunton	\$4,612,915
Pavement preservation & related work on Route I-495	Middleborough	\$2,781,367
Installation of sign panels and supports at eight locations on Route I-195 and Route 24	Fall River & Westport	\$881,928
Expansion of Micotransit Pilot Program GATRA GO		\$215,488
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$54,068,086</b>

## Community Technical Assistance

SRPEDD provides community technical assistance when requested by our communities in regards to issues that do not require a comprehensive study. These studies usually include the need for data collection or reviewing existing data, site evaluations and a technical memorandum. The technical memorandum and data collected (which is provided with the final report) provides the community with the recommendations, alternatives, and a course of action based on the request received. Some requests by communities only require data collection with no further report or recommendations needed. Some of the projects completed in the past include Signal Warrants, Multi-Way Stop Evaluations, Road Issues Evaluation, and Truck Analysis to name a few.

Although most data collection was suspended due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, SRPEDD was in the beginning stages or had completed 5 community technical assistance requests in 2020 which are listed below.

- Attleboro – Rocklawn Avenue between West Street and Todd Drive (data only).
- Dighton – Start of the Safety Zone Technical Memo.
- Fairhaven - Fairhaven Benoit Square Truck Analysis Tech Memo.
- Mansfield - West Street west of Walnut Street (data only).
- Wareham - Cranberry Highway at Tihonet Road Signal Warrants Analysis Technical Memo Completion.

## South Coast Bikeway Feasibility Study

SRPEDD, in conjunction with the South Coast Bikeway Alliance (SCBA), were pleased to have been awarded a 2020 MassTrails Grant. The grant, totaling \$40,000 is funding Phase II of a feasibility study examining routing of the South Coast Bikeway between Fall River and Fairhaven, through Westport, Dartmouth and New Bedford.

The Feasibility Study will help determine the best route to close a gap that has long existed in the East Coast and MA trail networks between the Gateway Cities of Fall River and New Bedford. It will also examine critical links within Dartmouth and Westport in light of the anticipated South Coast Rail Commuter Rail Project.

Phase II efforts build on the work completed by SRPEDD under Phase I, which was funded by SCBA and the individual municipalities of Westport, Dartmouth and New Bedford through Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. Phase 1 efforts included an in-depth look and documentation of existing conditions. Phase 2 efforts include analysis of the feasibility of each routing option, as well as cost estimates, prioritization of routing options and an implementation plan. Phase 2 will be complete by June of 2021.



## Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning in the Region

SRPEDD staff was invited to participate in MassDOT's 2020 Moving Together Conference and provided a presentation on bicycle infrastructure efforts in the SRPEDD Region in conjunction with presentations on the Blue Lane Project in New Bedford and MassDOT District 5 efforts.

SRPEDD participated in a well-attended and highly successful workshop in November of 2020 with the South Coast Bikeway Alliance, the East Coast Greenway and the Solomon Foundation to showcase the progress on the South Coast Bikeway and highlight critical needs for connecting the pathway.

The South Coast Bikeway

Alliance (SCBA) continued efforts to create a network of trails spanning the South Coast from Swansea to Wareham. SCBA commissioned SRPEDD for Part 1 of a feasibility study to examine routing between Fall River and Fairhaven through the communities of Westport, Dartmouth, and Fairhaven, which was completed in September of 2020. SRPEDD received a MassTrails grant for Phase 2 of the study, which started in October of 2020 and will be complete by June of 2021.

The Taunton River Trail continued to advance. The Taunton Pathways Committee continues to revamp routing and pursue a phased development plan in collaboration with the Dighton Pathways committee. Work continues on the design of the trail through Sweet's Knoll State Park.

SRPEDD continued the automated bicycle and pedestrian counting program using Trafx Infrared counters that measure the volume of bicycle and pedestrian movements. These counters can be placed in a variety of locations including sidewalks and trails at the request of a community. A long-term counter placed on the Mattapoissett Rail Trail for over a year provided valuable data, as well as information about trail use during the pandemic.

Design proceeded on the Mansfield/Norton Rail Trail Extension, the Marion Pathway Phase 1, and the Wareham Minot Avenue/Narrows Road Separate Use Path projects, which are programmed on the TIP for Fiscal Years 2022, 2023 and 2025 respectively. Significant progress was made on the Mattapoissett Pathway Phase 1B construction.



*SRPEDD Moving Together 2020 Presentation*

## The Trails Mapping Program

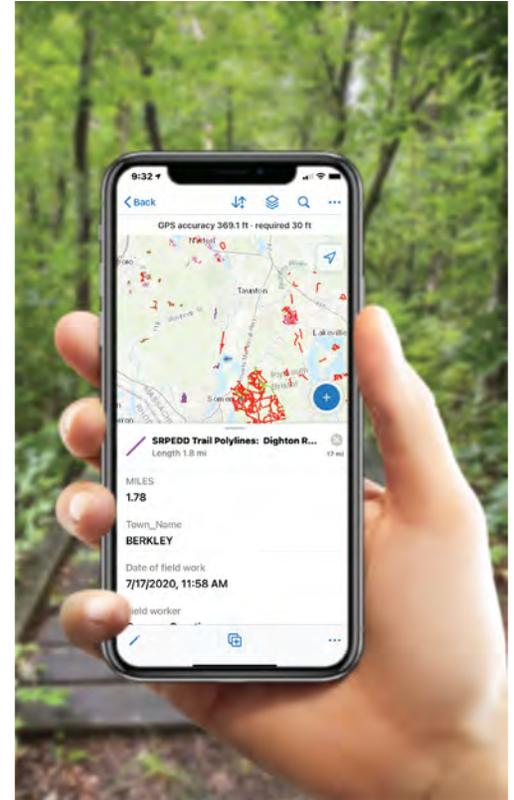
The SRPEDD region has many miles of public trails that provide access to nature, open space, opportunities for healthy recreation, as well as the potential to attract tourists. While some of these trails are well known and easily located, the majority are not.

To help identify and provide information on these valuable resources, SRPEDD launched a Trails Mapping Program in 2020. This program, in conjunction with a statewide effort, seeks to identify and collect data on trails to provide a unified resource for the public and municipalities.

Initially, the trails mapping team began by collecting GIS files and consolidating them into a database using mapping software. These efforts yielded 414 miles of identified trails, but since then, the total number of trails identified has grown to 633 miles. The database was used to create an ArcGIS Collector app, which was then used to collect data in the field.

SRPEDD staff collected a wide array of data points with the aim of increasing appropriate user access to the trails in the region. The data collected includes, but is not limited to trail width, trail condition, surface type, allowed recreational activities, trail difficulty, et cetera. Once fully compiled, this information will be a valuable resource to promote recreation and tourism in the SRPEDD region. When the project draws to a close, SRPEDD's database will be the most detailed and complete data set of public trails in Southeastern Massachusetts.

Accessible trails are trails that are considered accessible by Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Key features that make a trail accessible include a firm and stable trail surface, a clear tread width of 36 inches, and tread obstacles no more than 2 inches in height. Many of these trails also have other accessible features such as benches, guide ropes, guided audio tours, sculptures, and braille signs.



*ArcGIS Collector App used for Trails Mapping*



*Attaboro Springs accessible trail*



*Marion Osprey Marsh Landing accessible trail*

The SRPEDD team hiked 150 miles of the identified trails in 2020. A Year End Report was released for the program highlighting 2020 efforts and initial findings. It also highlights collaborate efforts with Norton and features information on ADA accessible trails in the region.



Above Images: SRPEDD employee, family members, and pets mapping the trails in the SRPEDD region

Next steps for the program include verifying and soliciting feedback on the data we have already collected while also gathering additional information on any trails we have yet to identify. If you are interested in connecting with our team about this project, please email Jackie Jones, Principal Transportation Planner via [jjones@srpedd.org](mailto:jjones@srpedd.org).

**20.4%**

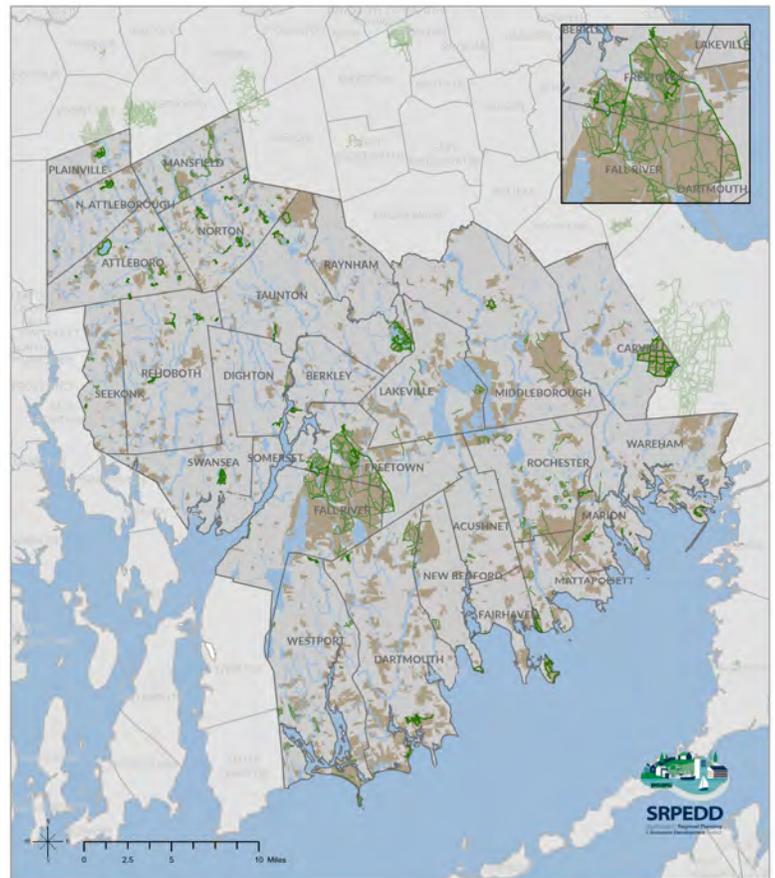
percent of mapped trails with data collected

**150 Miles**

of collected trail data in the SRPEDD Region

**322 Miles**

of mapped trails added to the database through outreach efforts



**Map Key**

**Field Work Status**

- Field Work Completed by SRPEDD Staff
- Field Work To-Be Completed in 2021-2022
- SRPEDD Region
- Open Space

December 12, 2020 Maps produced by SRPEDD are for the sole purpose of aiding regional planning decisions and are not intended for any other use. This map is not intended for engineering, legal, or survey purposes.  
 Data Sources: Mass DEM, All Trails, SRPEDD, DCR  
 (Source: See Credits, all other towns and land trusts within the SRPEDD region.)

The map on the right shows the progress the team has made during 2020. Shown in darker green are trails already mapped, and shown in lighter green are trails planned to be mapped.

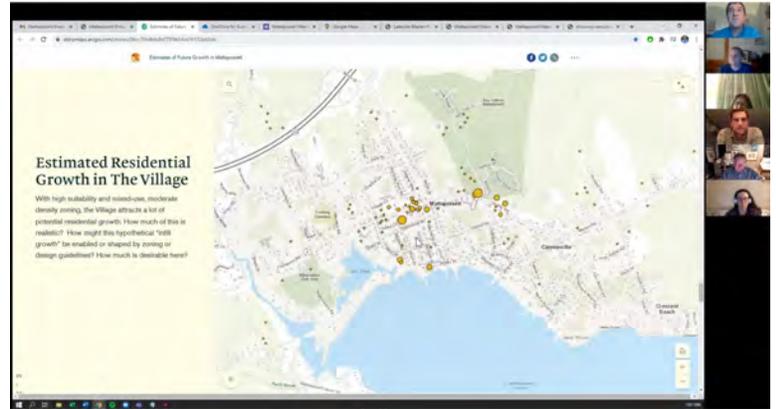
# Comprehensive Planning

## Meaningful, Innovation Master Planning in the Time of COVID

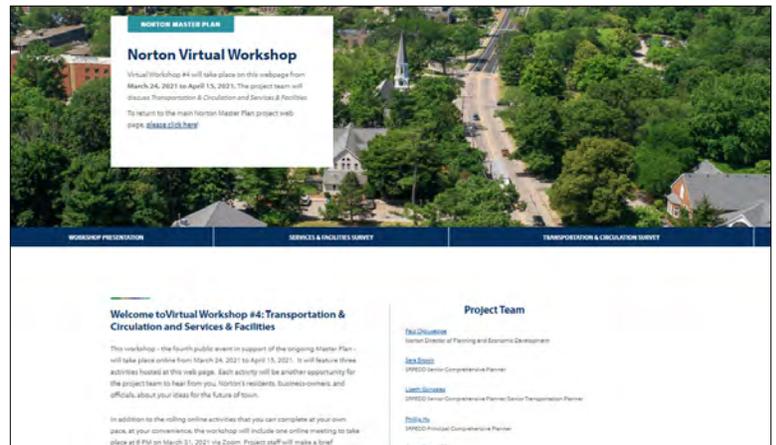
First, let's get the stats out of the way: In 2020, the SRPEDD Comprehensive Planning team launched our eighth, ninth, and tenth Master Planning efforts alongside Mattapoisett, North Attleborough, and Raynham. For each of these new plans – and for ongoing Master Plans in Berkley, Dartmouth, Lakeville, and Norton – SRPEDD facilitated several substantive and engaging workshops. During these events, which featured virtual meetings and rolling, multi-week activities hosted on unique web pages, we gathered the key insights and local perspectives that are so essential to Master Plans; see [www.srpedd.org/Mattapoisett-Virtual-Workshop](http://www.srpedd.org/Mattapoisett-Virtual-Workshop) for a good example. And Lakeville finalized, approved, and published their plan in 2020. We did all this – all together! – despite the ongoing pandemic.

Now for some background: More and more communities are clearly recognizing the value of a creating a comprehensive, long-range Master Plan and doing so through a public, collaborative process. The towns listed above join Carver (2017), Marion (2017), and Wareham (2018) as communities who have recently worked with SRPEDD to complete these essential policy documents. Each of these projects have benefited from a diverse funding pool that included DLTA and Community Compact resources, local funds, SRPEDD's free Municipal Assistance hours, and others. In turn, these funds pave the way for further state and federal program participation, increased infrastructure resources, more efficient government, and better outcomes – all guided by the public's vision for their community; all expressed in their Master Plan.

Finally, to 2021 and beyond: As we begin to find our way to a post-COVID normal, we're confident that Master Planning is here to stay. We're also confident that the measurable and meaningful successes that issue from each of these Master Plans make their value self-evident. And we're certain that SRPEDD can learn from last year's innovative online techniques, combine what we've learned with tried and true in-person workshops, and reach even more citizens with our planning. In short, we're hopeful that 2021 will present us with an opportunity to continue our meaningful, innovative Master Planning in partnership with our member communities. For more information, please see [www.srpedd.org/Master-Plans](http://www.srpedd.org/Master-Plans).



*Mattapoisett Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Virtual Workshop held in February 2021*



*Norton Master Plan Services & Facilities and Transportation & Circulation Workshop Website*

## District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA): An Essential, Enduring Program

Since 2009, Massachusetts has funded the District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) program to enable communities to complete a wide variety of planning projects in partnership with their RPA. Thanks to the State Legislature and the Baker-Polito Administration, this essential program continued in 2020, when SRPEDD funded 15 discrete projects. Many of these projects built on previous DLTA work, implemented an adopted Community Compact Cabinet (CCC) Best Practice, and brought matching resources to the table. In fact, in 2020, SRPEDD and project partners leveraged our DLTA allotment to create more than a 100% match from various local, state, and federal sources. These resources allow projects to span multiple years, to include more in-depth analysis, and to create improved outcomes for cities and towns in the region. Highlights from 2020 include: New Bedford's TOD Planning ([www.srpedd.org/New-Bedford-TOD](http://www.srpedd.org/New-Bedford-TOD), with funding from DLTA, MassDOT, SRPEDD, and the City); Wareham's Decas School Redevelopment Feasibility Study ([www.srpedd.org/Decas-School](http://www.srpedd.org/Decas-School), with funding from DLTA, U.S. EDA, and SRPEDD); and the Norton Master Plan ([www.srpedd.org/Norton-Master-Plan](http://www.srpedd.org/Norton-Master-Plan), with funding from DLTA, Community Compact Cabinet, SRPEDD, and the town). For more information, please visit SRPEDD's DLTA web page – [www.srpedd.org/DLTA](http://www.srpedd.org/DLTA).

## Creating Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) in New Bedford

For decades, encouraging development around public transportation hubs in the Commonwealth has been an ongoing strategy to address housing needs, produce sustainable jobs, and to move away from auto dependency. All across the state, these Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) areas are demonstrating the value of linking land use with public transportation – a partnership that benefits the residents who live there, the businesses and transportation agencies that serve them, and the communities looking to create sustainable and resilient neighborhoods. The reintroduction of commuter rail service to the South Coast has created these possibilities for Gateway Cities such as Taunton, Fall River, and New Bedford – all looking to reimagine the areas around these new stations.



*New Bedford TOD workshop held in January 2020*

Working with New Bedford's Planning Department and combining several funding sources (see the DLTA article in this report), SRPEDD has nearly completed a study of the two areas in the city that will soon host new commuter rail stations. This 2-phase, 24-month effort has included both in-person and virtual workshops and meetings, a substantial civic engagement program, a significant amount of analysis, and plenty of input from the public and key stakeholders. When complete, the study will provide the city with new TOD zoning overlay districts and design guidelines that will encourage new housing and business growth in compact, walkable areas, support the new public transportation investment, and complement the existing neighborhoods' character. SRPEDD has been proud to work on such an important project for the City of New Bedford and is looking forward to helping implement the study's vision in the years to come.

For more information about the study, please visit the project webpage - [www.srpedd.org/New-Bedford-TOD](http://www.srpedd.org/New-Bedford-TOD).

## Justice, Equity, and Community Development: A Responsibility to All Our Community Members

Whether it is through economic and community development, planning for safer streets, improving access to affordable housing, or strengthening coordination for a healthier environment, SRPEDD's regional planning mission is about building community and enhancing quality of life for everyone. The conversations that erupted about race, inequality, and social justice throughout 2020 prompted us to revisit the work we do every day. As planners, it is our responsibility to do the best work we can that serves everyone equitably. To better do so, SRPEDD created the Justice, Equity, and Community Development Task Force, with a long-term goal of increasing our community development efforts and actively incorporating just and equitable practices into all of our work.

Since its inception, the Taskforce has created a new mission and vision statement, revisited and rewritten our scoping and public outreach process, and began to incorporate justice, equity, and community development initiatives into all of our ongoing projects. These efforts are just the beginning of what will be a continuous, ever-changing endeavor to create more just, equitable, healthy, and safe living conditions and communities for all individuals and families in our region. For more information, please visit SRPEDD's Justice, Equity, and Community Development web page at [www.srpedd.org/JECD](http://www.srpedd.org/JECD).

### Building Equity and Inclusion through ADA Planning

In December 2020, the Massachusetts Office on Disability awarded the Town of Plainville with a Municipal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Improvement Planning Grant. The grant program equips cities and towns with the funds necessary to complete an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan as required by the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. SRPEDD partnered with the Town of Plainville to carry out the work program to produce a Self-Evaluation that identifies the programmatic and physical barriers to participation for individuals with disabilities and to create a Transition Plan that provides a schedule of improvements necessary to achieve ADA compliance.

During the four-month grant period, the project team utilized Matterport Technology to create 3D digital



*Example of Matterport Technology measuring counter height in the Plainville Town Hall*

models of all town-owned buildings. Matterport enables SRPEDD to conduct efficient data collection, allowing measurements of all physical spaces, while producing striking, modern visuals.

Participation in the MOD Grant Program makes meaningful progress on matters of equity and inclusion in Plainville and the region. Completion of the Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan will also make capital funding opportunities available to the town through the MOD ADA Improvement Grant Program. If you are interested in finding out more about the benefits and process of completing a Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan in your city or town, please visit [www.srpedd.org/Plainville-ADA](http://www.srpedd.org/Plainville-ADA).

## Ready to Launch Regional Housing Services at SRPEDD

In 2020, SRPEDD took the next step towards establishing an in-house Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO); RHSOs provide communities with a cost-effective solution to meeting their municipal affordable housing administrative requirements by offering proactive monitoring and maintenance of their subsidized affordable housing stock.

The first step in this process was selecting a community with which to pilot this initiative: Mansfield was a perfect “test case” thanks to its high number of affordable units and their relative diversity (with units developed under Chapter 40B and by local bylaws). The process began with SRPEDD staff gathering the critical documents (Comprehensive Permits, Special Permits, and Regulatory Agreements) for each affordable housing project in town. SRPEDD presented these documents and relevant affordable housing data for each project on the RHSO webpage –

[www.srpedd.org/RHSO](http://www.srpedd.org/RHSO). Next, armed with this current, comprehensive, readily available data, SRPEDD staff engaged in monitoring activities to ensure compliance with Permits and Regulatory Agreements.

In addition to a clear understanding of the town’s subsidized housing inventory (SHI), this work also resulted in extending the affordability status of 320 units by over 30 years – all thanks to basic research that would not have taken place without the RHSO work! These discoveries were welcome news to both the town and to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). And we’re confident that there are other discoveries out there.

### Mansfield (Pilot Community)

- 101 NORTH MAIN STREET (NORTH MAIN STREET)
- 214 RUMFORD AVENUE
- BAY BROOK VILLAGE
- BICENTENNIAL COURT
- CEDAR COURT
- COPELAND CROSSING
- DDS GROUP HOMES
- EDDY STREET
- HAWTHORNE COURT
- LINCOLN PLACE (THE CONDOMINIUMS AT LINCOLN PLACE)
- MADISON PLACE CONDOMINIUM (RUMFORD AVE)
- MANSFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY FAMILY RENTAL UNITS
- MANSFIELD MEADOWS
- ONE MANSFIELD (NORTH COMMON ESTATES)
- PARK COURT
- ROAD TO RESPONSIBILITY
- SPRING STREET MILL
- STATION POINT (VILLAGE AT MANSFIELD DEPOT I)
- STATION POINT (VILLAGE AT MANSFIELD DEPOT II)
- THE VILLAGE AT CEDAR HEIGHTS
- WEST VILLAGE (FAIRFIELD GREEN)
- WILLOWDALE



[View Master Deed](#)

[View Regulatory Agreement](#)

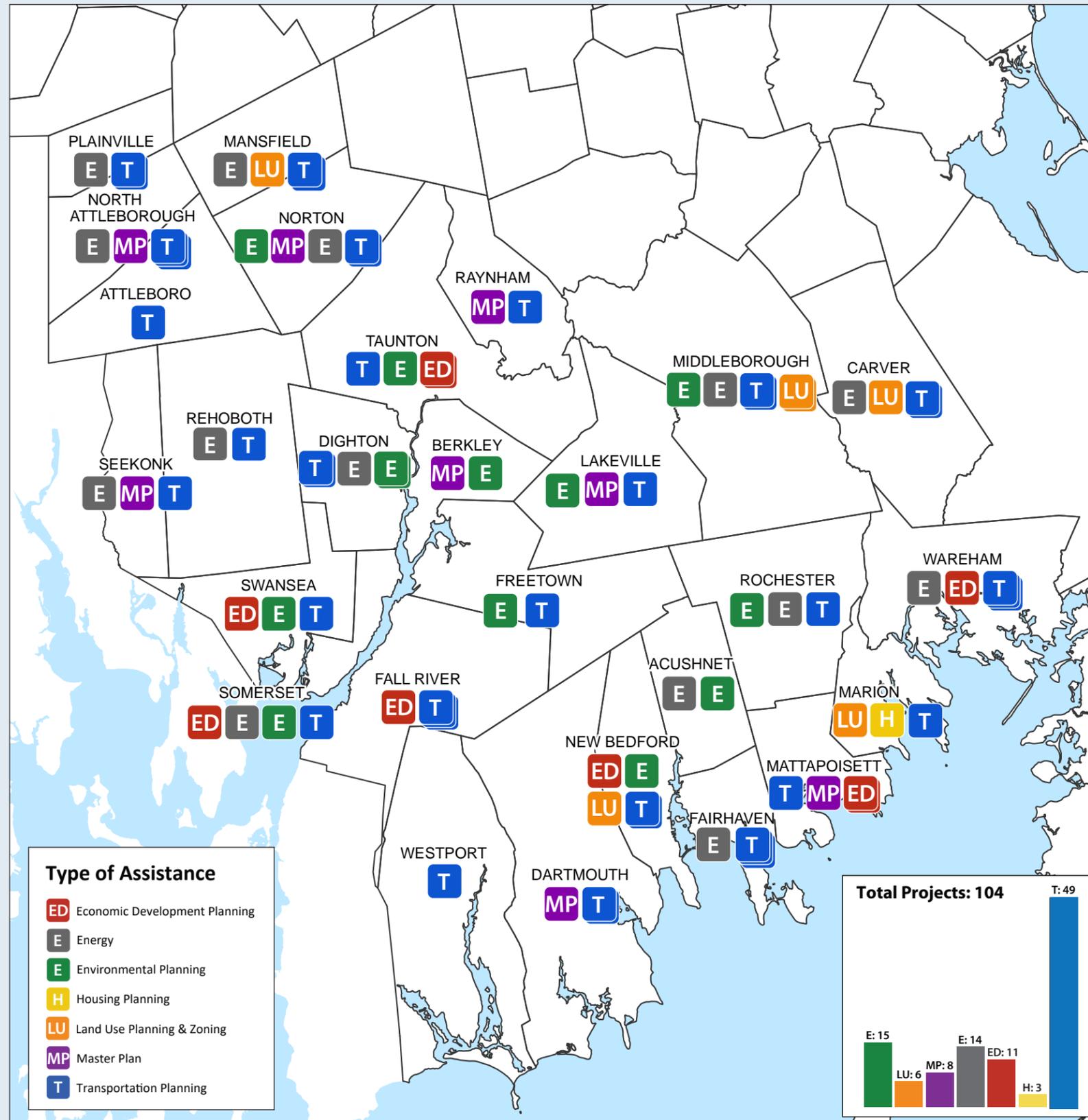
Address: 101 North Main Street  
 Rent or Own: Own  
 Housing Type: Family Ownership  
 SHI Units: 1  
 Restricted Units: 1  
 Market Units: 11  
 Total Units: 12  
 Income Eligibility: 80%  
 DHCD SHI ID#: 9770  
 Subsidizing Agency: DHCD  
 Monitoring Agent: Town of Mansfield  
 Is the Waiting List Open: No  
 Rental Type: N/A  
 Permit Type: Local  
 Affordability End: Perpetuity

*Mansfield was the pilot community for the RHSO website*

# Technical Assistance

SRPEDD provided technical assistance to all member communities during the past year. Funding came from the following sources: District Local Technical Assistance (Massachusetts Legislature), Economic Development (US EDA), Environmental Studies (US EPA, NOAA, Foundations, Local Contracts, Municipal Assistance (SRPEDD Assessments), SCR Technical Assistance (MassDOT), and Transportation Studies (MassDOT)

Acushnet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipal Vulnerability Planning</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Attleboro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Route 1 Corridor Study</li> </ul>
Berkley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Master Planning</li> <li>Municipal Vulnerability Planning</li> </ul>
Carver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Streets Application and Policy</li> <li>TDR Project Technical Assistance</li> <li>Complete Streets Prioritization Plan</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Dartmouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Master Planning</li> <li>Bike Path (Regional Plan) Assistance</li> </ul>
Dighton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culvert Management Plan Phase</li> <li>Speed Zone Sign Placement</li> <li>Regional Municipal Vulnerability Planning</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Fairhaven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bike Path (Regional Plan) Assistance</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> <li>Benoit Square Truck Exclusion Memo</li> </ul>
Fall River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bike Path (Regional Plan) Assistance</li> <li>Mothers Brook Sewer Upgrades EDA Application</li> <li>Pretimed Signalized Intersection Study</li> </ul>
Freetown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assawompset Pond Complex and Nemasket River Watershed Management and Climate Action Plan</li> </ul>
Lakeville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Master Planning</li> <li>Assawompset Pond Complex and Nemasket River Watershed Management and Climate Action Plan</li> </ul>
Mansfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bicycle Planning Technical Assistance</li> <li>TOD Area Build-Out and Indicators</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Marion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OSRD/Cluster Bylaw Updates</li> <li>Housing Production Plan Update</li> </ul>
Mattapoisett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Industrial Drive Applications</li> <li>Industrial Drive Infrastructure Improvement</li> <li>Master Planning</li> </ul>
Middleborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40R Zoning</li> <li>Historic/General Use District Bylaw Amendments</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> <li>Nemasket Survey &amp; Sediment Sampling (Repurposed MVP Funding)</li> <li>South Main Street at Mayflower Street Sight Distance Evaluation</li> <li>Assawompset Pond Complex and Nemasket River Watershed Management and Climate Action Plan</li> </ul>



New Bedford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TOD Market Study, Zoning, and Design Guidelines</li> <li>OSRP Design and Civic Engagement</li> <li>North Terminal Phase 2 EDA Application</li> <li>Pretimed Signalized Intersection Study</li> </ul>
North Attleborough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Route 1 Corridor Study</li> <li>Master Plan and Housing Production Plan</li> <li>Bicycle and Pedestrian Mapping</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Norton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Master Planning</li> <li>Waterbody Access Master Plan</li> <li>Bicycle Committee Technical Assistance</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Plainville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Streets Prioritization Plan</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Raynham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Master Planning</li> </ul>
Rehoboth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Rochester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> <li>Assawompset Pond Complex and Nemasket River Watershed Management and Climate Action Plan</li> </ul>
Seekonk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services &amp; Facilities Master Plan Element</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Somerset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project manager for the EDA-funded inflow and infiltration water and sewer construction improvement project and wastewater district creation via an IMA</li> <li>Municipal Vulnerability Planning</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Swansea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Municipal Vulnerability Planning</li> <li>Wastewater District Assistance</li> </ul>
Taunton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Development Marketing</li> <li>MSIP V - Business Park</li> <li>Fraga Farm Plan</li> </ul>
Wareham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decas School Redevelopment Plan</li> <li>Bike Path (Regional Plan) Assistance</li> <li>Bicycle Committee Technical Assistance</li> <li>Green Communities Program Assistance</li> </ul>
Westport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic Counts - Old County Road between Drift Road and Reed Road and Briggs Road west of Route 88</li> </ul>

\*The table does not include the numerous traffic counts, turning movement counts, and the assistance to South Coast Bicycle Alliance that we completed across the region.

# Economic Development

## CARES ACT

On June 24, 2020, the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded SRPEDD \$400,000 from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Recovery Assistance grant. EDA CARES Act Recovery Assistance provides a wide range of financial assistance to eligible communities and regions as they respond to and recover from the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. Tasked with updating economic development plans and enhancing programming to assist communities in responding to the coronavirus pandemic, SRPEDD rapidly mobilized and tapped into existing talent to expand outreach, grant-writing, and reporting.

Building on the existing infrastructure of the RESC, staff revamped and enhanced outreach to committee members to explore partnerships and potential regionally impactful projects. This past year alone, SRPEDD assisted 14 communities establishing economic development priorities, funding strategies, as well as completing grant applications for a variety of programs, including MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces, MassDevelopment Technical Assistance, Community One Stop for Growth, and U.S. EDA. These applications represent a potential of over \$2 million in CARES-related investments for the region. In the coming year, SRPEDD seeks to continue working with communities to pursue opportunities that strengthen our economy – through our CARES work program and our complementary economic development efforts.

## Somerset Water and Sewer Improvements

Somerset, with the assistance of SRPEDD was awarded a third Economic Development Administration grant under the Assistance to Coal Communities (ACC) program. The project will provide for construction improvements to water and sewer lines to address inflow and infiltration issues, and free-up additional sewer capacity in Somerset's wastewater treatment facility. Under a recently signed inter-municipal agreement between Somerset and Swansea the initial additional capacity we allow the neighboring Town of Swansea to tie-in to the Somerset sewer system and expand sewer service along the Route 6 corridor to address Title V issues and generate future economic development opportunities as well as generate fees to assist Somerset with future upgrades to the sewer treatment plant. Total project estimated at \$1.3ML with construction scheduled for May 2021. SRPEDD is providing project management services to Somerset.

## Inter-municipal Agreement Signed

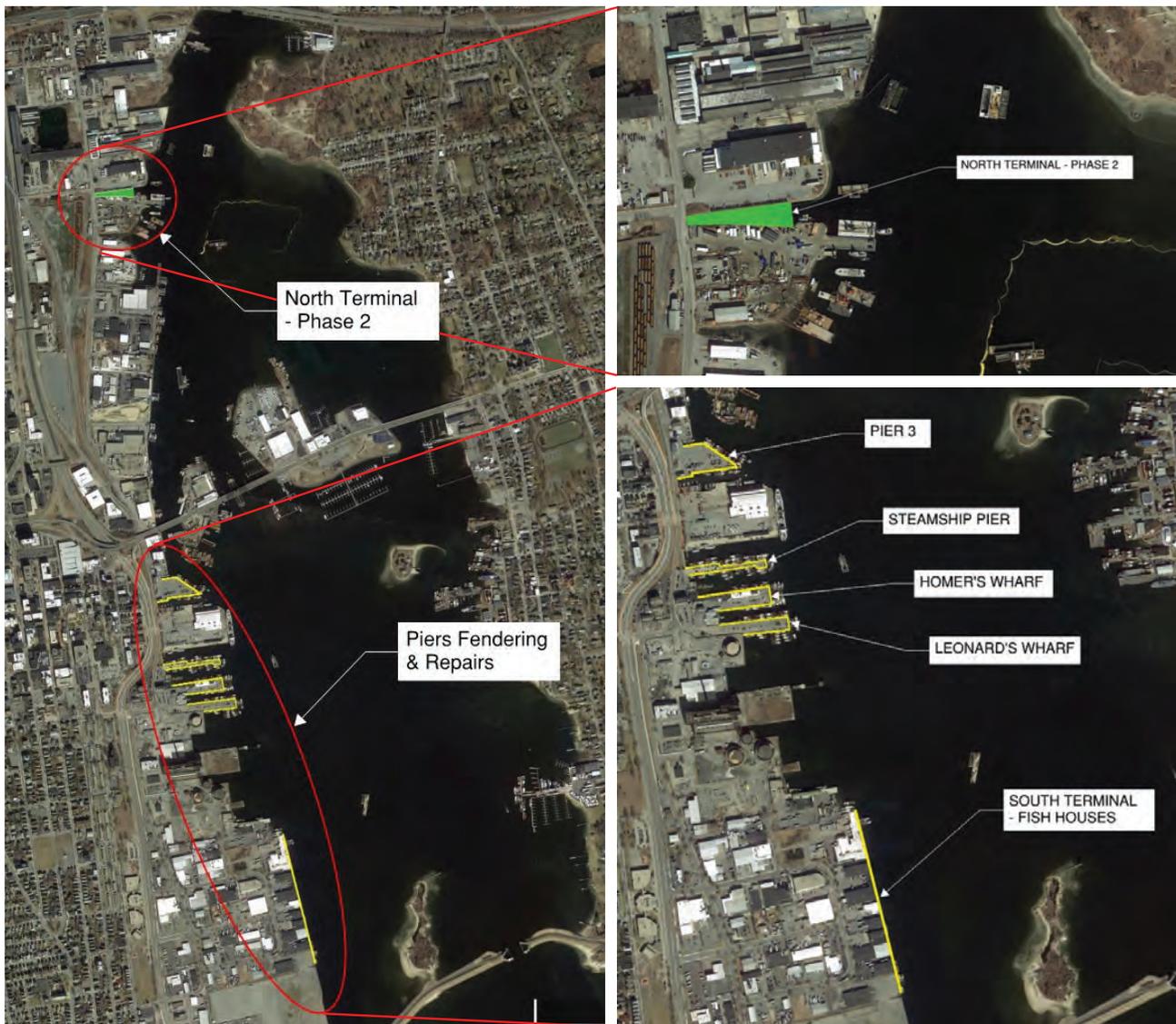
As part of an initial EDA planning grant award valued at \$1.1ML Somerset and Swansea for more than a year worked on negotiating a recently executed inter municipal agreement (IMA) to provide sewer service to Swansea, which will open up new economic development opportunities along the Route 6 corridor and assistance with Title V issues in Swansea. The IMA is also expected to lead to additional economic development potential in Somerset and provide much needed fees to assist with future upgrades to the sewer treatment plant. Additionally, the agreement sets precedent for potential future service along Route 138 in Dighton including associated economic opportunities as well. The planning grant which has closed out also provided Somerset with an Integrated Water Resource Management Plan, Comprehensive Master Plan and Economic Development Plan laying the ground work for future development. The project was also managed by SRPEDD.

## City of New Bedford and Port Authority receives \$16 Million U.S. EDA grant.

In October of last year, the City of New Bedford and the New Bedford Port Authority, with SRPEDD's direct assistance, received a \$16 million U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant award funded under the Supplemental Disaster Program; this grant was matched with \$4 million in local funds for a total project cost of \$20 million. This investment will provide assistance to New Bedford's Phase II North Terminal Expansion and Pier Fendering System Improvements.

This grant is one of the largest EDA ever awarded through the Philadelphia Regional Office, as well as the largest EDA grant ever received by a Massachusetts community. The project consists of filling in a 33,000 s.f. area to create additional development space for processing, distribution, and dockage space for off-shore wind under North Terminal Phase II. It also includes pier fendering improvement for five piers and wharves serving the port, including the Steamship Pier, Leonard's Wharf, Pier 3, Homer's Wharf, and South Terminal. Special thanks to New Bedford state delegation and area federal representatives for their support for this project.

For more information, please visit [www.srpedd.org/Economic-Development](http://www.srpedd.org/Economic-Development).

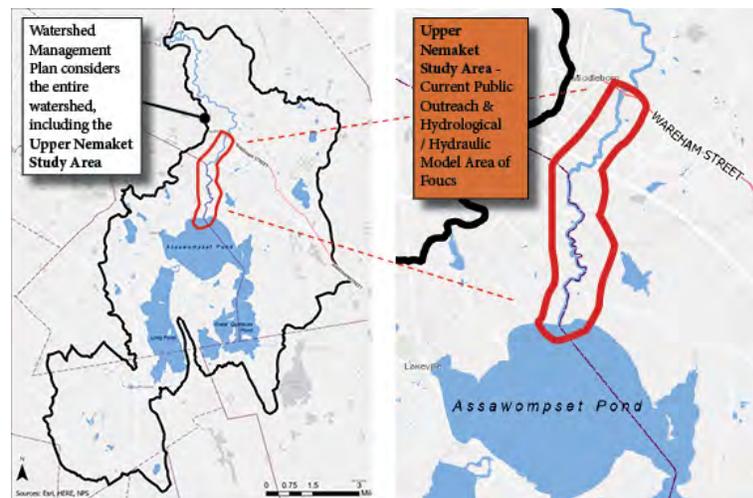


Port of New Bedford project diagram

# Environmental Planning

## Assawompset Pond Complex and Nemasket River Planning

In the last year, SRPEDD's Environmental Team has been heavily engaged in planning for the long-term health and improvement of the Assawompset Ponds Complex (APC) and Nemasket River watershed area, which spans the communities of Lakeville, Middleborough, Rochester, Freetown and which also serves as the water supply for the Cities of New Bedford and Taunton. After working through an initial Flood Management Program grant from the Division of Ecological Restoration, SRPEDD and its project partners, including the APC Management Team, MassAudubon, TNC, and Horsley Witten Group, made a quick transition into implementing the top priority action items to come out of that process.



*Assawompset Ponds Watershed and Nemasket River Study Area*

First, SRPEDD obtained two sources of Technical Assistance to focus on the Upper Nemasket River from the outlet of the APC dam in Lakeville to the Wareham Street Bridge in Middleborough; a Hydrological and Hydraulic study supported by a grant from the SNEP Network and a Community Engagement process supported by the Taunton River Stewardship Council. The project team was then able to leverage these efforts to obtain a two-year \$125,000 Regional MVP Action Grant to develop an APC and Nemasket River Watershed Management and Climate Action Plan, a process that will unfold through June of 2022.

While SRPEDD is conducting the grant work, this project would not have been possible without our RTWN team and the decades of working preceding from the APC Management Team, which meetings quarterly and includes representatives from town and city staff, water suppliers, river access and herring stewards, and state agency partners. It has been a lesson in the true power of partnerships to harness focused investment in watershed scale efforts. The entire project team are also grateful for the support from local state representatives including Representatives Orrall and Schmid, Senator Rodrigues, as well as from the Governor's Office and EOEEA.

## Climate Resilience and Floodwater Management at Assawompset Pond

In December 2019, the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration (DER) awarded \$100,000 to the Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SRPEDD) to design a floodwater management program. SRPEDD's Environmental Program staff convened a project technical team, including staff from Manomet, The Nature Conservancy, Mass Audubon, and the Horsley Witten Group, and a committee of municipal and other stakeholders, to work together to identify and prioritize potential flood mitigation actions in the Pond Complex and Nemasket River. The stakeholder team identified six priority projects for managing flooding, including dam, spillway and fish ladder upgrade and repair, culvert upgrades, and wetland restoration.

On July 17, 2020, Governor Charlie Baker, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides, Senator Michael Rodrigues, Representative Norman Orrall, state

and local officials, and project partners gathered to tour the Assawompset Pond region and discuss a climate resiliency project led by a state, regional and local partnership, looking to reduce future flooding, increase resilience to climate change, and restore habitat for fish and wildlife.

“The Assawompset Pond region is a critical natural resource for Southeastern Massachusetts, offering valuable habitat, drinking water and outdoor recreational opportunities to residents,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “Climate change is expected to worsen flooding issues in this area, and this state and local partnership will ensure the region is prepared for climate change while protecting public safety and wildlife habitat.”



*Gov. Baker at an Assawompset Pond Project event*

“Flooding doesn’t limit itself to town boundaries, so regional planning is essential,” said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. “This project highlights the importance of working with communities and local stakeholders on vital local projects to create a more resilient Commonwealth for generations to come.”

“As we’ve seen through our nation-leading Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program, locally led and regionally based climate adaptation planning and implementation is critical to ensuring climate and flooding resilience,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides.

Led by SRPEDD, the stakeholder group has continued working together and securing additional funding from various sources in order to carry out the priority projects. All of the projects will build community resilience to climate change, improve public safety, restore habitat for fish and wildlife, create jobs, help communities address aging road and water infrastructure, and improve access to the outdoors for recreation.

## A Unique Partnership in Stewardship of the Outstandingly Remarkable Values of the Taunton River

In 2009, the Taunton River received federal designation as a Wild & Scenic River. It is also part of the National Park Service’s Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers (PWSRs) Program. PWSRs represent a unique partnership between the National Park Service (NPS) and local, regional, and state stakeholders. This locally-driven, collaborative planning and management approach to river conservation is an effective alternative to direct federal management and administration. The Taunton River Stewardship Council (TRSC) is the local partner group working with NPS to help protect, manage, restore, and enhance the Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) of the Taunton River. The ORVs of the Taunton River, which were identified during the study leading to PWSR designation, include: Agriculture, Ecology and Biological Diversity, Estuary, Fisheries, History and Archaeology, and Recreation.

### Taunton River Stewardship Council

- SRPEDD, through National Park Service funding, provides staffing, administration, and technical assistance to the TRSC on behalf of the federally designated Wild & Scenic Taunton River. The TRSC is comprised of delegates from the ten (10) cities and towns abutting the mainstem Taunton River,

from Bridgewater to Fall River, as well as nine (9) representatives from non-profits, tribal organizations, state agencies, and the federal government.

- In 2020, despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the TRSC continued its successful mini – grants program, committing over \$130,000 in a number of local and regional river related projects, highlights of which included:
- Provided match funding for the Assawompset Pond Watershed Comprehensive Management and Climate Resilience Plan, working with Rochester, Freetown, Lakeville, Middleboro, Taunton, and New Bedford;
- Continued to provide support to the Taunton River Watershed Alliance (TRWA) to help make improvements to the River Education Center, a regional asset located at Sweets Knoll State Park in Dighton;
- Provided funding to the MA Division of Ecological Restoration’s Mill River Restoration Project in Taunton;
- Provided funding for an Upper Nemasket River Enhancement Plan in Middleboro and Lakeville, and TRSC tribal representatives;
- Provided funding for upgrade and enhancement to the Bridge Village Heritage Park in Berkley;
- Funded Phase V of the TRWA sponsored Diamondback Terrapin Study of Assonet Bay, Broad Cove, Assonet Bay, and the Lower Taunton River Estuary, in Dighton, Freetown, and Somerset; this is regarded as a foundation project of its kind by the state;
- Provided partial funding for improved access at the Oliver House property in Middleboro, along the Nemasket River.

## Flood Inundation Hazard Program

The goal of the Flood Inundation Hazard Program (FIHP) is to develop field observation derived data and visual records for selected sites, carried out over a number of years, in order to:

- establish patterns and trends of tidal encroachment on our coastal and estuarine systems; evaluate impacts to our man-made (gray) and green infrastructure;
- evaluate impacts to our riverine systems due to storm or climate related impacts, and;
- offer potential solutions, resources, and partnerships in order to address problems.

In 2020, SRPEDD staff continued its culvert assessments, stormwater, and flood hazard related fieldwork in the Taunton River estuary, the Assawompset Ponds Watershed, the Canoe River Aquifer, Runnins River, and the Eel Pond watershed. These activities involved direct engagement with municipal (Dighton, Somerset, Swansea, and Berkley; Freetown, Lakeville, Middleboro, Rochester, Taunton, and New Bedford; Mansfield, Norton, Easton, Seekonk, and Mattapoisett) and state, federal, and non-profit partners (EPA, NOAA, NPS, DER, DEP, EEA MVP Program, MassDOT, Manomet, Mass Audubon, The Nature Conservancy, Middleboro-Lakeville Herring Fishery Commission).

New projects for 2020-21 and those in development for the coming years:

- SRPEDD has started a new two-year initiative to develop a regional Roadway Flood Hazard Project Development Database, which is a spatial database that combines road network information with flood hazard information and environmental data to show a selection of projects where flood

mitigation roadway infrastructure projects would also be highly impactful in addressing natural resource and ecosystem concerns if these goals are also designed into the project.

- Year one achieved the construction of the database framework populated with basic actionable information and spatial layers.
- Year two will include an enrichment of flood hazard data, with the intention
- of brining in FEMA's HAZUS tool for determining more precise flood depth grid data, and further enriching the environmental datasets by digitizing data collected from SRPEDD's GRRIP program and all of the MVP program recommendations related to flooding that were included in local MVP plans.

## Norton Water Access Master Plan

SRPEDD is working with the Norton Conservation Commission to assess and create a plan for improved access to the town's waterbodies and waterways. The few parcels that the town currently has available are small and are heavily utilized during peak hours and times of year. The goal of the Water Access planning project is to create multiple access points for each of the waterbodies that will relieve some of the pressures felt by residents. This project will be a multi-phase project and take a few years to complete but we are confident it will be a benefit overall to people who would like to access the ponds for boating and fishing and for the residents who live near the boat launch areas. For more information, please see the webpage at the [link here](#).

## Assessing Nutrient Reduction Scenarios in the Wareham River Watershed

SRPEDD is partnering with the Buzzards Bay Coalition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Cape Cod Cranberry Growers' Association, the University of Massachusetts Cranberry Station, and the Woods Hole Research Center on a DEP 604(b) grant funded project entitled "Assessing Nutrient Reduction Scenarios in the Wareham River Watershed."

The Wareham River watershed is the third largest sub-watershed in the Buzzards Bay Basin and includes portions of the towns of Plymouth, Carver, and Wareham. The Wareham River has experienced loss of eelgrass, oxygen depletion, and excess algae growth. It is listed as impaired for total nitrogen, estuarine bioassessments, and fecal coliform on the Massachusetts Year 2016 303(d) Integrated List of Impaired Waters. High levels of nitrogen reach the Wareham River from various sources including septic systems, treated sewage, cranberry bogs, stormwater, and lawn fertilizer.

For this project we have applied an existing model and recent research findings to examine how different potential scenarios of cranberry bog restoration could contribute to the target of reducing nitrogen loads by 40% in the Wareham River Watershed. Understanding the likely reductions to be expected from different nitrogen sources is critical for towns across southeastern Massachusetts as they seek to meet nitrogen reduction targets. The project is slated for completion in June of 2021.

## Open Space and Recreation Planning

The City of New Bedford requested SRPEDD's assistance to advance the city's efforts to finalize its Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) in support of its open space and recreation planning and provisioning. Specifically, SPREDD will generate the layout and design of the final public-facing products of the OSRP process. These products include the final OSRP written document and an online interactive map that demonstrates plan recommendations and action items.



and coordinate the project, provide technical resources needed to carry out the project work and collaborate with the SNEP Network resources, regional partners that include Manomet and Southeast Regional Economic Development District (SRPEDD) and most importantly the communities and stakeholders in the project area (Mansfield, Norton, Easton, Foxboro, Sharon).

### Work Plan Summary

The Canoe River Aquifer project is in alignment with the jointly held goals of the SNEP Network and the RTWN while providing the opportunity to demonstrate the benefit of broad community engagement, regional planning and the importance of monitoring at the local scale. SNEP Network partners have agreed to assist the Canoe River Aquifer Protection Through Regional Application of Nature Based Solutions. The goals of the project are:

1. Engage the community in identifying opportunities to advance nature-based solutions, smart land use planning, land protection, and habitat restoration, to enhance community and watershed climate resiliency and aquifer protection.
2. Identify 10 projects along with the steps needed to implement them.
3. Identify and implement capacity building measures.
4. Conduct baseline monitoring and provide Easton with a monitoring protocol and training to carry out long-term monitoring of restoration success at Sam Wright Farm.

## SRPEDD-SEMAP Partnership Promotes “Room to Grow” Agricultural Soils Story Map

SRPEDD staff has been working with our partners at SEMAP, Jean Fox of Mass DOT’s South Coast Rail (SCR) Project, and State Representative Paul Schmid of Westport, to develop a pilot program based on the previous municipal Priority Protection/Priority Development (PPA/PDA) site work conducted in conjunction with the South Coast Rail Corridor Study. The new SRPEDD GIS based story map, created by Helen Zincavage, identifies areas of prime agricultural soils and agricultural soils of statewide importance within the proposed SCR Phase I Corridor. Large tracts of these soils occur in areas identified in the PPAA/PDA reports. Many of these areas are currently unprotected, and are also critical for their habitat values and carbon storage potential, which help to make our region more resilient to the impacts of climate change. Ignored or undetected, this valuable land could be lost to secondary development associated with the construction of new rail stations and housing.

In 2020, SRPEDD’s Environmental staff presented their work to the state’s Inter-agency Lands Committee, the SEMAP Annual Meeting, the Southeastern Massachusetts Legislative Caucus, and the Westport Board of Selectmen.

# Homeland Security

## Improving the Region's Interoperability: Copicut Hill Communications Tower

Over the course of the last year, SRAC and SRPEDD support staff has been working closely with two private firms to construct a new radio communications tower at Copicut Hill in Fall River. This tower will enhance radio interoperability coverage throughout Bristol and Plymouth counties – providing instrumental support to public safety operators by strengthening their ability to communicate effectively.

This past year, the land around the construction site was cleared, all site preparation work was done, the 180-foot tower was built, and the communications shelter, which will house the ground mounted telecommunications and data equipment was completed. This weather-tight, insulated shelter will be used to send radio transmission signals to several microwave dishes and transmitters that will eventually be installed on the tower.



*Copicut Hill Communications Tower, Fall River*

## SRPEDD's Tabletop Exercising Capabilities at Work

As active shooter events are becoming more prominent in the nation, public safety officials in the SRAC region are continually participating in group trainings and exercises to prepare for needed response. Recently, SRPEDD's Homeland Security team, having the capability to design, execute, and document exercises, directed an Active Shooter Tabletop Exercise (TTX) at Bridgewater State University. Working with sixteen state and municipal public safety partners, along with Bridgewater State University stakeholders, nearly forty individuals participated in this event.

The exercise utilized several realistic active shooter scenarios designed to prompt different types of discussion.

The exercise had three objectives:

- Facilitating a discussion of tactics, protocol and procedures when responding to an active shooter/hostile event.
- After an active shooter/hostile event, identify strengths and weaknesses of a response by initial responding agencies and mutual aid partners.
- Improving coordination and communication between responding agencies.

All three objectives were met by this exercise, and several strengths and areas for improvement were identified. Strengths included unity of priorities during all phases of response, excellent cross discipline discussion and communications, and cooperation between agencies. Areas for improvement included more detailed and robust dispatch policies and procedures, communications equipment, planning, and procedures, and a need for more joint exercises and training.

SRPEDD's Homeland Security team is available to help your community with these types of events – visit our webpage ([www.srpedd.org/Homeland-Security](http://www.srpedd.org/Homeland-Security)) to connect with us.

## Focusing on Enhancing Cybersecurity in a Digital World

During National Cyber Security Awareness Month in October, SRAC and SRPEDD support staff worked closely with the other regional Homeland Security Councils to complete the construction of a six-part cybersecurity training. Based on the Department of Homeland Security's Cyber and Infrastructure Security Agency (DHS/CISA) Cyber Essentials Toolkit, these six online trainings were developed to lead municipal officials through a holistic approach to create a "cyber-secure" environment.

Along with two webinars, led by local subject matter experts, each module focused on a specific area: Yourself, Your Staff, Your Systems, Your Surroundings, Your Data, and Your Actions Under Stress, which together help you to build a culture of cyber readiness. The modules were self-paced, approximately 10 minutes in length, and are available to access anytime on SRPEDD's SRAC webpage ([www.srpedd.org/homeland-security/cyber-training](http://www.srpedd.org/homeland-security/cyber-training)). Additionally, the two webinars (Part 1, Modules 1-3 and Part 2, Modules 4-6) can be viewed anytime on YouTube.



## SRPEDD's Ongoing Support of the Southeast Region Homeland Security Advisory Council (SRAC)

Since 2004, SRPEDD has directly supported the Southeast Region Homeland Security Advisory Council (SRAC) in their efforts to fund activities and purchase equipment that help member communities better respond to acts of terrorism. The Council's members, representing a variety of disciplines such as law enforcement, fire services, emergency management, emergency medical services, public health, public works and transportation, and local governments, work together to serve the ninety-seven member communities of the SRAC region. Their primary objectives are to provide necessary trainings and exercises, purchase specialized equipment, and to oversee the spending of the region's annual State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) grant funding.

As with any grant program, a written plan for monetary spending is required. SRAC members, with the help of SRPEDD's Homeland Security team, develop a yearly plan that outlines the projects for that federal fiscal year. Current projects include: 1) expanding of interoperable communications in the region, 2) improving emergency sheltering and community preparedness, 3) enhancing tactical and technical rescue response capabilities, and 4) supporting the regionalization of emergency assets.

For more information, please visit SRPEDD's Homeland Security webpage ([www.srpedd.org/Homeland-Security](http://www.srpedd.org/Homeland-Security)).

## Preparedness Trainings during COVID

Although there were many challenges with gathering individuals together for in-person trainings, nearly 30 individuals were able to safely participate in an important Rapid Deployment Search and Recovery Dive Training this past year. An outside vendor provided members from the regional public safety dive teams with a 34-hour training and certification program that involved both classroom and land and water base exercises. All proper COVID protocols were followed while providing this training at the Harwich Fire Department and at Long Pond in Harwich.

The ability to rapidly respond to a water body, whether it's along our long regional coastline, or of one of the many rivers, lakes, ponds, and reservoirs is key to emergency response. This training ensured that the existing teams continue to remain certified and competent in the skills needed to save lives or recover evidence.



*First responders in the Harwich Fire Department*



*First responders at Long Pond participating in the Rapid Deployment Search and Recovery Dive Training*

# Treasurer's Report

The agency's annual budget of \$3,703,841, derived from a mix of primarily state and federal sources shown below, has enabled the agency not only to advance its mission across multiple planning fronts, from Transportation and Transit, District Local Assistance projects and Municipal contracts, to Economic Development, Environmental Planning and Homeland Security, but to continue to hold down costs for member municipalities.

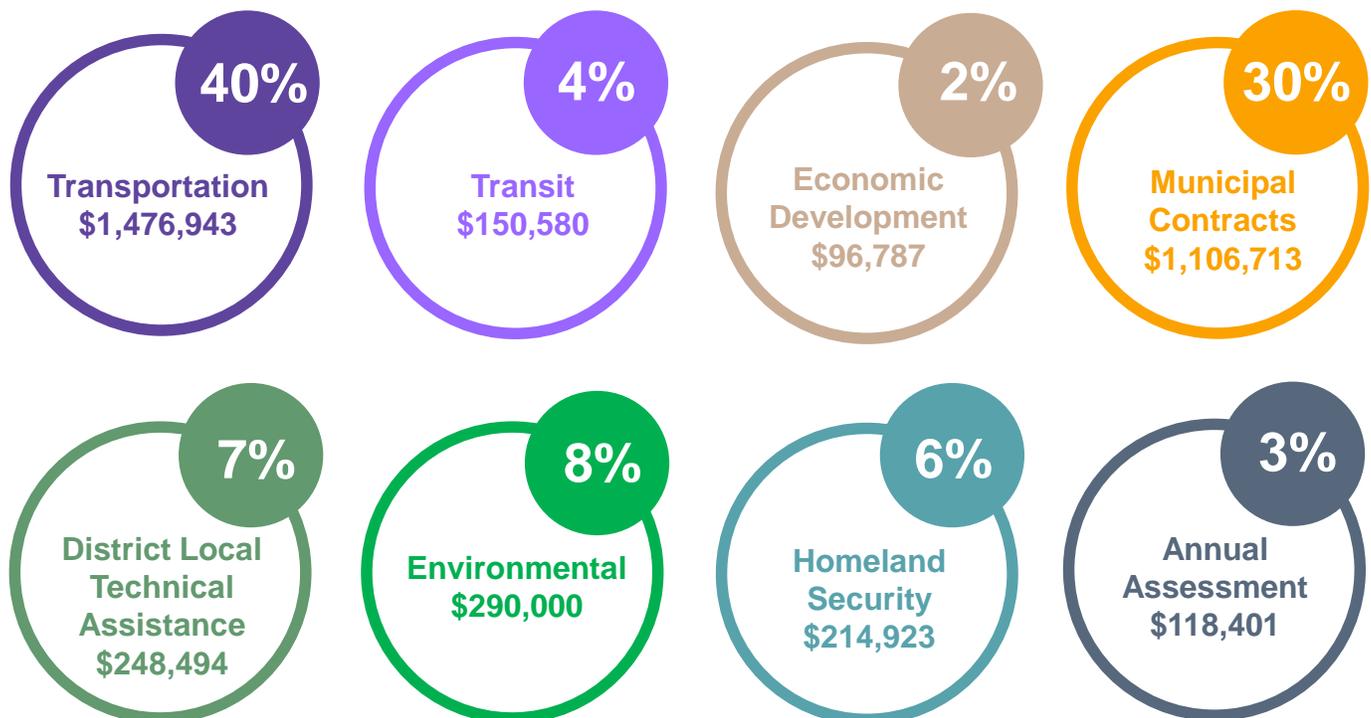
SRPEDD staff and Commissioners have worked and met remotely throughout the pandemic and they continue to focus additional resources on helping the region recover.

Finance Committee members, the Executive Director, and CFO meet once a month to review all financial transactions, monitor expenditures, and tend to the purchasing and maintenance needs of the expanding organization.

Members of the Finance Committee serving over the past year have been:

D. Austin Horowitz, Treasurer  
 Marie Clarner, Assistant Treasurer  
 Alan Slavin, ExOfficio  
 Joseph Callahan, Berkley  
 Jim Whitin, Westport

## Source of Funds FY'21



# The SRPEDD Commission

## Acushnet

BOS: Henry Young\*

PB: Henry Young\*

## Attleboro

BOS: Gary Ayrassian

## Berkley

BOS: Joseph Callahan -

### Vice Chair

PB: Steven Leary

## Carver

BOS: Jim Walsh

PB: Bruce Maki

## Dartmouth

BOS: Cody Haddad

PB: Kevin Melo

## Dighton

BOS:

PB: Jeff Carvalho

## Fairhaven

BOS: Robert Espindola

PB: Rene Fleurent, Jr.

## Fall River

BOS: William Kenny

PB: John Ferreira

## Freetown

BOS: David DeManche

PB: Chris McKay

## Lakeville

BOS: Mureen Candito\*

PB: Barbara Mancovsky

## Mansfield

BOS: Daniel Austin Horowitz

PB: Daniel Austin Horowitz

### Treasurer

## Marion

BOS: Norman Hills

PB: Norman Hills

## Mattapoisett

BOS: Robert A. Burgmann

PB: Janice Robbins -

### Secretary

## Middleborough

BOS: Leilani Dalpe

PB: Leeann Bradley

## New Bedford

BOS: Jamie Ponte

PB: Tabitha Harkin\*

## North Attleborough

BOS: Lyle Pirnie

PB: Marie K. Clarner -

### Assistant Treasurer

## Norton

BOS: Sandra Ollerhead

PB: Steven Homsby

## Plainville

BOS: Chris Yarworth

PB: Chris Yarworth

## Raynham

BOS: Carol Sullivan

PB: Matthew Andrade

## Rehoboth

BOS: Gerald V. Schwall

PB: William Costa

## Rochester

BOS: Greenwood Hartley, III

PB: Steve Starrett

## Seekonk

BOS: Steve D'Amico

PB: Phoebe Lee Dunn

## Somerset

BOS: Lloyd Mendes

PB: William Raposa

## Swansea

BOS: George Hovorka

PB: John P. Hansen, Jr.

## Taunton

BOS: William Roth

## Wareham

BOS: Alan Slavin -

### Chair

PB: Michael King

## Westport

BOS: Steven J. Ouellette

PB: James Whitin

## At Large:

Ricky Tith, Fall River

Patrick Sullivan, New Bedford

Janine Peccini, Taunton

BOS: Mayor/Select Board Representative

PB: Planning Board Representative

\*No Longer on Commission/Left Mid Year

# The Staff

**Eric Arbeene, AICP**  
Principal Comprehensive  
Planner & Chief Procurement  
Officer

**Sara Brown**  
Senior Comprehensive Planner

**Lilia Cabral-Bernard**  
Senior Transportation Planner  
& Title VI Coordinator

**Todd Castro**  
Homeland Security  
Program Manager

**Ling Ling Chang, CPA**  
Chief Financial Officer /  
EEO Officer

**Jennifer Chaves**  
Principal Transportation  
Planner

**Angela Constantino\***  
Senior Transportation Planner  
& Mobility Manager

**Jed Cornock, AICP**  
Principal Comprehensive  
Planner & Contract  
Coordinator

**Luis de Oliveira**  
Transportation Data Project  
Manager / Transportation  
Planner

**Emily Ann Dorrs\***  
Transportation Planning  
Technician

**Lisa M. Estrela-Pedro**  
Assistant Director of  
Transportation Planning

**Lizeth Gonzalez**  
Senior Comprehensive Planner

**Julianne Griffiths**  
Transportation Planning  
Technician

**Gregory Guertin**  
Senior Transportation Planner

**Kevin Ham**  
Homeland Security Project  
Mgr./ Comp. Planner &  
FAA Certified Drone Pilot

**Sean Hilton**  
Senior Transportation Planner

**Phillip Hu, AICP**  
Principal Comprehensive  
Planner

**Grant J. King, AICP**  
Director of Comprehensive  
Planning and Housing

**Jacqueline Jones, AICP**  
Principal Transportation  
Planner

**Guoqiang Li, PTP\***  
Senior Transportation  
Planner

**Benjamin Menezes**  
Transportation Intern

**Paul L. Mission**  
Transportation Planning  
Manager

**Benjamin Myers**  
Comprehensive Planner

**William S. Napolitano**  
Environmental Program  
Director

**Taylor Perez**  
Comprehensive Planner

**Karen M. Porter**  
GIS Specialist / IT Manager

**Stacy Royer**  
Office Administrator

**Donald R. Sullivan**  
Community & Economic  
Development Director

**Jeffrey Walker, AICP**  
Executive Director

**Helen Zincavage, AICP, CFM**  
Assistant Director of  
Environmental Programs /  
Principal Planner

\*No Longer at SRPEDD



# SRPEDD

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