Draft Minutes of the Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO) Meeting on Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at 1:00 PM - Held remotely via Zoom.

The following members were in attendance:
Steve Woelfel-------------Representing Jamey Tesler, MassDOT Secretary and CEO, Chair
Pamela Haznar------------Representing Jonathan Gulliver, MassDOT Highway Div. Administrator
Daniel Aguiar------------Representing Paul Coogan, Mayor of Fall River
Jamie Ponte-------------Representing Jon Mitchell, Mayor of New Bedford
Bill Roth---------------Representing Shaunna O’Connell, Mayor of Taunton
Robert Espindola-------Town of Fairhaven
Mark Germain-----------Town of Middleborough
Jacob Vaught----------Town of Somerset
Kevin Dumas-----------Town of Mansfield
Alan Slavin------------SRPEDD Commission Chair
Shayne Trimbell--------Representing Erik Rousseau, Administrator, SRTA
Stacy Forte------------Representing Mary Ellen DeFrias, Administrator, GATRA

The following members were absent:
Paul Heroux-----------Mayor of Attleboro

The following were also in attendance:
Andrew Reovan---------FHWA
Derek Shooster--------MassDOT
Derek Krevat----------MassDOT
Raissah Kouame--------MassDOT
Andrew Wang---------MassDOT
Josh Reinke----------Town of Mansfield
Lisa Estrela-Pedro-----SRPEDD
Lilia Cabral-Bernard---SRPEDD
Sean Hilton-----------SRPEDD
Jackie Jones---------SRPEDD
Luis de Oliveira------SRPEDD

Handouts:
SMMPO Agenda November 15, 2022
SMMPO Draft Meeting Minutes August 9, 2022
FFY2023-2027 TIP Proposed Adjustment #1
AGENDA:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call-
Chairman Woelfel called the SMMPO meeting to order at 1:01 pm. Ms. Lilia Cabral-Bernard asked all MPO members and designees to please unmute themselves so she could call the roll for attendance. She then called the complete roll of MPO members, with the following being present at the time of the roll call.

MassDOT Chair--------------------------Yes
City of Fall River-------------------------Yes
City of New Bedford-------------------Yes
City of Taunton--------------------------Yes
MassDOT Administrator---------------Yes
Town of Fairhaven----------------------Yes
Town of Middleborough--------------Yes
Town of Manfield-----------------------Yes
Town of Somerset-----------------------Yes
SRPEDD Commission Chair------------Yes
SRTA-----------------------------------------Yes
GATRA--------------------------------------Yes

2. Approval of Minutes – August 9, 2022 (Materials Attached and Roll Call Vote Needed)
Chairman Woelfel requested a motion to approve the minutes from the SMMPO meeting from August 9, 2022. The motion was made by Alan Slavin and seconded by Bill Roth. Ms. Cabral-Bernard then called the roll:

MassDOT Chair--------------------------Yes
City of Fall River-------------------------Yes
City of New Bedford-------------------Yes
City of Taunton--------------------------Yes
MassDOT Administrator---------------Yes
Town of Fairhaven----------------------Yes
Town of Middleborough--------------Yes
Town of Manfield-----------------------Yes
Town of Somerset-----------------------Yes
SRPEDD Commission Chair------------Yes
SRTA-----------------------------------------Yes
GATRA--------------------------------------Yes
3. Public Comments - Opportunity for the public to address the SMMPO - Chairman Woelfel invited members of the public to make comments. There were no comments presented.

4. Proposed FFY2023-2027 TIP Proposed Adjustment #1 (Materials Attached, Roll Call Vote Needed)

Lisa Estrela-Pedro informed the group that the proposed adjustment Number 1 is to the current 2023 to 2027 TIP. This project was amended into the 2022 to 2026 TIP in federal fiscal year 2023 at $3.1 million. It is for the new Airport Express bus service from the Mansfield MBTA station to Logan Airport. This would be an adjustment to the existing TIP. She asked the body to approve that today.

The Chair asked for a motion and a second to approve and then questions. The motion to approve was made by Alan Slavin and seconded by Kevin Dumas. Bill Roth asked for clarification on this adjustment and Lisa responded that this is the project that was discussed at the New Bedford meeting. MassDOT agreed to pick up any cost overruns for the projects that were currently programmed with STP funds, if they exceeded what we had leftover in target funding. As of right now, there is still a balance of $1.6 million. But if any of those projects go over that, Mass DOT will pick that up so that the project could be programmed.

With no additional questions, the Chair asked Lilia to call the roll.

MassDOT Chair--------------------------Yes
City of Fall River------------------------Yes
City of New Bedford---------------------Yes
City of Taunton------------------------Yes
MassDOT Administrator------------------Yes
Town of Fairhaven----------------------Yes
Town of Middleborough------------------Yes
Town of Manfield-----------------------Yes
Town of Somerset-----------------------Yes
SRPEDD Commission Chair--------------Yes
SRTA-------------------------------------Yes
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Title VI/Language Assistance Plan Update
Lilia Cabral-Bernard introduced herself and started the presentation with the Language Assistance Plan (LAP). She explained that staff is required to translate vital documents into languages identified as Safe Harbor languages in the SMMPO region. Safe Harbor language is determined if a language threshold is more than 5% of our population or if more than 1,000 persons speak another language because they speak English less than well or not at all. The average of LEP persons in the SMMPO region is 7.28%.

The Safe Harbor languages were Portuguese, Spanish, and (Haitian) Creole until the new Census data recently added Chinese, and Mon Khmer Cambodian. We also need two translations into Chinese (Simplified and Traditional Chinese) to cover most dialects.

Ms. Cabral-Bernard then moved to the Title VI Report, stating that Title VI ensures that everyone has the opportunity to participate, and has access to programs, activities and services. She highlighted several items and tasks for this year’s Title VI report, including Signed Certification and Assurances (one from Federal Highway and one from Federal Transit); how staff will be disseminating new Complaint Procedures & Forms: any Title VI related training taken by staff over the past year; the most recent Public Participation Plan (April 2022) and the most recent Language Access Plan (September 2022); and a mapped demographic profile of the region, including minority, low-income, LEP, older adults and persons with disabilities.

While displaying these maps, she explained populations have traditionally been identified as such if they are above the regional average or threshold for that population which are the shaded areas on the maps. But we have also used “dot density.” A dot represents 50 or 100 persons in a concentrated area. These two distinct methods of identifying these populations were used because although thresholds are an absolute way to identify where the greatest number of these populations are located, dot density gives a better overall perspective, so as not to unintentionally eliminate any populations of concern that have not exceeded the threshold, but should be considered, nonetheless.

Ms. Cabral-Bernard identified the regional thresholds as follows: Minority 10.98%; Low Income/poverty 10.87%; Limited English Proficiency 7.28%; Older Adults (Age 65 and above) 14.48%; Persons with a disability 14.01%
She informed the group that maps with this information are being made interactive and would be available in a few months on the website. She offered to answer any question now or anytime, supplying her contact info and telling the group it was a pleasure speaking to them.

6. **FFY2024-28 TIP Development Update**
Jackie Jones informed the group that TIP development roughly runs from October to May and right now, in this October December timeframe, staff will be collecting data on projects that have been approved or new projects that could be considered for inclusion in the next TIP. Staff will be gathering all the data needed for the evaluation criteria process and reaching out to project stakeholders to get new project schedules to see if anything has changed. Starting in December, staff will begin the project evaluation criteria process, which helps us prioritize projects based on identified regional priorities. Staff will also be presenting proposed scenarios to the JTPG and the SMMPO, based on that information.

In March, the JTPG will make their final scenario selection, and recommend that to the SMMPO for approval. When that list is approved, staff will release it for a public comment period. Staff will get feedback from our federal partners and state partners and incorporate all comments into the document. It is anticipated that the TIP will be endorsed at the May SMMPO meeting. There were no questions for Ms. Jones.

7. **FFY2023 UPWP Update**
Lisa Estrela-Pedro gave the group a review of the FFY 2023 UPWP tasks and deliverables which include the Title VI Plan update, as well as the development of the FFY2024 UPWP & the FFY2024-2028 TIP. Staff will also be continuing data collection efforts including the task of developing a standalone Safety Plan & Congestion Plan, which have previously been included as chapters in the RTP but will be standalone plans going forward. Staff will also be updating our Regional Travel Demand Model.

She continued by informing the group that Traffic Counting will start up again in the Spring, as well as Pavement Management and an attempt will be made to complete Fall River and New Bedford, weather permitting. Staff will be continuing to work on several Community Technical Assistance requests and trails mapping by performing quality control on data collected to date.

The Transportation staff will be assisting the Environmental Department with the Regional Resiliency Plan and will be completing the Route 140 Comprehensive Corridor Study for the city of Taunton in combination with our Comprehensive Department. Staff will be updating the Bike Plan, last updated in 2016, as well as the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, and the Long-Range Transportation Plan.
8. **Regional Transportation Plan Update**
Lisa Estela-Pedro informed the group that in combination with updating a lot of the data for our Regional Transportation Plan, we're also continuing our efforts on public outreach. She and another staff member attended a community event last month in hopes of getting hundreds of survey responses, and actually only got a few. Staff then redirected their efforts and reached out to all 27 communities to post a link to the survey on their website. Twenty-one communities did that and we are now at 561 responses. There were six communities that posted within a day or two and survey numbers went up by over 200 following. Staff very much appreciates our communities’ assistance with this effort. In addition, staff will be reaching out to all of our communities to provide department heads with the opportunity to meet with us and identify their priorities. We'll be reaching out to SRTA, as staff has already met with GATRA.

Staff are also planning to schedule public meetings and attend additional community events. Staff is coordinating with MassDOT on hosting ‘meeting in a box’ events at Council on Aging’s or similar venues to promote and garner feedback for the statewide Long-Range Plan, as well as the MPO’s regional transportation plan update, Staff will continue to provide this group with updates as we progress through the development process. There were no questions for Ms. Estrela-Pedro

9. **Date and Time for Next Meeting**
The Chair announced that the next SMMPO meeting will be on December 20 at 1pm virtually.

9. **Adjourn**
The Chair asked for a motion and second to adjourn. Alan Slavin made the motion and Jamie Ponte seconded it. He asked that all in favor say aye. All ayes were heard. The Chair thanked everyone. The meeting was adjourned at 1:23 PM.