

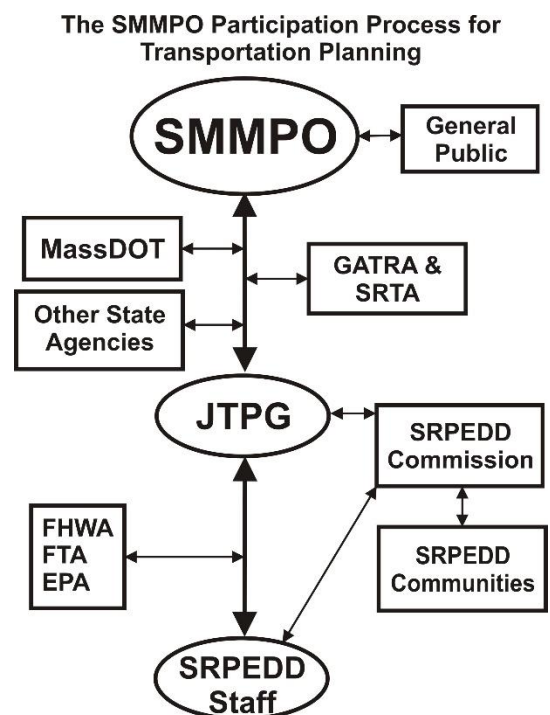
WHAT IS THE MPO?

Metropolitan **P**lanning **O**rganizations are established in urbanized areas across the nation to implement federally mandated transportation planning. The **Southeastern Massachusetts MPO (SMMPO)** was established in 1976 for southeastern Massachusetts and is responsible for programming federally mandated transportation planning and improvements. At that time, the Governor's office authorized and established thirteen (13) MPOs in Massachusetts that follow the boundaries of each of the 13 regional planning agencies. Nationally, there are 385 MPOs throughout the United States. The Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) Transportation personnel acts as staff to the SMMPO.

The SMMPO board is responsible for determining how to spend federal funds for roadway and bridge improvement projects as well as for transit services. The SMMPO is comprised of the Secretary and CEO of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT); the Administrator of the MassDOT Highway Division; the Chair of SRPEDD; the Administrator of the Greater Attleboro-Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA); the Administrator of the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA); the Mayors of the Cities of Attleboro, Fall River, New Bedford, and Taunton, or their designees; and four Town Representatives (Chosen from the Select Board members or comparable elected executive branch of town government) representing 4 towns in the SRPEDD region. The Secretary of Transportation, Gina Fiandaca, is the Chairman of all of the 13 MPOs in the Commonwealth while Alan Slavin (Chair of the SRPEDD Commission) is the Vice-Chairman of the SMMPO.

The planning process that enables the initiation and implementation of transportation improvements for southeastern Massachusetts can be complicated and sometimes difficult to navigate. To begin, there are three key groups essential to the planning process for transportation improvements in our region; the **SMMPO**, the **Joint Transportation Planning Group (JTPG)**, and the **SRPEDD Commission**. The graphic to the right details the structure and roles of the SMMPO in relation to the other committee and agencies involved in this planning process.

The SRPEDD Transportation Planning Staff provides technical support and coordination services for the SMMPO. This includes organizational support, public outreach, the preparation of required federal certification documents, transportation studies and reports, regional transportation modeling, and transit planning. The SRPEDD Transportation



Planning Staff also works with the JTPG, the forum for public involvement and the advisory board to the SMMPO, to prepare key documents for presentation and review by the SMMPO board for endorsement. These documents include:

- **The Regional Transportation Plan** – This document is an assessment of existing and future needs of transportation and is updated every 4 years as required by federal and state transportation agencies,
- **The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** – The annual document that programs five consecutive years of federal and state funds for specific transportation projects (highways, roads, bridges, transit facilities, bike paths, etc.)
- **The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)** – the annual work program that outlines a scope of work and potential studies for the SRPEDD staff.

The importance of having local elected officials represented on the SMMPO ensures that transportation funding is distributed in a fair and equitable manner and throughout the entire region. It also provides an opportunity for municipalities to assist in prioritizing transportation needs for the region and develop policies with the development of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The SMMPO typically meets, on average, nine times per year at 1:00 PM on the third Tuesday of the month at the SRPEDD office in Taunton or virtually, but always keeping in accordance with the **Massachusetts, Open Meeting Law**. Additional meetings are possible if transportation issues need to be resolved. Meetings currently scheduled for the SMMPO include:

- **Tuesday, May 16, 2023 at 1:00 PM**
- **Tuesday, June 20, 2023 at 1:00 PM**
- **Tuesday, July 18, 2023 at 1:00 PM**

The following are the SRPEDD Commission by-laws pertaining to the SMMPO process and the election of the local board of selectmen to the SMMPO representative board.

Excerpt from the 2018 SRPEDD AGENCY POLICIES, Section III. BY-LAWS (*with amended language*)

PREAMBLE: These by-laws, adopted under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40B, Sections 9 to 19, define the Rules and Procedures for the activities of the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission as the governing body of the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District.

DEFINITION: The word "Commission" where appearing in these by-laws shall be construed to mean the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission. The word "District" wherever appearing in these by-laws shall mean a public body politic and corporate development known as the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District.

10. SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (SMMPO):

- A. The Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization consists of thirteen (13) members representing the following:
1. Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of Massachusetts Department of Transportation;
 2. Highway Administrator of the MassDOT Highway Division;
 3. Chairman of Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District Commission;
 4. Administrator of the Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA);
 5. Administrator of the Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA);
 6. Mayors of Attleboro, Fall River, New Bedford, and Taunton; and
 7. Members of four (4) Boards of Selectmen in the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (*or comparable executive branch of government*) to be elected by the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District Commission. (*In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, at least one, but not more than two of the four SMMPO town representatives shall be from towns within Plymouth County and/or Norfolk County.*)
- B. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) relating to the comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative transportation planning process, the SRPEDD Commission is authorized to elect the four (4) representatives of Boards of Selectmen utilizing the procedure described below:
1. Term of Office: Two (2) representatives will be elected each year for two-year terms. Elections will be held annually in the month of May or June.
 2. Solicitation of Nominees: Annually, the SRPEDD Commission will send notices to the Board of Selectmen and SRPEDD Commissioners of each of its member towns. The purpose and role of the SMMPO and a description of the election process will accompany the notice. Each member of every local Board of Selectmen from member communities will be offered an opportunity to nominate themselves as a candidate for election to the SMMPO. Nominations will be returned to SRPEDD offices within four (4) weeks of the date they are distributed. Nomination forms are typically distributed by the second (2nd) week of the month of May.

3. Election of Selectmen Representatives: Nominations will be referred to the SRPEDD Commission for a vote at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission in the month of June. All names and towns of the interested selectmen will be printed on a paper ballot. Nominees will be invited to attend and speak at the meeting of the SRPEDD Commission when the vote is taken.
4. Designees: Board of Selectmen members elected to the SMMPO may send a designee to a meeting in their place. The designee may vote only with written and signed authorization from the elected SMMPO member.
5. Vacancies: Should a selectmen's position fall vacant between annual elections, the represented town for that vacancy may nominate, and the SRPEDD Commission may elect, a duly eligible candidate from that town's Board of Selectmen to temporarily fill the vacancy until the following election. In the event that no member of the municipality's Board of Selectmen is able to fill the vacancy, then any member town may nominate, and the SRPEDD Commission may elect, a candidate to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. (Amended May 23, 2018)

SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (SMMPO)
FY2023 SMMPO MEMBERS

- Gina Fiandaca, MassDOT Secretary & CEO, Chair
- Alan Slavin, SRPEDD Commission Chairman, Vice-Chair
- Cathleen DeSimone, Mayor of Attleboro
- Paul Coogan, Mayor of Fall River
- Jonathan Mitchell, Mayor of New Bedford
- Shaunna O'Connell, Mayor of Taunton
- Jonathan L. Gulliver, MassDOT Highway Division Administrator
- Diana Bren, Mansfield (Term Expires 8/1/2024)
- Jacob Vaught, Somerset (Term Expires 8/1/2024)
- Mark Germain, Middleborough (Term Expires 8/1/2023)
- Robert Espindola, Fairhaven (Term Expires 8/1/2023)
- Erik Rousseau, SRTA
- MaryEllen DeFrias, GATRA

Ex-officio, non-voting members:

- Jeff McEwen, FHWA Division Administrator
- Peter Butler, FTA Deputy Regional Administrator
- Stephanie Crampton, Joint Transportation Planning Group Chairman