

**Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SRPEDD)
Joint Transportation Planning Group (JTPG) Meeting**

DRAFT Minutes for the JTPG Meeting

Held on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at 2:00 PM

**Held Hybrid via Zoom and SRPEDD Office in Accordance with Massachusetts Open
Meeting Law**

The following members and alternates were in attendance:

Victoria Alfaro, Chair.....Town of Acushnet
Joe Callahan.....Town of Berkley
Tim Barber.....Town of Dartmouth
Thomas Ferry.....Town of Dighton
Joshua Crabb.....Town of Fairhaven
Dan Aguiar.....City of Fall River
Deborah Pettey.....Town of Freetown
Kevin Dumas.....Town of Mansfield
Josh Reinke.....Town of Mansfield
Norm Hills.....Town of Marion
Janice Robbins.....Town of Mattapoissett
Leann Bradley.....Town of Middleborough
Adam Hart.....City of New Bedford
William O'Rourke.....Town of Plainville
T.J. Torres.....Town of Plainville (Attended at SRPEDD office)
William Anderson.....Town of Swansea
Katherine Nunes.....City of Taunton
Ken Buckland.....Town of Wareham
James Hartnett.....Town of Westport
Michael Burris.....Town of Westport
Chris McDermott.....At-Large, City of Attleboro
Ashley Eaton.....At-Large, City of New Bedford
Alan Slavin.....At-Large, Wareham/New Bedford Subregion

The following members/alternates were NOT in attendance:

Town of Carver
Town of Lakeville
Town of North Attleborough
Town of Norton
Town of Raynham

Town of Rehoboth
Town of Seekonk
Town of Somerset
Town of Wareham

Also in Attendance:

Nancy Durfee.....Town of Rochester
Ken Buckland.....Town of Wareham
Robert Price.....Mattapoissett Bike Path Committee (Attended at SRPEDD office)
Gail Rodrigues.....Southcoast Bikeway Alliance Member
Barbara Lachance.....Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Chris Klem.....Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Shaun Handy.....Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Emma Yeh.....Pare Corp.
Steve Findlen.....Howard Stein Hudson
Eric Axelrod.....Fuss & O'Neill
Jim Fitzgerald.....Apex
Phil Viveiros.....Bowman
Patrick Carr.....A1 Crane
Lisa Estrela-Pedro.....SRPEDD (Attended at SRPEDD office)
Jackie Jones.....SRPEDD (Attended at SRPEDD office)
Andrea Duarte.....SRPEDD (Attended at SRPEDD office)
Noah Soutier.....SRPEDD (Attended at SRPEDD office)
Sean Hilton.....SRPEDD
Rebekah Rose.....SRPEDD

Handouts:

JTPG Meeting Agenda for April 9, 2025
DRAFT March 12, 2025, JTPG Meeting Minutes

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call:

Chair Victoria Alfaro called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. Chair Alfaro made an announcement on how the meeting will be run using the Zoom webinar mode. Andrea Duarte asked all JTPG members to unmute themselves so she could call the complete roll call of JTPG members, with the following being present at the time of the roll call:

Victoria Alfaro, Chair.....Town of Acushnet
Tim Barber.....Town of Dartmouth
Thomas Ferry.....Town of Dighton

Deborah Pettey.....Town of Freetown
Kevin Dumas.....Town of Mansfield
Norm Hills.....Town of Marion
Janice Robbins.....Town of Mattapoisett
Leann Bradley.....Town of Middleborough
Justin Chicca.....City of New Bedford
Adam Hart.....City of New Bedford
William O'Rourke.....Town of Plainville
William Anderson.....Town of Swansea
James Hartnett.....Town of Westport
Michael Burris.....Town of Westport
Chris McDermott.....At-Large, City of Attleboro
Ashley Eaton.....At-Large, City of New Bedford
Alan Slavin.....At-Large, Wareham/New Bedford Sub Region

2. Approval of Minutes – March 12, 2025 (Materials Attached & roll call vote needed)

Chair Alfaro called for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2025, meeting. The motion was made by Norm Hills and seconded by Joe Callahan. Ms. Duarte then called the roll:

Town of Acushnet.....Yes
Town of Berkley.....Yes
Town of DartmouthYes
Town of Dighton.....Yes
Town of Fairhaven.....Abstain
Town of Freetown.....Abstain
Town of Mansfield.....Yes
Town of MarionYes
Town of Mattapoisett.....Yes
Town of Middleborough.....Abstain
City of New Bedford.....Yes
Town of Plainville.....Yes
Town of Swansea.....Abstain
Town of Westport.....Yes
At-Large, City of Attleboro.....Yes
At-Large, City of New Bedford....Yes
At-Large, Town of Wareham.....Yes

THE MOTION PASSED WITH 4 ABSTENTIONS.

3. Public Comments – Opportunity for the Public to address the JTPG

There were no comments offered.

4. Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) Report - RTA Updates

GATRA and SRTA representatives were not present and there were no comments offered.

5. Community of Practice Discussion - Opportunity for Members to Share Questions, Project Updates, Challenges, Success Stories, Lessons Learned

Ashley Eaton asked for an update on the SS4A regional plan. Lisa Estrella-Pedro replied that the SS4A plan will be discussed in a later agenda item.

6. Draft FFY2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Transit Projects List

Jackie Jones presented the upcoming project highlights related to SRTA, GATRA, and other regional transit initiatives as part of the 2026–2030 TIP development. The full draft TIP, which includes detailed project lists, is available online. Highlights for GATRA include work on the East Wareham maintenance facility (awaiting a demolition permit), a solar project on a parcel off Route 6A, roof replacement funding for the Attleboro train station, parking and flooring upgrades at the Taunton terminal, two new charging stations, and replacement diesel buses due to federal funding uncertainty around electric buses. GATRA is also adding 13 replacement vans through mobility assistance funding and a temporary East Taunton MBTA connector, with potential future expansion of Route 8 and micro-transit support. For SRTA, major projects include a new Fall River maintenance facility, improvements to the 9E interstate express route, bus stop upgrades (shelters and signage), charging infrastructure, resurfacing at the New Bedford and Fall River garages, scaffolding for bus maintenance, and new electric buses. SRTA also continues to run a micro connector service offering on-demand transit connections to the New Bedford and Fall River MBTA stations.

7. Draft FFY2026-2030 TIP – (Vote needed to recommend to SMMPO for release to 21-day public comment period)

Ms. Jones presented to the JTPG a Draft of the 2026–2030 TIP. She explained that a roll call vote was needed to recommend the draft to the SMMPO for release to a 21-day public comment period. Ms. Jones emphasized that the previously discussed transit project lists are included in this TIP. The full draft document is now available online and provides detailed information about project selection, funding, and prioritization processes. It includes both regional target projects, over which there is local control, and statewide projects, which are programmed by MassDOT at the state level. Projects are selected based on funding availability, evaluation scores, and project readiness. Scenario 2, previously approved by both the JTPG and SMMPO, has been maintained, with adjustments made using an Advanced Construction (AC) funding tool to handle cost increases—most notably a \$9.6 million increase for one project. Highlights of regional highway projects were presented year by year from 2026 to 2030, with three projects using AC to distribute costs over multiple years. Though some project timelines shifted slightly due to funding constraints, all previously approved projects remain in the TIP. Kevin Dumas asked Ms. Jones to repeat when Mansfield's project at School Street and Route 106 is programmed in the TIP. Chris Klem replied that the project is programmed for 2027. Robert Price asked for clarification on why the Marion pathway project is missing from the current online draft of the TIP. Ms.

Jones replied that it was recently noticed that the project listing table was cut off in the draft document, but the full version was shown during the meeting. An updated draft will be uploaded to the website which includes the missing project. All projects were presented to the SMMPO and JTPG. Mr. Price inquired where the Mattapoissett Bike Path project might be placed in the 2026-2030 TIP. Ms. Jones replied that the project is in a unique situation, as it received a MassTrails grant for funding but hasn't yet gone through the initial stages of MassDOT's project development process. To be eligible for programming, a project must complete the project initiation and scoping steps and then receive approval as a project by the Project Review Committee (PRC). The regional planning agency is unable to program or track project status until it has passed through the PRC. Due to the timing of the PRC meeting relative to the approval schedule for this TIP document, this project cannot be included in the current programming cycle. Barbara LaChance commented that MassDOT has begun initiation on the project with the Town of Mattapoissett. T.J. Torress requested clarification on when the Route 1A project in Plainville is programmed. Ms. Jones replied that it is programmed for 2027. Ms. Jones stated that the language within the TIP document has changed slightly, and that adjustments were made to align with updated guidance from the new federal administration. She advised that if changes are noticed throughout the document, they were made intentionally to ensure consistency with current policies and expectations.

Chair Alfaro called for a motion to recommend the Draft FFY2026 to 2030 TIP to the SMMPO to be released for a 21-day public comment period. The motion was made by Dan Aguiar and seconded by Norm Hills. Ms. Duarte then called the roll:

Town of Acushnet.....Yes
 Town of Berkley.....Yes
 Town of DartmouthYes
 Town of Dighton.....Yes
 Town of Fairhaven.....Yes
 Town of Freetown.....Yes
 Town of Mansfield.....Yes
 Town of MarionYes
 Town of Mattapoissett.....Yes
 Town of Middleborough.....Yes
 City of New Bedford.....Yes
 Town of Plainville.....Yes
 Town of Swansea.....Yes
 City of Taunton.....Yes
 Town of Westport.....Yes
 At-Large, City of Attleboro.....Yes
 At-Large, City of New Bedford....Yes
 At-Large, Town of Wareham.....Yes

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. JTPG (Re)Appointments for Upcoming year

Ms. Duarte reminded the group that the annual process for appointing or reappointing representatives to the JTPG body for FY26 is approaching. The new term will begin on June 1, 2025 and run through May 31, 2026, with any new appointees starting at the June meeting. Emails will be sent to current members, town leadership, and council or select board chairs to confirm appointments. She emphasized the importance of selecting someone who can attend the JTPG meetings regularly, as these meetings are where key information is shared, and decisions are made. Appointment forms will be distributed within the next week and are due by May 15.

9. Other Business

Ms. Estrela-Pedro provided an overview of current grant opportunities including:

- The Small Bridge Replacement Grant, offered through the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration, has a submission deadline of May 12.
- The Mass Clean Energy Center Vehicle-to-Everything demonstration projects—applications for school districts are due by May 30, and applications for residential and commercial projects are due by July 31.
- The Safe Streets and Roads for All program is accepting submissions for the third round of FY25 funding, with applications due by June 26.

Ms. Estrela-Pedro invited Ms. Jones to provide additional information on the Safe Streets and Roads for All program. Ms. Jones informed the group that a key requirement for applying for implementation grants in the current Safe Streets and Roads for All funding round is that the proposed project must be included in a Regional Safety Action Plan. SRPEDDs Regional Safety Action Plan is nearing completion, and the timeline has been accelerated to ensure it's available for communities intending to apply during this round. Ms. Jones suggested that given the short application timeline, if any community is interested in applying, they should reach out as soon as possible to discuss preliminary recommendations and potential funding options. The draft Regional Safety Action Plan will be presented at upcoming JTPG and SMMPO meetings. Presentation slides of these grant opportunities will be sent out after the meeting with all relevant links for easy access.

Ms. Estrela-Pedro highlighted the following upcoming trainings and announcements:

- April 16, Massachusetts Safe Routes to School is hosting a spring webinar.
- May 8 in Newton, the UMass Center is presenting "Saved by a Traffic Engineer: Advancing Multimodal Safety through Research and Practical Use of the MUTCD and other Design Guidance."
- MassDOT's Road Inventory 2024 is now available on GeoDOT.
- Walk Massachusetts has released the 2024 report on fatal pedestrian crashes in the state.
- For TIP project development, the next Project Review Committee (PRC) meeting is scheduled for May 21, with a pre-PRC meeting on May 7. To be considered, projects must be submitted by

April 16 to allow time for district review. The next opportunity for submissions will be August 20, ahead of the September PRC meeting.

Gail Rodrigues informed the group that the South Coast Bikeway Summit will take place on Tuesday, May 13 at 6:00 PM at the UMass Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology, located at 836 South Rodney French Boulevard in New Bedford. The event is open to all and will feature keynote speaker Trish Carter. The summit aims to bring together cyclists and community members to discuss biking initiatives and share inspiration.

10. Date and Time for Next Meeting

Date and Time for the next meeting is May 14, 2025, at 2:00 PM as a hybrid meeting, in which attendees can join at the SRPEDD office in Taunton or via Zoom.

11. Adjourn

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn which was made by Tim Barber and seconded by Tom Ferry. Hearing no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 2:33 PM.