

**Draft Minutes of the Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO) Meeting on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 1:00 PM - Held remotely via Zoom.**

**The following members were in attendance:**

Stephen Woelfel-----Representing Phillip Eng, Interim MassDOT Secretary and CEO, **Chair**  
Shaun Handy-----Representing Jonathan Gulliver, MassDOT Highway Div. Administrator  
Christopher McDermott—Representing Cathleen DeSimone, Mayor of Attleboro (joined late)  
Jay Pateakos-----Representing Shauna O’Connell, Mayor of Taunton  
Jamie Ponte-----Representing Jon Mitchell, Mayor of New Bedford  
Josh Reinke-----Representing Michael Feck, Town of Mansfield  
Sarah Hewins-----Town of Carver  
Jennifer Vincent-----Town of Berkley  
Marie Clarner-----SRPEDD Commission Chair  
Corey Hebert-----Representing Erik Rousseau, Southeastern Regional Transit Authority  
Mary Ellen DeFrias-----Greater Attleboro and Taunton Regional Transit Authority

**The following Ex-Officio, non-voting members were in attendance**

Anthony Jones-----Federal Highway Administration  
Victoria Alfaro-----Joint Transportation Planning Group Chair

**The following were also in attendance:**

Alan Slavin-----Damien’s Food Pantry/JTPG At-Large Commissioner/Wareham  
Derek Shooster-----Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
Christina Mendoza-----Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
Barbara Lachance-----Massachusetts Department of Transportation  
Stephanie Gray-----Office of Congressman Auchincloss  
Catarina Perreira-----Office of Congressman Auchincloss  
Kian Dana-----Office of Congressman Auchincloss  
Albert Araujo-----Member of the Public  
Aaron Alvarado-----Member of the Public  
Lisa Estrela-Pedro-----SRPEDD  
Jackie Jones-----SRPEDD  
Andrea Duarte-Campos-SRPEDD  
Dan Brogan-----SRPEDD  
Noah Soutier-----SRPEDD  
Jen Chaves-----SRPEDD

**Handouts:**

SMMPO Agenda February 17, 2026  
SMMPO Draft Meeting Minutes January 20, 2025

**AGENDA:**

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call-**

Chairman Woelfel called the SMMPO meeting to order at 1:01 pm. Ms. Andrea Duarte-Campos 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  
MassDOT Administrator-----Yes  
City of Attleboro-----Yes  
City of New Bedford-----Yes  
City of Taunton-----Yes  
Town of Mansfield-----Yes  
Town of Berkley-----Yes  
SRPEDD Commission Chair-----Yes  
SRTA-----Yes  
GATRA-----Yes

**2. Approval of Minutes – January 20, 2026 (Materials Attached and Roll Call Vote Needed)**

Chairman Woelfel requested a motion to approve the minutes from the January 20, 2026, SMMPO meeting. The motion was made by Mary Ellen DeFrias and seconded by Jay Pateakos. Ms. Duarte-Campos then called the roll:

MassDOT Chair-----Yes  
MassDOT Administrator-----Yes  
City of Attleboro-----Yes  
City of New Bedford-----Yes  
City of Taunton-----Yes  
Town of Mansfield-----Yes  
Town of Berkley-----Abstain  
SRPEDD Commission Chair-----Yes  
SRTA-----Yes  
GATRA-----Yes

## **THE MOTION PASSED WITH ONE ABSTENTION.**

### **3. Public Comments**

Chairman Woelfel invited members of the public to make comments, and none were provided.

### **4. Regional Transit Authorities Report – RTA Updates**

Mary Ellen DeFrias announced that GATRA is excited that the Gateway Link service, which connects Brockton, Taunton, and Fall River, is continuing to see an increase in ridership, surpassing 3,000 people in January. It is connecting the three transit hubs and behaving as the transit authorities and legislature had hoped. She stated that the Wareham maintenance facility is getting very close to completion and will service the southern portion of GATRA's service area.

Corey Hebert stated that SRTA is continuing to see ridership increases across all its routes, including the Gateway Link. SRTA is nearing completion of renovations to doors and storefront of its New Bedford terminal and doors of its maintenance facilities.

### **5. Safety Performance Measures (PM1) Presentation**

Christina Mendoza from MassDOT presented an overview of the federal transportation safety performance measures (PM1) for 2026. These measures, established under Federal Highway Administration regulations in 2016, include five key metrics: the number of roadway fatalities, number of serious injuries, fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), serious injury rate per 100 million VMT, and the number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. Ms. Mendoza explained the trends for each year compared to the targets that were set. Targets are calculated as five-year rolling averages, with the 2022–2026 statewide target for Massachusetts projecting 357 fatalities and a fatality rate of 0.56 per 100 million VMT, along with 2,562 serious injuries and a serious injury rate of 4.03 per 100 million VMT. These projections account for recent trends, including pandemic-era increases in speeding and fatalities, improvements in 2023, and continued efforts to reduce crashes, with the state's overarching goal continuing to be zero roadway deaths. Separate targets were also set for non-motorized users—people walking, biking, or rolling—with a five-year target of 512 combined fatalities and serious injuries, assuming a 5% annual reduction due to increased focus on protecting vulnerable road users. She stated that MPOs must adopt statewide targets or set their own by the end of February 2026.

Jackie Jones from SRPEDD followed and compared local trends to statewide targets. SRPEDD region fatality and serious injury totals have remained relatively steady but currently have higher rates than the statewide averages. Ms. Jones emphasized that safety improvements are being pursued through transportation programming, safety planning efforts, and regional Safe Streets and Roads for All grant initiatives, with the expectation that implemented projects will

help reduce these numbers over time. Ms. Jones recommended that the SMMPO adopt the statewide target goals and stated that if board members would like to discuss not adopting them, that is also a possibility. She reminded the body that the SMMPO has adopted the statewide goals in previous years and asked the body for a vote to adopt the statewide safety targets and goals.

A brief discussion initiated by Marie Clarner followed regarding seasonal crash patterns, particularly why many incidents occur between January and July. Staff indicated they would review the data and follow up with additional analysis.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions on the statewide safety targets and seeing none asked for a motion and second to approve the statewide targets for the current time frame as presented. The motion was made by Marie Clarner and seconded by Josh Reinke. The Chair asked Ms. Duarte-Campos to read the roll as follows:

MassDOT Chair-----Yes  
MassDOT Administrator-----Yes  
City of Attleboro-----Yes  
City of New Bedford-----Yes  
City of Taunton-----Yes  
Town of Mansfield-----Yes  
Town of Carver-----Yes  
Town of Berkley-----Yes  
SRPEDD Commission Chair-----Yes  
SRTA-----Yes  
GATRA-----Yes

**THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**6. FFY2027-2031 TIP Development / Opportunity for Community Input on Project Status**

Ms. Jones explained the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development process, focusing on the role of “readiness days,” where MassDOT and regional planning agencies review project status and recommend when projects should be programmed for funding. These discussions consider factors such as right-of-way needs, design progress, and environmental permitting. The meeting focused on highway projects, while transit projects—such as SRTA facility upgrades, bus replacements, and GATRA vehicle replacements and solar projects—will be reviewed in a future meeting. Ms. Jones clarified key terms including advanced construction, which allows project costs to be split across multiple years, and project readiness, which refers to design milestones (25%, 75%, 100%, and final PS&E). Regional guidelines recommend that projects programmed in the first year of the TIP be at least 75% design, and MassDOT now

advises that projects should be at least at the 25% design milestone before being programmed in any year of the TIP to ensure they are ready for funding.

Ms. Jones reviewed project funding projections and programming for each of the next five years, explaining the regional target budget—funded roughly 80% by federal funds and 20% by the state—and how existing projects fit within that budget. Some projects are expected to remain in their scheduled years, while others may shift due to cost increases, funding constraints, or slower design progress. For example, a Norton intersection improvement project may move to an earlier year because it is advancing quickly, while a Mansfield project may shift to a later year due to slower progress. Several projects currently scheduled for 2028–2030 have experienced cost increases that could push program years over budget, requiring adjustments. Although many projects are progressing appropriately, the available funding means not all can remain in their current years. Ms. Jones informed the group that SMMPO staff will continue developing project funding scenarios and evaluation scores to be presented at upcoming meetings. She encouraged members to provide project updates or feedback before final programming decisions are made.

## **7. Other Business**

Ms. Estrela-Pedro provided updates and reminders for the group including:

- **MassDOT Innovation Conference**
  - May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, at DCU Center in Worcester
  - Early Registration Ends February 28<sup>th</sup>
- **Project Review Committee – Next Meeting is April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026**
  - Project Submissions are due in MaPIT Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026
- **North Attleborough – Bridge Replacement, Br#N-16-004, Mendon Road over Abbott Run River – Project No. 607348, Virtual Design Public Hearing will be on Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 7:00pm**

## **8. Date and Time for Next Meeting**

The Chair announced that the next SMMPO meeting will be on March 17, 2026, at 1:00 pm, held virtually on Zoom.

## **9. Adjourn**

The Chair asked for a motion and second to adjourn. Jay Pateakos made the motion and Marie Clarner seconded. The Chair asked that all in favor say aye. All ayes were heard. The Chair thanked everyone, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:37 PM.