

Draft Minutes of the Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO) Meeting on Tuesday, April 21, 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
Cathleen DeSimone-----Mayor of Attleboro
Christopher McDermott---Representing Cathleen DeSimone, Mayor of Fall River
Dan Aguiar-----Representing Paul Coogan, Mayor of Fall River
Jay Pateakos-----Representing Shauna O’Connell, Mayor of Taunton
Jamie Ponte-----Representing Jon Mitchell, Mayor of New Bedford
Mallory Arnstein-----Representing Michael Feck, Town of Mansfield
Jennifer Vincent-----Town of Berkley
Sarah Hewins-----Town of Carver
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

Rhonda Motley-----Federal Highway Administration

The following were also in attendance:

Alan Slavin-----Damien’s Food Pantry/JTPG At-Large Commissioner/Wareham
Michelle Scott -----Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Derek Shooster-----Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Christina Mendoza-----Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Barbara Lachance-----Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Stephanie Gray-----Office of Congressman Auchincloss
Pam Haznar-----McClure
Albert Araujo-----Member of the Public
Leslie Franco-----Member of the Public
Lisa Estrela-Pedro-----SRPEDD
Jackie Jones-----SRPEDD
Andrea Duarte-Campos-SRPEDD
Dan Brogan-----SRPEDD
Noah Soutier-----SRPEDD

Handouts:

- SMMPO Agenda April 21, 2026
- SMMPO Draft Meeting Minutes March 17, 2026
- FFY2026-2030 TIP Amendment #4
- FFY2026-2030 TIP Amendment #5
- FFY2026-2030 TIP Adjustment #3
- FFY2026-2030 TIP Administration Modification #1

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call-

Chairman Woelfel called the SMMPO meeting to order at 1:00 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 Fall River-----Yes
- City of New Bedford-----Yes
- Town of Mansfield-----Yes
- Town of Carver-----Yes
- Town of Berkley-----Yes
- SRPEDD Commission Chair-----Yes
- SRTA-----Yes
- GATRA-----Yes

2. Approval of Minutes – March 17, 2026 (Materials Attached and Roll Call Vote Needed)

Chairman Woelfel asked if there were any proposed changes and requested a motion to approve the minutes from the March 17, 2026, SMMPO meeting. Ms. Duarte stated that SRTA provided corrections on Agenda Item 7 of the minutes, referencing the draft 2027–2031 TIP transit project list. The item referenced \$82 million for construction of a new Fall River maintenance facility but for clarification SRTA has not yet secured funding or land for the project. The project and estimated cost are included in the draft TIP to increase visibility for future funding requests, as approximately \$82 million is needed to plan and construct the new Fall River maintenance facility. She stated that these corrections would be incorporated into the final minutes. The motion to approve the minutes with these edits was made by Dan Aguiar and seconded by Jamie Ponte. Ms. Duarte-Campos then called the roll:

MassDOT Chair-----Yes
 MassDOT Administrator-----Yes
 City of Fall River-----Yes
 City of New Bedford-----Yes
 Town of Mansfield-----Abstain
 Town of Carver-----Abstain
 Town of Berkley-----Yes
 SRPEDD Commission Chair-----Yes
 SRTA-----Yes
 GATRA-----Yes

THE MOTION PASSED WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS.

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 stated that GATRA is experiencing a busy period while co-hosting transportation with the MBTA for the World Cup matches in Foxborough and will operate hotel loops within its service area, while standardizing its micro transit service for the event to help ensure timely access. She stated that because GATRA does not have enough assets to support the effort alone, it will work with other RTAs across Massachusetts and coordinate closely with the Federal Transit Administration to meet required benchmarks. She also shared that the Gateway Link, which has been operating since August, has improved mobility between Taunton, Brockton, and Fall River; in March, the service reached record ridership of 4,672 passengers, reinforcing the need for connections across Bristol County, including access to the BCC campus, Stonehill, and Massasoit through Brockton connections. GATRA has another year of funding for the program and will continue seeking additional funding, with the goal of reaching three full years to better assess its impact on NTD reporting.

Corey Hebert stated that ridership continues to increase for both fixed-route and demand-response services. SRTA is also nearing completion of rehabilitation and renovation work at the New Bedford terminal and both garages, including door replacements. He stated that work has begun on a new capital project to replace the workforce management system, which will improve technology and modernize operations.

5. MassDOT 2027-2031 Capital Investment Plan Presentation

Michelle Scott of MassDOT provided an update on the development of MassDOT’s 2027–2031 Capital Investment Plan (CIP), a rolling five-year, fiscally constrained plan that covers planning,

construction, and capital maintenance across the state’s transportation system. The CIP includes investments in roads, bridges, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit, the state rail network, public-use airports, MassDOT enterprise services, and the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Ms. Scott noted that the CIP is guided by major transportation plans and policies, particularly the Beyond Mobility statewide long-range transportation plan, which emphasizes priorities such as safety, reliability, travel experience, clean transportation, resiliency, and destination connectivity. She explained how the CIP overlaps with and differs from the STIP and regional TIPs, noting that the CIP includes items such as Chapter 90, other local aid programs, and state-funded transit and modal investments, while the STIP includes some federal funds that flow directly to transit agencies.

Ms. Scott also highlighted major funding sources and investment priorities in the preliminary CIP, which is currently estimated at approximately \$20 billion, up from \$18.5 billion in the prior 2026–2030 CIP. The largest investment area is the bridge program, estimated at about \$7 billion, with other major investments including Chapter 90, railway reconstruction, the Cape Cod bridges, municipal partnership programs, and projects supported by expanded Commonwealth Transportation Fund revenues from the Fair Share Amendment. She highlighted that for Southeastern Massachusetts, major investments include bridge and corridor improvements in Freetown, Marion, Wareham, Swansea, and Taunton, as well as ongoing work on the I-195/Route 18 interchange in New Bedford. The CIP also supports climate resiliency, active transportation, airport investments, culvert and dam replacement, electric vehicles for RTAs, and state support for SRTA’s hybrid bus purchases. She announced that MassDOT expects to release the draft CIP for public review in May, with a 21-day comment period anticipated from May 21 to June 10 and final board approval targeted for June 17. She gave an opportunity for questions to which none were provided.

6. FFY2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Administrative Modification #1 – Community Transit Grant Awards (Materials Attached & Roll Call Vote Needed to Endorse)

Before presenting the proposed administrative modification, Lisa Estrela-Pedro reminded members of the MPO’s process for amendments, administrative adjustments, and administrative modifications and differences between each, which are outlined in both the current TIP and the draft 2027–2031 TIP in the form of tables. The table identifies the type of change, its definition, required procedure, length of review, and responsible party. For this item, the change is considered a project description change because the Community Transit Grant projects were already programmed in the TIP but had not yet been specifically defined. As a result, the only action required is a motion to approve. Ms. Estrela-Pedro then presented the proposed administrative modification, which included Community Transit Grant awards for

services and vehicle replacements. Award recipients included GATRA, the Marion Council on Aging, the Nemasket Group, and Associates for Human Services.

The Chair asked if there were any questions on the 2026-2030 TIP Proposed Administrative Modification #1 and seeing none asked for a motion and second to release it to a 21-day public comment period. The motion was made by Dan Aguiar and seconded by Jennifer Vincent. The Chair asked Ms. Duarte-Campos to read the roll as follows:

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

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- 7. FFY2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #4 – Addition of projects in FY2026 (Materials Attached & Roll Call Vote Needed to Endorse):**
 - a. 613106 Rehoboth Deck Replacement, R-04-018 (3U4, 3U5), I-105 (EB/WB) over Palmer River**
 - b. S13419 Fairhaven: Steamship Authority – Construction of two (2) New Vehicle Transfer Bridges, Gallows, Counterweights and Related Equipment for the Steamship Authority’s Fairhaven Vessel Maintenance Facility**
 - c. 609193 Norton – Intersection Improvements at West Main Street (Route 123), North Worcester Street and South Worcester Street – move project from FFY2027 to FFY2026**

Jackie Jones stated that at the previous meeting, the SMMPO voted to release Amendment 4 for public comment. No comments were received during the public comment period, including at the April 2 virtual public meeting that was held. She briefly reviewed the proposed changes and requested a vote to approve them for inclusion in the TIP. Amendment 4 includes moving the Norton intersection improvements project at West Main Street, North Worcester Street, and South Worcester Street from 2027 to 2026 because the project advanced quickly and funding became available in 2026. It also adds the Rehoboth deck replacement over the Palmer

River to 2026 using statewide target funding, as the bridge project is ready to proceed this year. In addition, the amendment adds approximately \$2.2 million in Ferry Boat Program funding for the Fairhaven Steamship Authority project, which includes construction of two new vehicle transfer bridges, galleys, counterweights, and related equipment at the Fairhaven maintenance facility. She stated that no changes were made to the amendment after it was released, and no public comments were received.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions on the Proposed FFY26-30 TIP Amendment #4 and seeing none asked for a motion and second to endorse it. The motion was made by Mary Ellen DeFrias and seconded by Dan Aguiar. The Chair asked Ms. Duarte-Campos to read the roll as follows:

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

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- 8. FFY2026-2030 TIP Amendment #5 (Materials Attached & Roll Call Vote Needed to recommend to 21-day public comment period)**
 - a. 607871 - Dartmouth Corridor Improvements on Route 6, From Faunce Corner Road to Hathaway Road - Remove project from the TIP (will be included in FFY2027-2031 TIP)**
 - b. 613636 - Dighton Bridge Replacement, D-08-002 (3L9), Pleasant Street over Muddy Cove - Program \$2,714,714 of Statewide-CON-Bridge On-System funding towards the project in FY2026**
 - c. T00200 SRTA Preventative Maintenance – Increase amount of Section 5307 funding from \$800,000 to \$1,200,000. Increase amount of State Capital Assistance (SCA) funding from \$200,000 to \$300,000**

d. T00204 SRTA Non-Fixed Route ADA Paratransit - Increase amount of Section 5307 funding from \$160,000 to \$400,000. Increase amount of State Capital Assistance (SCA) funding from \$40,000 to \$400,000

Ms. Jones reminded the group that amendments require a 21-day public comment period, as outlined in the TIP procedures discussed earlier. Proposed amendment #5 primarily focuses on using available funding for projects that are ready to move forward. It includes the Dartmouth corridor improvements project on Route 6, from Faunce Corner Road to Hathaway Road, that was originally programmed for 2026 but will not be ready that year. It was proposed to be removed from the current TIP so available funding can be used for other regional projects, while the Dartmouth project is expected to appear in the draft 2027-2031 TIP. Ms. Jones explained that a portion of the remaining regional funding would be applied to the Wareham culvert and dam replacement project on Cranberry Highway/Route 28 at Mill Pond Dam over the Agawam River, allowing the funds to stay in the region rather than be reallocated elsewhere. Amendment #5 also includes additional statewide funding for the Dighton bridge replacement project on Pleasant Street over Money Cove, which has an earmark but requires more funding to be fully covered. On the transit side, the amendment would increase funding for existing SRTA projects, including preventative maintenance and non-fixed-route ADA paratransit, using Section 5307 operating assistance and state contract assistance funds. She requested a vote from the SMMPO to release the proposed amendment for a 21-day public comment period, during which a public meeting will be held and comments will be accepted.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions on the Proposed FFY26-30 TIP Amendment #5 and seeing none asked for a motion and second to release it to a 21-day public comment period. The motion was made by Jamie Ponte and seconded by Mallory Arnstein. The Chair asked Ms. Duarte-Campos to read the roll as follows:

- MassDOT Chair-----Yes
- MassDOT Administrator-----Yes
- City of Attleboro-----Yes
- City of Fall River-----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

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. FFY2026-2030 TIP Adjustment #3 (Materials Attached & Roll Call Vote Needed to Approve)

606352 - Wareham - Culvert and Dam Replacement on Cranberry Highway at Route 28 and Route 6, Mill Pond Dam over Agawam River - Program \$10,770,811 of Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Target Funds towards the project and adjust the statewide portion to \$6,438,378

Ms. Jones stated that unlike amendments, administrative adjustments do not require a public comment period; if approved by vote, the adjustment takes effect immediately and is reflected in the TIP. Ms. Jones requested approval of an adjustment related to the Wareham Culvert and Dam Replacement on Cranberry Highway at Route 28 and Route 6, Mill Pond Dam over Agawam River due to project timing and the need for the project to be advertised on schedule. She explained that the adjustment would add regional target funding to the project while decreasing funding from statewide sources in fiscal years 2027 and 2028. She clarified that the adjustment does not change the total project funding amount or make any significant changes to the project itself; it only shifts funding between sources.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions on the Proposed FFY26-30 Adjustment #3 and seeing none asked for a motion and second to release it to a 21-day public comment period. The motion was made by Sarah Hewins and seconded by Jamie Ponte. The Chair asked Ms. Duarte-Campos to read the roll as follows:

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

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. Draft FFY 2027-2031 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Presentation (Link & Roll Call Vote Needed to Release to 21-day Public Comment Period)

Ms. Jones presented the full draft 2027-2031 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for release to a 21-day public review period, noting that the document includes not only project lists but also required federal and state planning information, Title VI notices, MPO and JTPG membership, endorsements, performance measures, project development guidance, public participation documentation, project prioritization, funding distribution analysis, regional project descriptions, grant program participation, air quality conformity, greenhouse gas monitoring, and appendices with highway, transit, statewide, MBTA, supplemental, and obligated-project lists. She explained that the project lists were largely unchanged from the prior meeting, except for the Dartmouth Route 6 corridor improvements project, which was removed from the 2026-2030 TIP and added to the 2027-2031 TIP regional target funds list with associated earmarks, leaving a zero balance of available funding in 2027. Ms. Jones explained that the draft TIP also includes information on how projects are selected, how funding categories are used, how investments relate to performance measures and equity considerations, and how projects from previous TIP years have benefited the region. She encouraged members to review the document in detail during the comment period and noted that some required reports, including the latest obligated projects report, would be added before the final vote.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions on draft FFY2027-2031 TIP and seeing none asked for a motion and second to release it to a 21-day public comment period. The motion was made by Cathleen DeSimone and seconded by Sarah Hewins. The Chair asked Ms. Duarte-Campos to read the roll as follows:

- MassDOT Chair-----Yes
- MassDOT Administrator-----Yes
- City of Attleboro-----Yes
- City of Fall River-----Yes
- City of New Bedford-----Yes
- City of Taunton-----No response/Left early
- Town of Mansfield-----Yes
- Town of Berkley-----Yes
- Town of Carver-----Yes
- SRPEDD Commission Chair-----Yes
- SRTA-----Yes
- GATRA-----Yes

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

11. Other Business

Ms. Estrela-Pedro stated that a virtual design public hearing will be held this evening at 6:00 p.m. for the Fall River Jefferson Street over Sucker Brook bridge replacement project. In addition, a public information meeting will be held for the Acushnet project along South Main Street, from Main Street to Alden Road, on Wednesday, May 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the Ford Middle School auditorium in Acushnet.

12. Date and Time for Next Meeting

The Chair announced that the next SMMPO meeting will be on May 19, 2026, at 1:00 pm, held virtually on Zoom.

13. Adjourn

The Chair asked for a motion and second to adjourn. Marie Clarner made the motion and Jennifer Vincent seconded. The Chair asked that all in favor say aye. All ayes were heard. The Chair thanked everyone, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:56 PM.