

Draft Minutes of the Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO) Meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 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 Fall River [Arrived late]
Dan Aguiar-----Representing Paul Coogan, Mayor of Fall River
Jay Pateakos-----Representing Shauna O’Connell, Mayor of Taunton
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

No Ex-Officio, non-voting members were in attendance

The following were also in attendance:

Austin Reiff-----City of Attleboro
Derek Shooster-----Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Christina Mendoza-----Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Barbara Lachance-----Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Kian Dana-----Office of Congressman Auchincloss
Pam Haznar-----McClure
Albert Araujo-----Member of the Public
Sonia Austin-----Member of the Public
Lisa Estrela-Pedro-----SRPEDD
Jackie Jones-----SRPEDD
Jen Chaves-----SRPEDD
Sean Hilton-----SRPEDD
Noah Soutier-----SRPEDD

Handouts:

SMMPO Agenda May 19, 2026
SMMPO Draft Meeting Minutes April 21, 2026
FFY2027-2031 Draft TIP Public Comment Received Table
FFY2027-2031 Draft TIP Comment Period Changes Table

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call-

Chairman Woelfel called the SMMPO meeting to order at 1:00 pm. Ms. Lisa Estrela-Pedro 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 Taunton-----Yes
Town of Carver-----Yes
Town of Berkley-----Yes
SRPEDD Commission Chair-----Yes
SRTA-----Yes
GATRA-----Yes

2. Approval of Minutes – April 21, 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 April 21, 2026, SMMPO meeting. The motion was made by Dan Aguiar and seconded by Jay Pateakos. Ms. Estrela-Pedro then called the roll:

MassDOT Chair-----Yes
MassDOT Administrator-----Yes
City of Fall River-----Yes
City of Taunton-----Yes
Town of Carver-----Abstain
Town of Berkley-----Yes
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 stated that she recently presented on GATRA’s work with the Gateway Link service and the 413 in Western Massachusetts at the Mobility Conference in Salt Lake City, which was well received. She reported that the Gateway Link continues strong with 5,000 riders in the month of April alone. She stated that GATRA’s Wareham facility is almost complete and aims to have that online in June. Corey Hebert stated that SRTA is continuing to see growth in bus ridership.

5. Regional Congestion Management Plan Update and Municipal Survey

Sean Hilton of SRPEDD stated that staff is updating the region’s Congestion Management Plan, last updated in 2021, and is seeking feedback from the MPO and JTPG municipal staff members about congestion locations in their communities. Mr. Hilton stated that in 2023, the SMMPO endorsed MassDOT’s two- and four-year congestion performance targets, including measures for Interstate travel time reliability, non-Interstate travel time reliability, and truck travel time reliability. He stated that recent 2025 performance reviews show that the SMMPO region is performing well, with Interstate and non-Interstate travel time reliability remaining above MassDOT’s four-year goals. However, because much of the available data from RITIS focuses on major roadways, local congestion issues may not be fully captured. To address this gap, SRPEDD staff created a short survey for municipal staff to identify congestion areas by placing a point on a map and describing the issue.

Discussion ensued about what RITIS is and how RITIS works, including its use of INRIX traffic data, and questions were raised about whether cell-phone-based data captures accurately all drivers. SRPEDD and MassDOT staff responded that they could share out information about RITIS and INRIX methodology after the meeting. There was also discussion about whether the survey should be shared more broadly with the public, since residents may be more aware of day-to-day congestion concerns than municipal staff who may not live in the community and this may help provide a broader and more accurate perspective of local congestion issues. Marie Clarner noted that residents sometimes have congestion concerns and feel that their voices go unheard and this project is an opportunity to gather their input and reaffirm their voice matters. Mr. Hilton noted that the current focus is on municipal priorities but acknowledged the value of broader public input. He stated that the survey would be open until August 2026. Ms. Jones added that staff are currently also engaging the public through other efforts such as the Healthy Living Survey.

6. FFY2026-2030 TIP Amendment #5 (Materials Attached & Roll Call Vote Needed to Endorse)

- 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**

Jackie Jones reminded the group that Amendment 5 was released for public comment following a vote at the previous meeting. The amendment removes Project 607871, the Dartmouth Route 6 Corridor Improvements from Faunce Corner Road to Hathaway Road, from the FFY 2026-2030 TIP and moves it into the FFY 2027–2031 TIP, where it will be funded in the next TIP cycle. She noted that the project appears multiple times in the amendment because it includes several funding sources, mostly earmarks, which will also carry forward into the next round. Amendment 5 also includes funding changes for Project 613636, the Dighton Bridge replacement on Pleasant Street over Muddy Cove, by adding statewide target funds to supplement earmark funding and fully fund the project. In addition, there are two SRTA-related changes involving increased match funding for preventative maintenance and ADA paratransit projects.

Ms. Jones noted that during the public comment period, a public meeting was held on May 4 to discuss Amendment 5 and the draft FFY 2027–2031 TIP. No specific comments were received on Amendment 5 itself, although general comments were made about the Dartmouth Route 6 project and were categorized under the FFY 2027 TIP because they focused on the project scope rather than the schedule change. Staff received a phone call from a Dartmouth resident who expressed frustration about the project delay from 2026 to 2027 due to safety concerns at Hathaway Road. Staff explained that the project is being delayed because the design is not ready for FFY 2026, and therefore it cannot be funded for construction at that time. Ms. Jones noted that those comments were passed along to MassDOT and the Town of Dartmouth and will be included in the public record. She then asked the SMMPO to take a vote on endorsing this Amendment as part of the FFY 2026–2030 TIP.

The Chair asked if there were any questions on the 2026-2030 TIP Proposed 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 Dan Aguiar and seconded by Jennifer Vincent. The Chair asked Ms. Estrela-Pedro to read the roll as follows:

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

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. FFY2026-2030 TIP Amendment #6 (Materials Attached & Roll Call Vote Needed to Release to a 21-day public comment period) 614243 District 5 – VRU Missing Crosswalks at State Signals at Multiple Locations (North Attleborough)

Ms. Jones described FFY2026-2030 TIP Proposed Amendment #6 as a new and relatively straightforward amendment. Amendment 6 would add funding for missing crosswalks at signalized intersections at multiple locations in the state, including improvements within the SRPEDD region at South Washington Street near the Emerald Square Mall North Driveway in North Attleborough. The purpose of the project is to make crossings on state roadways safer and easier for vulnerable road users, including pedestrians and bicyclists, through the addition of crosswalks and related sidewalk improvements. Ms. Jones provided an opportunity for questions and asked the SMPO to take a vote to release the amendment for a 21-day public comment period.

The Chair asked if there were any questions on the 2026-2030 TIP Proposed Amendment #6 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 Dan Aguiar. The Chair asked Ms. Estrela-Pedro to read the roll as follows:

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

City of Taunton-----Yes
Town of Carver-----Yes
Town of Berkley-----Yes
SRPEDD Commission Chair-----Yes
SRTA-----Yes
GATRA-----Yes

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Self-Certification of the SMMPO Transportation Planning Process (Roll Call Vote Needed to Certify)

Ms. Jones read the certification into the record, explaining that the SMMPO certifies its metropolitan transportation planning process complies with applicable federal requirements and supports the development and implementation of the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan, Air Quality Conformity determinations, the Transportation Improvement Program, and the Unified Planning Work Program. The certification references federal transportation planning statutes, Clean Air Act requirements, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, nondiscrimination provisions related to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, gender, disability, and business opportunity, Equal Employment Opportunity requirements, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Older Americans Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and federal anti-lobbying restrictions. Ms. Jones summarized the purpose of the certification as confirming that the MPO’s transportation planning process is inclusive and ensures that everyone has a voice.

Ms. DeFrias from GATRA asked whether the certification language had been updated from the previous year, particularly regarding Disadvantaged Business Enterprise language. Ms. Jones explained that the language had been updated in the last cycle and reviewed by MassDOT, but DeFrias noted that federally funded agencies are no longer reporting on or giving preference through DBE programs. Other members asked for clarification on the meaning of DBE and whether the clause needed to be removed from the certification language. Ms. Jones explained that the certification applies to the MPO’s 3C planning process rather than requiring GATRA or SRTA to take specific action but agreed to seek guidance from Federal Highway on whether the DBE language should remain. Derek Shooster of MassDOT suggested that the SMMPO vote to conditionally approve the certification, allowing staff to either retain or remove the DBE language based on federal guidance without needing to return for another vote. The board agreed to this course of action.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions on the Self-Certification and seeing none asked for a motion and second to conditionally approve the Self-Certification of the SMMPO

Transportation Planning Process. The motion was made by Marie Clarner and seconded by Dan Aguiar. The Chair asked Ms. Estrela-Pedro to read the roll as follows:

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

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. 310 CMR 60.05: Global Warming Solutions Act Requirements for Transportation (Roll Call Vote Needed to Adopt)

Ms. Jones reviewed the Global Warming Solutions Act certification. She explained that the certification states that the SMMPO’s Transportation Improvement Program, air quality conformity determination, and Long Range Transportation Plan comply with applicable requirements under state regulation 310 CMR. Ms. Jones asked the body to vote to endorse the certification so that it could be included in the TIP, with Philip Eng signing on behalf of the MPO. During discussion, Ms. Hewins asked whether the certification requirements would be removed if the federal government eliminated similar requirements. Ms. Jones clarified that the Global Warming Solutions Act certification is based on state, not federal, requirements.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions on the 310 CMR 60.05: Global Warming Solutions Act Requirements for Transportation and seeing none asked for a motion and second to adopt them. The motion was made by Marie Clarner and seconded by Chris McDermott. The Chair asked Ms. Estrela-Pedro to read the roll as follows:

MassDOT Chair-----Yes
MassDOT Administrator-----Yes
City of Attleboro-----Yes
City of Fall River-----Yes
City of Taunton-----Yes
Town of Carver-----Yes
Town of Berkley-----Yes
SRPEDD Commission Chair-----Yes

SRTA-----Yes

GATRA-----Yes

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**10. Draft FFY 2027-2031 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Presentation
(Materials Attached, Link & Roll Call Vote Needed to Endorse)**

Ms. Jones reviewed the draft FFY 2027–2031 Transportation Improvement Program, which had been released for a 21-day public comment period following a vote at the previous meeting. Ms. Jones reported that a significant amount of public comment was received, including comments from the Chair of the Dartmouth Pathways Committee and the President of the South Coast Bikeway Alliance. These comments focused on Dartmouth-specific projects and the need for stronger protections for vulnerable road users. Staff also received comments from a Dartmouth resident who had previously expressed concern about the delay of the Route 6 project, particularly related to safety issues at Hathaway Road. Ms. Jones noted that because many of the comments were project-specific, staff passed them along to MassDOT and recommended that commenters also contact MassDOT and the Dartmouth DPW directly. MassDOT also provided its annual review comments on the document, which were incorporated into the public record. She stated that at its meeting the prior week, the JTPG reviewed the same comments and proposed changes and voted to recommend that the SMMPO endorse the FFY 2027–2031 TIP with the proposed revisions.

Ms. Jones summarized several proposed changes to the final TIP document, most of which were minor or administrative. These included updating an MPO member title, correcting broken or missing links in the table of contents, fixing a typo, making accessibility updates to meet new requirements, revising performance measure language and a chart to better reflect the safety targets adopted by the board in January, and correcting a minor rounding error in the financial projections. Ms. Jones also explained that the highway project lists would be reprinted because MassDOT Highway recommended moving three statewide pavement preservation projects based on updated pavement conditions. She stated that the Mansfield/Norton I-495 pavement preservation project would be moved sooner to 2027 because the pavement condition is worse, while the New Bedford/Freetown Route 140 pavement preservation project and the Lakeville/Freetown/Taunton Route 140 resurfacing project would be moved later because those pavement conditions were better than expected. These changes affect statewide funding sources and do not change the regional target funding overseen by the MPO. Additional updates were also made to the SRTA transit lists in Appendix C, the statewide project lists in Appendix D, and the MassDOT operations and maintenance report in Appendix I.

Ms. Jones emphasized that the proposed changes did not substantially affect the regional target projects or transit scenarios previously presented to the board. The FFY 2027–2031 TIP represents a five-year program proposing approximately \$657 million in transportation investments in the region, not including some state-funded projects where the exact regional expenditure is harder to determine. Discussion ensued about whether MassDOT actually responds to and makes changes to projects based on public comments. Chair Woelfel explained that public comments are taken seriously, that staff responds where possible, and that project-specific comments are passed along to MassDOT and local contacts. He emphasized that it’s also up to the SMMPO board and SRPEDD in addition to MassDOT to address public comments on these regional funds. Ms. Jones added that while the TIP public comment process is important, the design public hearing process is often the most effective opportunity for residents to influence specific project details. Mr. Shooster confirmed that design changes can and do result from public feedback received during those hearings and that MPO meetings are another guard rail to help ensure that projects are not developed against public will.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions on the FFY 2027-2031 TIP and seeing none asked for a motion and second to endorse it. The motion was made by Marie Clarner and seconded by Sarah Hewins. The Chair asked Ms. Estrela-Pedro to read the roll as follows:

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

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

11. FFY2027 Draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (Link & Roll Call Vote Needed to recommend to 21-day public comment period)

Ms. Estrela-Pedro reviewed the draft Unified Planning Work Program, or UPWP, which serves as the annual work program for SMMPO staff. She explained that the UPWP is required to administer the MPO’s work and document the use of Federal Highway and FTA planning funds. The document is updated annually and includes the scope of work, detailed deliverables, responsible staff, time frames, and costs. The draft being considered covers the period from

October 1, 2026 through September 30, 2027. In developing the UPWP, staff take into consideration federal planning factors from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the FAST Act, as well as goals from the Long Range Transportation Plan.

She explained that the UPWP is organized into three main elements. Element 1, Management and Support of the Planning Process, includes tasks related to the 3C planning process, MEPA reviews, public participation and Title VI work, monitoring and developing the UPWP, maintaining and amending the TIP, developing the next TIP for FFY 2028–2032, and tracking regional and statewide performance measures. Element 2 focuses on regional data collection, modeling, and analysis, including data management, GIS and modeling, the regional traffic counting program, pedestrian and bicycle counts, pavement management for federal-aid roads not maintained by MassDOT, and community technical assistance. Ms. Estrela-Pedro noted that the technical assistance program is especially popular because it provides shorter memo-style support to communities on issues such as signal warrant analyses or potential truck exclusions.

She explained that Element 3 includes the project-specific transportation planning activities and studies. Planned work for 2026-2027 includes continuing Phase 2 of the Pleasant Street corridor study in Fall River, updating the regional freight plan, updating the top 100 most dangerous intersections, continuing Year 2 of the Mansfield bicycle and pedestrian network plan, updating the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, continuing support for the SERCOTT committee, and completing Year 2 of the SRTA fare-free economic impact analysis. A new Long Range Transportation Plan visioning and outreach task is also included, which will begin early preparation for the next LRTP through literature reviews, scenario planning considerations, and outreach to communities to update local transportation priorities identified during the previous planning cycle. The environmental coordination task will continue maintaining a database that prioritizes flood-prone roadways and culvert replacements.

Ms. Estrela-Pedro reported that the draft 26-27 UPWP budget is approximately \$1.8 million, with about 32% allocated to Element 1, 21% to Element 2, and 47% to Element 3. The budget will be modified slightly because staff received approval to use leftover deobligated funds from the previous year to purchase noise and air pollution monitoring equipment. She noted that the draft document is available for download on the SRPEDD website, and staff will hold a public meeting during the 21-day comment period. She asked the MPO take a vote to release the draft UPWP for public comment, with endorsement anticipated at the next MPO meeting on June 16.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions on the draft FFY2027 UPWP 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 Dan Aguiar. The Chair asked Ms. Estrela-Pedro to read the roll as follows:

MassDOT Chair-----Yes

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

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. Other Business

Ms. Estrela-Pedro announced that self-nomination forms had been sent out for MPO members for the upcoming term, with the Mansfield and Fairhaven members’ terms set to expire at the end of July; completed forms are due back by June 15. She also reminded members that the FY 2026 Safe Streets and Roads for All grant deadline is May 26. She noted additional upcoming events including MassDOT’s Capital Investment Plan meeting on June 8 at 4:00 p.m., the MBTA Focus 2050 Long Range Plan virtual public sector forum on June 3 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m., and the Drive Electric Massachusetts Symposium on June 10 at the AC Hotel in Worcester. She noted that this information would be shared with members after the meeting. Ms. Jones announced that staff also have a Healthy Living Survey out to gather public input for the region’s Age-Friendly Mobility Plan, Food Access and Security in Transportation Plan and other agency efforts; she encouraged attendees to take it and share it out.

13. Date and Time for Next Meeting

The Chair announced that the next SMMPO meeting will be on June 16, 2026, at 1:00 pm, held virtually on Zoom.

14. Adjourn

The Chair asked for a motion and second to adjourn. Marie Clarner made the motion and Sarah Hewins seconded. The Chair asked that all in favor say aye. All ayes were heard. The Chair thanked everyone, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:58 PM.