

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF THE
Joint Transportation Planning Group (JTPG)
Wednesday March, 13, 2019
Held at SRPEDD
88 Broadway, Taunton, MA 02780

The following JTPG Members were in attendance:

Robert Burgmann, Town of Mattapoisett
Alan Slavin, Town of Wareham
Shayne Trimbell, SRTA
Jamie Pisano, VHB
Franklin Moniz, Town of Lakeville
Paul Scott, Town of Plainville
Manuel H. Silva, City of New Bedford
Jonathan Church, McMahon Associates
John Woods, Town of Carver
LeAnn Bradley, Town of Middleboro
Pamela Haznar, MassDOT
Tom Ferry, Town of Dighton
Paul Mission, SRPEDD

David Hickox, Town of Dartmouth
Charlie Mills, SRPEDD
Jeffrey Walker, SRPEDD
Guoqiang Li, SRPEDD
Lloyd Mendes, Member of Public
Fred Cornaglia, City of Taunton
Jack Hamm, Taunton DPW
Paul DiGiuseppe, Town of Norton
Ed Buckley, Town of Raynham
Bill Roth, City of Fall River
JR Frey, City of Fall River
Lisa Estrela-Pedro, SRPEDD
Jackie Jones, SRPEDD

Handouts:

1. Draft Evaluation Criteria Scoring
2. Proposed FFY 2020-2024 TIP Projects Scenario I
3. Proposed FFY 2020-2024 TIP Projects Scenario II

1. **Call to Order and Introductions:** The meeting was called to order at 2:00 by Vice Chairman Mr. Alan Slavin, after which attendees introduced themselves.
2. **Public Comments:** Vice Chairman Mr. Alan Slavin opened the floor to any members of the public that wished to address the JTPG. No public comments were made.
3. **Approval of Minutes – February 13, 2019:** A motion was made to approve the minutes of the last JTPG meeting held on February 13, 2019. The motion was seconded and approved UNANIMOUSLY.
4. **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Proposed Project List and Scenarios in FFY 2020-2024 for consideration and recommendation to SMMPO**

Ms. Lisa Estrela-Pedro explained the first handout DRAFT Evaluation Criteria scoring for all the projects included in both Scenarios as well as the projects on the Future Elements list of the TIP. The projects were scored with the new Evaluation Criteria based on PNF's and PIF's

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and we reached out to a couple of the communities as well as MassDOT for assistance in answering a lot of the evaluation questions so the total could be 100 points.

The two other handouts are the scenario project lists for our funding that SRPEDD is responsible for programming for projects in the region. The scenarios deal with FFY 2020-2024. There are two scenarios that were created, the only change dealt with FY 2021 and everything that is currently on the TIP for FFY 2023 got pushed out to FFY 2024. Ms. Estrela-Pedro mentioned that the FFY 2024 is currently over programmed so the board needs to recommend a plan for 2024, potentially having something fall off. Ms. Estrela-Pedro is asking the JTPG body to recommend one of the two scenarios to the SMMPO as they are looking for a firm list of projects for TIP development.

Ms. Estrela-Pedro is recommending in both Scenario I and II that the Lakeville project be pushed out to FFY 2021. SRPEDD has been in discussion with MassDOT and the town, and the town is aware that this will not affect their construction start. We are pushing it out because we want to be safe as it is close to \$10 million. Ultimately, if the project is not ready in FFY 2020 we would be scrambling to find something to take its place. After working with MassDOT they feel confident that they can advance a \$5 million resurfacing project in Taunton and Dighton for 2020. There is a \$3.6 million balance in 2020 so we will look and see if there is something that can use up the remaining funds or there may be cost increases.

In 2021, Scenario I is looking to push out three projects in Attleboro, Taunton, and Dartmouth and bringing in two projects in Rehoboth and New Bedford that are currently programmed in 2022. The reason that those projects are being pushed out is because of the costs and we can fit some smaller projects that are a bit more advanced to fill that gap. In 2021, Scenario II pushes out the Raynham project that is programmed for 2021 to 2022 and keeps the Attleboro project in its place.

In FFY 2023 all of that funding is being taken up by the three projects that are being pushed out from 2022 to 2023. Ms. Estrela-Pedro reiterated that all the projects from 2023 will be moved to 2024. Ms. Estrela-Pedro explained that the two biggest decision that need to be made is whether we want to keep the Raynham project or the Attleboro project in 2021. Also, in FFY 2024 which project will we remove to stay fiscally constrained.

Mr. Lloyd Mendes stated that it seems that projects are not proceeding along on schedule. He suggested for a matter of policy that we should try and encourage projects that are on

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schedule not get pushed out on the TIP. In this case, the Dighton/Taunton resurfacing project is at pre-25%, why are they kept and the Attleboro project that is at 25% design is being considered to be pushed out a year.

Ms. Estrela-Pedro explained that during TIP Day we talked about project readiness and the Taunton/Dighton project will be able to move a little quicker than the Attleboro project and a lot of the time it comes down to the hurdles of Right-of-Way and any environmental issues that a project may face.

Mr. Lloyd Mendes mentioned that speaking as a member of the public, that for transparency purposes it is important for people to know what is going on when projects get cut.

Mr. Slavin asked if moving the Mattapoisett project will affect their bike path which was approved for 2022. Mr. Robert Burgmann stated that it is coming from the village and it is not bike path related.

Mr. Burgmann asked if you can split projects between multiple fiscal years. Ms. Estrela-Pedro explained that we are not allowed to do so unless it exceeds the available target funds. She explained that in 2022 the available target funding was \$22.3 million and unless a project exceeded that amount they could not split a project over multiple years. We are allowed to break projects into phases but it is unlikely that it would be programmed in consecutive years.

Mr. Jeffrey Walker mentioned that moving high cost projects there are so many variables involved to knowing the true cost of a project. He also stated that it is hardly an issue faced by just SRPEDD as regions across the state face the same issues.

Ms. Pamela Haznar had a few comments and as far as the Taunton/Dighton resurfacing project it is a MassDOT project and they have been working on it although it is at pre-25% design. It is a very straight forward project with no right-of-way or any other issues. If there is ROW on a project, you can add about a year to the project timeline because it is a very difficult process that is why it will be easier to get out. Raynham/138 is an example of a project that was more resurfacing and it was thought that they could narrow the lanes and add sidewalks but because of a concrete slab MassDOT was not able to do that and due to 2 high-crash locations, the price escalated and MassDOT has been working with their designer to cut the project in half so that they could get something done. The northern phase of the

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project will be looked at in the future. She added that FHWA is looking for smaller projects that can be done quickly and efficiently. Through MassDOT's PRC process the Chief Engineer wants projects that have a significant cost increase to go back to PRC for re-approval.

A question was raised asking what is considered a small project.

Ms. Haznar clarified that it depends on the region and small projects at \$3 million can be shifted much easier than a \$5 or \$6-million project. Ms. Haznar believes that they should advance Raynham rather than Attleboro because there are still a lot of studies going on currently in Attleboro.

Ms. Estrela-Pedro clarified that it is Scenario I.

Ms. Haznar had a comment on the 2024 projects saying that the Mansfield project is still pre-25% design so the cost is still fluid and after talking with the town about combining a 106/140 project that is in 2021 and may be getting shifted to 2023. Right now it is still in 2021 and it is ahead of a lot of the other statewide projects. The project cost overall should be a bit lower than what it is currently programmed at. Ms. Estrela-Pedro asked if the cost should be updated to a lower cost? Ms. Haznar clarified that it should and it will not include the 106/140 intersection whether the rest of the corridor gets included at the same time it would have to be looked at.

Ms. Estrela-Pedro clarified that SRPEDD will work with MassDOT to see if they can lower that project cost which will make it easier to determine whether or not any projects from 2024 need to fall off the TIP.

Mr. Paul Mission mentioned that the other issue is having a firm project list for the SMMPO to consider next week and for MassDOT Boston to have a firm list by next Tuesday. If it is not reduced by \$824,311 we have the problem of not being fiscally constrained so SRPEDD is hoping that taking another look at this will bring it down the necessary amount but if we cannot bring it down that amount, then it is up to the SMMPO to make the decision what gets left off. He asked for a certain recommendation from the JTPG board for a certain scenario, keeping in mind that there may be a cost adjustment can the JTPG board also come up with a possible alternative, if in fact the cost does not come down that SRPEDD can at least present to the SMMPO board with the JTPG approval. The other issue is that if we move out the Mansfield project, what do we put in its place?

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Ms. Estrela-Pedro explained that if we do need to move a project out we will go to the Evaluation Criteria list and see which project could be programmed in FFY 2024.

A statement was made that whatever project does get moved out there will be a chunk of uncommitted money for FFY 2024.

Ms. Haznar explained that Plainville is at 25% design and Lakeville County Street is a project that MassDOT will not be advancing at the time and will try to get it deactivated the rest of the projects in 2024 are good. Ms. Estrela-Pedro explained that if they can get the Mansfield costs updated SRPEDD can leave 2024 as is and the JTPG Board just needs to pick Scenario I or Scenario II. If SRPEDD cannot then which project does this body recommend pushing out? Mr. Slavin explained that any project that gets pushed out except New Bedford leaves a huge dollar amount that needs to get filled. A discussion ensued determining which project in 2024 left the region in the best position to keep the lowest possible programmed balance available.

Mr. Mission explained that if we pick a scenario and in the motion we state “pending on the cost adjustments for the Mansfield Project”. If the cost cannot be adjusted downward then we will move Plainville project to 2025 and move a New Bedford project from the future element list in its place in order to remain fiscally constrained.

Ms. Haznar explained that MassDOT met with the town and the police chief in Plainville and there have been a couple of fatal crashes and the town has asked MassDOT to advance a project. There is a designer on board. It is a very dangerous section of road and MassDOT is hoping to complete it before 2024 if possible.

Ms. Haznar stated that the Plainville project may go down in cost and MassDOT is looking at different concepts since the traffic signal warrants do not meet warrant 1. It is a high speed intersection and there are challenges with the design.

Mr. J.R. Frey reiterated that there are 2 potential cost reductions and wanted clarification on the Wareham bike lanes. Ms. Haznar reiterated that the town of Wareham does have a designer on board and MassDOT is awaiting the schedule.

Ms. Jackie Jones explained that if you look at the Evaluation Criteria scoring, it was unable to determine if a signal was included in that project because that will have a big effect on the project cost. Any number in the Evaluation Criteria that far out is not solid.

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Mr. Mendes explained that the Plainville Project on Route 1 serves far more people as it is a connector to I-295 and I-95.

Mr. Mission provided a suggestion stating that the JTPG board selects either Scenario I or Scenario II however, if the cost does not come down for the Mansfield project and SRPEDD is still stuck with the financial constraint they leave it up to the SMMPO Board to consider a project and the proponents of those projects will all be in attendance at the SMMPO meeting next week.

A motion was made to put forward Scenario I for consideration to the SMMPO as approved by the JTPG with the option for the SMMPO to consider a project change for FFY 2024 if cost constrained. The Motion was SECONDED AND APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Regional Transportation Plan – Update on status and presentation of Draft Chapters Completed

Ms. Jones reported that there were only minor updates regarding the Airport sections of the Regional Transportation Plan since the last RTP in 2016. She explained that operations at the Taunton, Mansfield and Plymouth airports had remained steady and that operations at the New Bedford airport had increased due to a runway expansion project.

Ms. Jones explained that for the pedestrian sections of the RTP, updates were made to the main text of the document to reflect the SMMPO Regional Pedestrian Plan (RPP) completed in 2018. She further explained that RPP would be included in full in the appendices of the document.

Ms. Jones discussed updates to the bicycle sections of the RTP, including updated statistics for commuting and safety and mapping updates to reflect current project statuses. She explained that the Ten Mile River Trail in North Attleborough and Plainville would be added to the map and that routing for the Taunton River Trail had been updated recently.

Mr. Charles Mills reported that not much has changed in the region since the last RTP Freight update in 2016. He explained that many of the regional issues revolve around the State Freight Plan and many of the regional issues revolve around efficiency. It is crucial to develop cost effective infrastructure improvements that resolve key bottlenecks.

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Brayton Point Power Station was decommissioned in May 2017 and was purchased by Commercial Development Company in January 2018 they are working to bring the power plant back to productive reuse.

A lot of the policies and recommendations revolve around the efficient flow of freight as it is crucial to the SMMPO region. It is important for the SMMPO region to continue Harbor Maintenance Dredging in both harbors. Continue the Industrial Rail Access Program and expand it to SMMPO. As well as prioritize improvements to roadways designated as Freight Routes.

Mr. Frey asked about the secondary railway that runs between Mt. Hope Bay and the Taunton River below Battleship Cove to the sewage treatment plant. Is that in consideration for updating? Mr. Mission said that we can look into that because he knows that the state is working on a separate rail plan and we can find out the status of that. There is a need for Gold Medal Bakery and the sewage treatment plant and that access to that via rail is necessary. Mr. Frey added that DEP has shut down the incinerator to the plant so the city is now trucking all of the sludge that is generated, which is extremely costly. Mr. Mission clarified that SRPEDD will note the comment and check the State Rail Plan.

It was noted that the Shining Sea Bikeway will be using the rail line that runs through Bourne. Mr. Slavin clarified that it depends who owns the rail line if it is a bit easier or not.

Ms. Jones clarified that there were some safety concerns with the Cape Flyer in changing from a low speed freight route to a passenger freight route.

Mr. Mendes asked about Brayton Point and wanted to know if we were including in the plan that the town wanted to improve access to Brayton Point as it might help with the town searching for funding.

Mr. Mills clarified that he will check in and see the elements of the access to the point and is aware of the study that the town is currently undertaking.

Mr. Mission explained that there will be additional chapters at future meetings. The plan has to be in Draft form by June the latest and the SMMPO needs to endorse the plan by July.

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Ms. Estrela-Pedro mentioned that the Draft Chapters will be uploaded onto the RTP page for review.

6. Other Business

a. Capital Investment Plan (CIP) – Mr. Mission mentioned that The CIP is moving forward and there will be public meetings and listening sessions to discuss the CIP. It also offers people the opportunity to reach out to MassDOT and discuss projects and what they want to see. The Interchange at Brayton Point would be a good avenue to reach out to MassDOT about as it is something to consider when the listening sessions start. SRPEDD will make this body aware when the listening sessions begin.

Mr. Mendes mentioned asked if the CIP listening sessions were the better places for people to voice their opinion on project matters.

Mr. Mission explained that the CIP listening sessions are a really good place to discuss the Brayton Point Plant because it deals with highway access and TIP funding doesn't necessarily cover those projects. It is owned and maintained by MassDOT and appropriation of funding must go through MassDOT and not the TIP.

Ms. Haznar explained that it would more than likely be considered a statewide project.

b. MassDOT Innovation Conference (April 9 & 10, 2019) – Mr. Mission explained that there will be more transit and mobility workshops this year. However, our next JTPG meeting will be April 10th.

The JTPG reappointment forms will be sent out sometime in April or May so that we can get people either reappointed or get new members on board. Gloria McPherson has moved on from being the Town Planner of Fairhaven so we do need to fill that with election of officers.

7. Date, Time, Place for Next Meeting – The next meeting will be April 10, 2019 at 2:00 in the SRPEDD Offices.

8. Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 2:54. The Motion was seconded and APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.