

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

**DRAFT Minutes for the JTPG Meeting**

**Held on Wednesday, February 14, 2024 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-Duran, Chair.....Town of Freetown  
Tim Barber.....Town of Dartmouth  
Franklin Moniz.....Town of Lakeville  
Kevin Dumas.....Town of Mansfield  
Josh Reinke.....Town of Mansfield  
Norman Hills.....Town of Marion  
Janice Robbins.....Town of Mattapoisett  
Leeann Bradley.....Town of Middleborough  
Justin Chicca.....City of New Bedford  
Nancy Durfee.....Town of Rochester  
David Cabral.....Town of Seekonk  
Alan Slavin, Vice-Chair.....Town of Wareham  
James Hartnett .....Town of Westport  
Michael Burris.....Town of Westport

**The following members/alternates were NOT in attendance:**

City of Attleboro	At-Large, City of Fall River
City of Fall River	At-Large, City of Taunton
Town of Acushnet	At-Large, City of New Bedford
Town of Berkley	At-Large, City of Attleboro
Town of Carver	
Town of Dighton	
Town of Fairhaven	
Town of North Attleborough	
Town of Norton	
Town of Plainville	
Town of Raynham	
Town of Rehoboth	
Town of Somerset	
Town of Swansea	

**Also in Attendance:**

Kathy Holton.....City of Taunton  
Lyle Pirnie.....Town of North Attleborough  
Lu-Ann Souza.....Town of Freetown  
Mary Ellen DeFrias.....GATRA  
Raissah Kouame.....MassDOT  
Barbara Lachance.....MassDOT  
Colleen Pekrul.....Safe Routes to School Liaison  
Bonnie Roalsen.....Safe Routes to School Liaison  
Marie Clarner.....SRPEDD Commission Chair  
Lisa Estrela-Pedro.....SRPEDD  
Jackie Jones.....SRPEDD  
Andrea Duarte.....SRPEDD  
Sean Hilton.....SRPEDD  
Jon Gray.....SRPEDD  
Luis de Oliveira.....SRPEDD  
Danica Belknap.....SRPEDD  
Sid Kashi.....GPI  
Steve Findlen.....Howard Stein Hudson

**Handouts:**

JTPG Meeting Agenda for February 14, 2024  
DRAFT January 10, 2024, JTPG Meeting Minutes

**AGENDA****1. Call to Order and Roll Call:**

Chair Victoria Alfaro Duran called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. 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-Duran, Chair.....Town of Freetown  
Tim Barber.....Town of Dartmouth  
Franklin Moniz.....Town of Lakeville  
Kevin Dumas.....Town of Mansfield  
Norman Hills.....Town of Marion  
Janice Robbins.....Town of Mattapoisett  
Leeann Bradley.....Town of Middleborough  
David Cabral.....Town of Seekonk  
Alan Slavin, Vice-Chair.....Town of Wareham

James Hartnett .....Town of Westport

## **2. Approval of Minutes – January 10, 2024 (Materials Attached & roll call vote needed)**

Chair Alfaro Duran called for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024 meeting. The motion was made by Alan Slavin and seconded by Norman Hills. Ms. Duarte then called the roll:

Town of Freetown.....Yes  
Town of Dartmouth.....Yes  
Town of Lakeville.....Abstain  
Town of Mansfield.....Yes  
Town of Marion.....Yes  
Town of Mattapoisett.....Abstain  
Town of Middleborough.....Yes  
City of New Bedford.....Abstain  
Town of Rochester.....Abstain  
Town of Seekonk .....Yes  
Town of Wareham.....Yes  
Town of Westport.....Yes

### **THE MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR 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**

Mary Ellen DeFrias informed the group that GATA has now implemented full Sunday service throughout the region but is still having challenges hiring enough drivers. They are using a new dispatch software to help with ADA accessibility. GATRA moved its Plymouth operations to Wareham as of February 5, and will be operating out of the Decas School until its new facility is built in Wareham.

## **5. Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grant Presentation**

Danica Belknap, SRPEDD Environmental Planning Manager, provided a presentation of the Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grant (CPRG) from the Environmental Protection Agency that SRPEDD is currently working on. SRPEDD staff are currently in the public engagement stage of the grant project, collecting feedback from municipal representatives and the general public. The aim of the project is to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that are contributing to warming of the planet. It also aims to support the creation of good jobs and lower energy costs for families, accelerate work to address climate injustice, empower community driven solutions and overburdened neighborhoods, and provide the full benefits of cleaner air by reducing emissions and air pollution throughout the region. It is a country-wide initiative where funding was awarded to the most populated Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs). The SRPEDD region lies within the Providence Warwick MSA, which includes part of Southeastern Massachusetts and the entire state of Rhode Island. SRPEDD is facilitating the planning process on behalf of this area. The deliverables of this grant include a Climate Action Plan, with a

shorter planning timeframe, which outlines a list of key priorities we can do now to reduce emissions and the types of projects that are ready to implement. The CPRG program has a second phase of implementation grants. Once SRPEDD completes the Climate Action Plan, it becomes eligible to apply for implementation funding to implement any of the actions identified in the priority Climate Action Plan.

Ms. Belknap reviewed a draft list of measures for JTPG members' input in the sectors of buildings, transportation electricity generation, agriculture and working lands, waste management and materials, and industrial processes. SRPEDD is doing a low-income and disadvantaged communities benefits analysis as part of this to look at how the actions proposed will benefit low-income communities Ms. Belknap identified on a regional map. The Plan will provide an outline of how SRPEDD will work with the proper authorities to implement the plan. The comprehensive climate action plan that comes later will be more detailed and will expand on the actions to actually prepare greenhouse gas emission projections, targets for how much we want to reduce emissions, and do some further outreach and further benefits analysis. Ms. Belknap informed the group that the draft action list and public comment form can be found on the project webpage, [www.srpedd.org/cprg](http://www.srpedd.org/cprg) and they can contact [enviro@srpedd.org](mailto:enviro@srpedd.org). She provided time for comment and questions and discussion ensued about EV ships, coordination with Mass Save programs, green vs. nongreen community outcomes in electricity initiatives, electric buses to Boston, and developers' opposition to green building requirements and costs.

## **6. Draft FFY 2025-2029 TIP Development**

Lisa Estrela-Pedro stated that she and Jackie Jones attended two Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) readiness days with the MassDOT district office and Boston office last week where they discussed all projects in the current TIP as well as additional projects, their statuses and cost increases. Ms. Estrela-Pedro presented a chart of projects considered for programming in the FFY2025-2029 TIP. There will be an overall cost increase of \$11.5 million for 2024-2028 projects. She discussed updates on projects in each year and explained the domino effect that is happening. SRPEDD staff will have further conversations with specific communities on projects' readiness and desires for funding. Staff will send out several scenarios for the development of the FFY2025-2029 TIP, and at the next meeting, JTPG members will be asked to choose a scenario to recommend for funding to the SMMPO. Ms. Estrela-Pedro noted that projects in red are those that staff are looking to push out. Yellow indicates a questionable project where there is uncertainty whether or not it would stay in that year. Projects in green are those that have the opportunity to advance to an earlier year, of which there is only one. She presented a list of supplemental projects that were initiated by communities, received an earmark, and are looking for construction funding. Ms. Estrela-Pedro provided opportunity for questions and none were asked at the time.

## **7. SSRPEDD Transportation Technical Assistance Opportunities**

SRPEDD Senior Transportation Planner, Luis de Oliveira, provided a presentation about SRPEDD's transportation community technical assistance program. The program addresses local transportation issues that do not need a comprehensive planning study, but may include traffic counts (volume, class, and speed), evaluation of road issues (sight distance, parking, etc.), truck analysis/truck exclusions,

signal warrants and multi stop warrants, bicycle and pedestrian access, and safety zones. Mr. de Oliveira noted that in 2023, 10 requests were received for technical assistance from 7 communities, of which New Bedford, Dartmouth, and Middleborough each submitted two. He explained each type of analysis that staff can assist with and provided specific examples of requests from past communities. Mr. de Oliveira showed the group where they could find the request form on the SRPEDD website , and stated that forms could be sent to himself at [ideoliveira@srpedd.org](mailto:ideoliveira@srpedd.org) or Lisa Estrela-Pedro at [lestrela@srpedd.org](mailto:lestrela@srpedd.org).

## **8. Other Business**

Ms. Duarte informed the group that some members had asked for feedback from colleagues about where Vulnerable Road User “Motorists Give 4 Feet to Pass” signs are being installed and strategies for sign locations to which Ms. Alfaro Duran responded that Freetown has received their signs and decided to install them on longer roads and areas where drivers are speeding, in addition to roads on the Pan Mass Challenge. Ms. Estrela-Pedro stated that another town inquired about recommendations for electric vehicle charging station vendors, to which Mary Ellen DeFrias stated that GATRA has six chargers at its facility and is happy to connect with the town to provide them more information. Ms. Duarte shared a recording of a webinar by the Massachusetts Safe Routes to School team about digital, language and physical accessibility and recommended the group utilize the best practices discussed therein in their work. Ms. Estrela-Pedro reminded the group that the MassDOT Innovation Conference is on April 30 and May 1 at the Worcester DCU Center, and that early registration ends on February 21. She stated that on February 28 there will be a virtual design public hearing for the Marion and Wareham bridge replacement on Marion Road in Wareham Road along Route 6 over the Weweantic River. On March 20, there will be a virtual design public hearing for the Westport intersection improvements at Route 177 and Roberts Road/Tickle Road.

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

Date and Time for next meeting is March 13, 2024, at 2:00 PM as a hybrid meeting, in which attendees can join at the SRPEDD office in Taunton or via Zoom.

## **10. Adjourn**

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn which was made by Alan Slavin and seconded by David Cabral. Hearing no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 2:58 PM.