



Rural Communities Opioid Response Planning

On December 6th, SWRPC staff presented the results of a needs assessment to a consortium of partners working to address opioid use and related issues in the Monadnock Region. The document included data and information about substance use prevention, treatment and recovery services, access to care, and workforce issues. Strategies were derived from interviews, focus groups and past studies or planning efforts. The meeting also included a prioritization exercise focused on the needs/gaps that were identified based on their potential impact and feasibility. To learn more about the Monadnock Region Rural Communities Opioid Response Planning Project, visit www.mrcorpp.com and www.facebook.com/MRCORPP. For questions related to SWRPC's contributions to the project contact either Terry Johnson or Henry Underwood of SWRPC staff at tjohnson@swrpc.org or hunderwood@swrpc.org.

Regional Housing Forum

On December 12th, SWRPC and the [Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce](#) co-sponsored a forum entitled *Housing in the Monadnock Region: Addressing Quality of Life and Workforce Needs*, at the Alumni Center at Keene State College. The featured speaker was George Reagan, Manager of Community Engagement at NH Housing. Mr. Reagan presented information on current housing inventory, existing trends, and overall needs and concerns related to addressing housing challenges. The presentation was followed by a panel discussion consisting of local and statewide experts with diverse perspectives on the issue including planning, community character, developers, realtors, employers, and municipal government. Issues addressed included how to provide housing stock that is affordable and of sufficient quality, aligns with the needs and preferences of current and future residents, addresses the region's changing demographics, and meets the expectations of the region's workforce. The presentations generated strong audience discussion and many attendees committed to participate in an ongoing conversation aimed at addressing these issues. For more information, please contact Terry Johnson of SWRPC staff at tjohnson@swrpc.org.

Monadnock Broadband Group Meeting

On December 2nd, SWRPC hosted a meeting of the Monadnock Broadband Group, an informal coalition of municipal officials, practitioners and other stakeholders with interest in understanding and coordinating relative to broadband issues in Southwest NH. The meeting agenda included presentations from New Hampshire Bond Bank staff and counsel on bonding for broadband; Vermont Department of Public Service staff on communications union districts and technical assistance opportunities in the State of Vermont; updates on upcoming broadband-related legislation and more. To view a recording of the webinar, the meeting agenda and more visit www.swrpc.org/broadbandgroup. For questions related to SWRPC's activities related to broadband, contact either Henry Underwood or Todd Horner of SWRPC staff at hunderwood@swrpc.org or thorner@swrpc.org.

2019 National Brownfields Conference

During December, Principal Planner J. B. Mack attended the 2019 National Brownfields Training Conference in Los Angeles, California, sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the International City Manager's Association. The National Brownfields Conference attracts hundreds of EPA brownfields grantees as well as industry professionals including environmental scientists, state regulators and others. Mr. Mack attended several sessions including a presentation on revitalizing vacant or underutilized buildings in small towns presented by Deb Brown, co-founder of www.saveyour.town, converting brownfields to "brightfields" (solar arrays), updates on how states are managing emerging contaminants like PFAS, and how to leverage grant and other financing tools to achieve community goals. For more information, contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at jbmack@swrpc.org.

Age-Focused Planning Update

SWRPC's Age-Focused Planning Work Group has met twice in recent weeks to brainstorm strategies addressing changing demographics in Southwest New Hampshire. Themes for strategies include transportation alternatives, housing options, economic opportunity, and social engagement. For more information, please contact Lisa Murphy of SWRPC staff at lmurphy@swrpc.org.

Spofford Lake Implementation of Best Management Practices

A project designed to introduce best management practices within the Spofford Lake watershed is underway. During December a project work group met to participate in the work to be performed as part of a grant awarded to SWRPC in 2019. The 2-year project includes implementation of stormwater management projects at 11 sites previously identified in the Spofford Lake Watershed Management Plan. The project also includes enhanced awareness among property owners on ways to reduce erosion and nutrient loading to the lake. For more information, please contact Lisa Murphy of SWRPC staff at lmurphy@swrpc.org



U.S. Census Bureau Updates

During December, the U.S. Census Bureau released new 5-year estimates from the American Community Survey (2014-2018) can be found at data.census.gov. Also in December, the Bureau began advertising for the 2020 Census. Among other things, the results will be used to redraw congressional district boundaries, plan for community needs, determine where to start a business, and how to allocate billions of dollars in New Hampshire each year. Most households will start receiving invitations by mail to respond to the 2020 Census in mid-March. For more information, visit 2020census.gov, or contact Henry Underwood of SWRPC staff at hunderwood@swrpc.org

Southwest Region Planning Commission

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CDBG Award

SWRPC staff recently participated in a meeting of the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) meeting held at the NH Community Development Finance Authority offices in Concord, NH. At that meeting, CDAC reviewed the second round of 2019 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) public facilities applications and approved a \$500,000 proposal by the City of Keene to support a project by Southwestern Community Services (SCS). The project will consolidate three facilities operated by SCS and provide for much needed rehabilitation for a shelter and transitional housing facility in Keene. For more information, please contact James Weatherly of SWRPC staff at jweatherly@swrpc.org.