



SWRPC

Commission Highlights

July 2018

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Brownfield Grant Award

On July 23rd, EPA New England's Regional Administrator Alexandra Dapolito Dunn and NHDES Commissioner Robert Scott presented brownfields grant awards to SWRPC, the North Country Council and the City of Somersworth in a ceremony held in Somersworth City Hall. SWRPC's recent award of \$200,000, which can be used to conduct environmental assessment activities on brownfield sites in the Southwest New Hampshire region, represents the 11th brownfield assessment grant awarded to SWRPC since 2003. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

Ashuelot Rail Trail Survey

SWRPC recently hosted the first of five planned meetings of the Ashuelot Rail Trail Project Advisory Committee, a group formed to aid and guide SWRPC staff in the development of a vision and plan for the Ashuelot Rail Trail. To assist in this effort, an online survey has been developed. The survey contains questions about how people use the trail, how they would like to see it improved, as well as opportunities to volunteer to assist staff with aspects of the project. Anyone with an interest in the trail is encouraged to participate. The survey is available at www.surveymonkey.com/r/ashuelot-rail-trail. For more information about this project, please contact Henry Underwood of Commission staff or visit www.swrpc.org/plan-for-ashuelot-rail-trail.

Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge Project Update

During July SWRPC staff assisted the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) by providing data, information and a support letter for an application for support through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program. Funds would be used to replace the existing Anna Hunt Marsh and Charles Dana bridges with a newer, safer and more modern Connecticut River bridge crossing. The grant request is in the amount of \$25 million and, if awarded, would cover approximately half of the total project cost. A portion of the grant would be put toward the rehabilitation of the existing bridges, built in the early 1920s, which were recently placed on New Hampshire's red list. NHDOT and VTrans intend to restrict future access to the existing bridges to pedestrians and bicyclists only. SWRPC is currently assisting a project steering committee and an existing bridges subcommittee in considering various elements of the project. Construction on the new bridge is set to begin in 2020. More information about the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge project, and the BUILD proposal is available at <https://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/hinsdalebrattleboro12210/index.htm>. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

2018 Transportation Alternatives Program

Six communities from Southwest New Hampshire have recently submitted letters of interest to apply for funding under the federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) administered by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT). These communities include Hinsdale, Jaffrey, Keene, New Ipswich, Swanzey, and Troy. The goal of TAP is to support projects for non-motorized users that are safe, reliable and convenient. The program often funds sidewalk, bicycle path, crosswalk, and bicycle lane type projects. Of note, five of the six communities expressing interest in TAP have adopted complete streets policies with the assistance of SWRPC. All communities are required to attend a mandatory training and submit an application by September 9th to be considered for funding. SWRPC's Transportation Advisory Committee will review and rank projects from the region and share its results with NHDOT. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

Community Development Block Grant Program Update

During July, SWRPC staff assisted Cheshire County in completing two Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects.

- The 2016 Riverbend Apartments Rehabilitation project involved Cheshire County sub-granting CDBG funds to Keene Housing, which used the funds to support the rehabilitation of 24 units of affordable housing. Riverbend Apartments is located off Route 10 in Swanzey, NH.
- The 2017 Microenterprise project involved sub-granting CDBG funds to the Hannah Grimes Center, the University of New Hampshire/Pathway to Work program, and the Regional Economic Development Center. Grant funds were used to provide training and technical assistance services through the subrecipients and partner organization's microenterprise programs, to 152 microenterprises throughout the State. The microenterprise program's mission is to increase the income and economic stability of self-employed people and microenterprises by helping them access capital, business training and expanded market opportunities.

For more information, please contact Rebeckah Bullock of Commission staff.



Hazard Mitigation Planning Update

SWRPC recently completed local hazard mitigation plan updates for the City of Keene, and the Towns of New Ipswich, Walpole, Langdon, and Fitzwilliam. The updates, funded by a Predisaster Mitigation Grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, are distributed through NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management. SWRPC is beginning plan updates for the Towns of Nelson and Stoddard. For more information, please contact Lisa Murphy of Commission staff.

Southwest Region Planning Commission

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