



Plan for Ashuelot Rail Trail

SWRPC is nearing completion of an 18-month project to develop a Plan for the Ashuelot Rail Trail in which it has engaged the City of Keene, the towns of Swanzey, Winchester and Hinsdale and other stakeholders to learn about how the trail is used today and to identify improvement needs and strategies. To help finalize the Plan, SWRPC has launched an online survey. Anyone with an interest in the Trail is encouraged to review the draft Plan and provide feedback. The survey is available at the project webpage: www.swrpc.org/plan-for-ashuelot-rail-trail. Written feedback may be mailed to SWRPC. Feedback can also be sent via e-mail to Henry Underwood at (603) 357-0557 or hunderwood@swrpc.org. SWRPC asks that survey responses and comments be received by **December 8, 2019**.

Floodplain Administrator 101 Training Workshop

SWRPC, in conjunction with the NH Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI), will be holding a three-hour Floodplain Administrator 101 Training Workshop for local community officials on **December 9, 2019** from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at 49 Community Way in Keene (snow date December 12). This workshop is for municipal officials who administer and enforce floodplain regulations, review applications and/or issue permits for development in floodplain areas, or anyone interested in learning more about a community's responsibilities as a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). To RSVP or if you have questions, please contact Samara Ebinger, Principal Planner, NH Office of Strategic Initiatives at (603) 271-1755 or samara.ebinger@osi.nh.gov

Housing in the Monadnock Region

SWRPC, in conjunction with the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, is sponsoring a forum on housing in the Monadnock Region. Is our existing housing stock of sufficient quality? Is it aligned with the needs and preferences of current and future residents? Are adequate housing choices available in the region in light of changing demographics? And what about affordability and meeting the expectations of our workforce? Questions such as these will be the focus of this session. The forum is scheduled for **December 12, 2019** from 8:00-10:00 a.m. at the Alumni Center at Keene State College. Although there is no registration fee, a \$5 donation is requested of those attending the event to help cover costs. To register, please call the Keene Chamber at (603) 352-1303, preferably by December 9th.

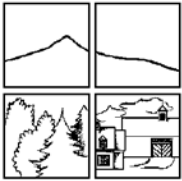
New Amtrak Service in the Area

On November 22nd, SWRPC joined Windham Regional Commission (VT) and Franklin Regional Council of Governments (MA) to discuss a marketing campaign to increase awareness about a new train service pilot program. Amtrak recently launched a seven day a week passenger train called the "[Valley Flyer](#)", to enhance existing Vermonter passenger train service from Springfield to Greenfield, MA. If the 2-year pilot project shows an increase in ridership above and beyond the Vermonter's current ridership growth rate, the service may continue and possibly grow northward toward Southwest New Hampshire via stations in Brattleboro and Bellows Falls, VT. SWRPC will coordinate with its partners over the course of the pilot study to draw train riders from New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts to visit and do business in the area as well as to make Granite Staters aware of the benefits of using the train for southbound travel. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at (603) 357-0557 or jbmack@swrpc.org.

Municipal Technical Assistance Grant (MTAG) Program Announces Funding Opportunity

The Municipal Technical Assistance Grant (MTAG) program, funded by New Hampshire Housing and administered by Plan NH, is continuing into the coming year. This program is for communities who wish to expand residential options, but find that local regulations may be a barrier. Grants provide funding to hire a consultant, such as SWRPC, to work with the community to identify housing needs, determine what kinds of homes the community would like to see that would support those needs, review the current regulations to identify gaps, and work with the community to develop guidelines and regulations to support the findings. Grants range between \$5,000 and \$20,000.

For additional information visit: www.plannh.org and www.vibrantvillagesnh.org. If you would like to discuss a potential project, please contact Lisa Murphy of SWRPC staff at (603) 357-0557 or lmurphy@swrpc.org



Wastewater Asset Management

On November 13th, SWRPC staff attended the kick-off meeting for a wastewater asset management project jointly awarded to the towns of Antrim and Bennington. Following a similar effort dedicated to the communities' shared drinking water assets, the project will involve implementing a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) application for data collection and ongoing updates as well as related training for municipal staff and officials. Specific activities will include assistance with the conversion of paper documents to electronic files, the development of GIS templates suitable for collecting data, the creation of interactive maps, feedback to the project consultant on a data collection and management strategy, and developing and delivering a training resource suitable for supporting routine maintenance of the electronic asset inventory. For more information about this project, please contact Henry Underwood of SWRPC staff at (603) 357-0557 or hunderwood@swrpc.org.

Southwest Region Planning Commission

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