

SWRPC

Commission Highlights

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New Hampshire Broadband Summit

On October 14th, Henry Underwood of SWRPC staff joined this year's New Hampshire Summit on Systemic Inclusion in a session entitled *Affordable Broadband Statewide*. The session was co-facilitated by Margaret Byrnes of the New Hampshire Municipal Association and Carol Miller of the National Collaborative for Digital Equity. Presenters covered a range of topics designed to support and inspire efforts to increase investment in infrastructure and affordable access. Henry highlighted the Monadnock Region Broadband Implementation Guide, available at SWRPC's online Resource Library (www.swrpc.org/resource-library). Other presenters featured topics including communication districts, the federal infrastructure package, municipal bonding, the work of the New Hampshire Electric Co-op, and an introduction to the newly-established Broadband Office of the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs. All three days of the conference are recorded and available online. For more information, please contact Henry Underwood of SWRPC staff at hunderwood@swrpc.org.

Brownfields Assessment Grant Closes

During October, SWRPC conducted close-out activities of its recent brownfields assessment grant. Funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the program supports assessment of perceived contamination on vacant or underutilized properties in efforts to remediate and redevelop those properties. SWRPC's most recent grant - a three-year grant that started in October 2018 and closed September 30, 2021 - continued its history of success by conducting assessment work at seven different brownfield sites in Hinsdale, Greenfield, Jaffrey, Keene, and Winchester. Assessment activities at these sites have led to redevelopment including the creation of a new home for a business, a business park and a new park. Other projects to benefit from the program include a future homeless shelter and a solar array. The \$200,000 grant leveraged over \$77,000 in clean-up funds and over \$1.8 million in redevelopment activity. Although this grant has been closed, SWRPC will apply for additional funding from EPA later this year. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at jbmack@swrpc.org.

Emergency Management Updates

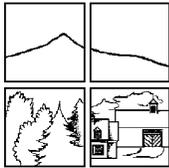
Emergency Management is garnering increased attention in the region due to recent flooding events. The increase in storm intensity and historic rainfall events has raised awareness in many communities. SWRPC has recently completed updates of emergency operations plans (EOPs) for Antrim and Swanzey and is currently updating the plan for Nelson. In addition to the interest in EOPs, staff is working to update hazard mitigation plans in Richmond, Swanzey and Westmoreland. The Federal Emergency Management Agency provides funding to update both types of plans every five years in New Hampshire. For more information, please contact Lisa Murphy of SWRPC staff at lmurphy@swrpc.org.

Ten Year Transportation Plan Survey

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation requests public input on transportation priorities as part of the development of the 2023-2032 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan update. The survey seeks to rank objectives, rate existing conditions and assess trade-offs between desired transportation improvements. To access the survey, please go to (bit.ly/3BhLyJm). For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at jbmack@swrpc.org.

Community Forum on Food Access

On October 19th, members of the Monadnock Children’s Food Access Alliance (Alliance) and other interested stakeholders participated in a community forum hosted by the Monadnock Farm and Community Coalition. The forum provided an opportunity for attendees to learn about key findings from the [Monadnock Region Food Access Analysis](#), conducted by SWRPC and have a voice in selecting strategies to make affordable, healthy food more accessible to those experiencing food insecurity. The Alliance will consider input provided during the forum in determining effective projects for improving food access. The plan is to secure funding for three projects by the end of 2021 and implement them during 2022. Potential projects include working with the NH Department of Health and Human Services to enroll more residents in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly food stamps); launch an outreach campaign to increase awareness of all federal nutrition programs; expand community transportation services, such as volunteer driver programs and transit services to help those without vehicles get to grocery stores; and make farm-fresh foods available in more locations. For more information, please contact Terry Johnson of SWRPC staff at tjohnson@swrpc.org.



Community Development Block Grant Update

During October, SWRPC assisted Cheshire County in administering a federal Community Development Block Grant for the rehabilitation of the Bennett Block, located at 32-24 Washington Street in Keene. The Bennett Block is a historic 1920’s era building that was purchased by Keene Housing in the early 1990’s to provide 14 apartments for low- to moderate-income households. The project represents a \$1.4 million total investment into the property and represents the first major rehabilitation of the building in 30 years. Construction is nearing completion and the first tenants are scheduled to move-in to the newly rehabilitated apartments on November 1, 2021. For more information, please contact James Weatherly of SWRPC staff at jweatherly@swrpc.org.

