

SWRPC

Commission Highlights

July 2022

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Public Feedback on Transit Services

During July, SWRPC and its transit consultant Via Transportation, Inc. hosted public meetings to present and collect feedback about several preliminary transit route and microtransit zone concepts. Meetings were held in Peterborough and Keene and a third meeting was held remotely on Zoom. The purpose of the meetings was to assess public interest related to proposed changes to existing public transit services in Keene and introduce new services in Southwest NH. Among some of the newer services discussed at the meetings were routes or zones between Keene and Winchester, Keene and Troy, Keene and Brattleboro, Keene and Peterborough, and Peterborough and Rindge. Due to limited funds for public transit, only a limited number of scenarios such as these are likely to move to implementation. Information from the meetings will be used to inform planned modeling exercises that can inform service designs, costs and ridership. A second set of public meetings is planned for the fall of 2022 to present Via's findings. Via will also develop guidance to assist SWRPC and its partners with implementation. SWRPC will post a video of Via's presentation on its project webpage: www.swrpc.org/featured-projects/transit-and-shared-ride-improvement-feasibility-study/. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at jbmack@swrpc.org.

SWRPC Co-Hosts Idea Jam for Community Innovators

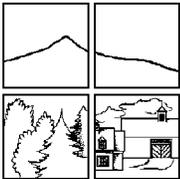
SWRPC and the Hannah Grimes Center for Entrepreneurship recently joined forces to co-host the Pitchfork Idea Jam for Community Innovators. Creativity and innovation are often essential ingredients to a place's prosperity, and a community that cultivates and nurtures new ideas will be better able to adapt to changes in demographics, economics, or the environment. The premise for the event was simple: invite community members with ideas about how to help our region thrive, then gather an audience and grab a microphone. The goal was to create a supportive space where local innovators could workshop an idea, practice communicating about it, elevate its profile, and network with like-minded citizens. Approximately 40 people participated with about half of those attending pitched their ideas, which ran the gamut from restoration of a historic church, to the creation of a regional literary festival, to the development of a four-season outdoor recreation facility. Participants will be invited to submit their ideas for inclusion *Our Economy: A Strategy for Southwest NH*, the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). For more information about the Idea Jam or *Our Economy*, please contact Todd Horner of SWRPC staff at thorner@swrpc.org.

Southwest Connects Update

On July 12th SWRPC sponsored a public meeting to discuss the NH 9 West Corridor which includes the primary municipalities of Chesterfield, Hinsdale and Keene. The meeting was the first in a series designed to inform an update to the Region's Long-Range Regional Transportation Plan - *Southwest Connects*, which was last updated in 2014. Members of the public are encouraged to attend these meetings and share concerns and discuss potential solutions about needs, safety, concern during severe storms, and bicycle and pedestrian use. The next meeting in this series will focus on the NH 9 East Corridor, which includes the towns of Alstead, Antrim, Gilsum, Keene, Langdon, Marlow, Nelson, Roxbury, Stoddard, Sullivan, Surry, and Windsor. It will be a virtual meeting on Wednesday, August 10th, at 6:30 p.m. If you are interested in joining the meeting, please visit <https://www.swrpc.org/swconnects/> or www.facebook.com/southwestrpc. For more information about the plan update or public meetings, please contact Andrew Smeltz asmeltz@swrpc.org or Lisa Murphy lmurphy@swrpc.org of SWRPC staff.

Road Assessment and Paving Plan in New Ipswich

During July, SWRPC completed a Road Surface Management System and Pavement Preservation Plan for the Town of New Ipswich. Referred to as RSMS, this program is designed to provide municipal officials with key information and data to better manage municipally-owned paved roads and to assist with planning and budgeting for future pavement repairs. As part of its work, SWRPC staff first conducted field assessment of all paved roads maintained and owned by the Town and then used a computer modeling application to estimate future pavement conditions and the cost of future pavement repairs. Using this information and input from the Town, SWRPC created a 10-year paving plan. This plan will assist the Town and guide pavement management into the future. For more information on this project or to consider RSMS in your community, please contact Andrew Smeltz of SWRPC staff at asmeltz@swrpc.org.



InvestNH Housing Program

On July 27th, SWRPC staff attended a webinar hosted by the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA) focused on the InvestNH housing program. The presentation included an overview of the three InvestNH municipal grant programs and provided guidance on eligibility and the application process. The programs include: Housing Development Grant Program; Municipal Demolition Grant Program; and the Municipal Planning and Zoning Grant Program. Pre-applications are now open through these programs and full applications will be available on August 5, 2022. Municipalities are encouraged to complete the application early as interest is likely to be high across the State. A review of the requirements can be found by visiting www.invest603.com. If you are interested in discussing a project, please contact Lisa Murphy of SWRPC staff at lmurphy@swrpc.org.

