



SWRPC

Southwest Region
Planning Commission

NH Route 9 West Corridor Virtual Meeting
Held to inform SWRPC's update to the *Southwest Connects Long Range Transportation Plan*
Tuesday July 12, 2022 6:30pm

SWRPC held a virtual meeting on Tuesday July 12, 2022 at 6:30 pm focused on the NH Route 9 West Corridor, which runs from Keene to Brattleboro, VT. This corridor is one of eight major transportation corridors in the Southwest NH Region as depicted in the *Southwest Connects Long Range Transportation Plan*. This meeting was the first in a series of eight that SWRPC is holding over the next several months in 2022 and 2023. Each meeting will focus on one of the regional transportation corridors. The purpose of this meeting (and future meetings) is to share information about the corridor with local communities and to collect public input for the Southwest Connects Long Range Transportation Plan.

The following people attended the meeting: David Meader (Keene), Chief Duane Chickering (Chesterfield), Selectman Gary Winn (Chesterfield), Joe Brodbine (Chesterfield), John Zannotti (Chesterfield), State Senator Ruth Ward (Stoddard), Maria Bissell (Chesterfield), and Steve Laskowski (Chesterfield).

The following information was covered and discussed (more detailed information is available by viewing the presentation at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hbyWyzjy2ks>):

- The NH Route 9 West corridor includes the Towns of Chesterfield, Hinsdale and Keene. In addition to NH Route 9 this corridor also includes NH Route 63, 119 and 9A. It is a highly trafficked corridor that is important for commuting, tourism, commerce, and other reasons.
- The corridor had nine fatal automobile crashes between 2011 - 2019 and several non-fatal crashes.
- Approximately 12,225 commuters per day enter the corridor from outside towns. 8,044 people live on this corridor and commute to outside towns. 6,657 people live and work on this corridor.
- In recent decades, communities on this corridor have seen an increase in the percentage of older adults and a decrease in percentage of youth and younger adults.
- By 2040, current State population projections predict a 3.6% increase for towns on this corridor. All towns on this corridor are expected to increase slightly in population, except Hinsdale which is predicted to decrease by 2.9%.

The following safety concerns and suggestions were shared by participants at the meeting:

- There are issues with excessive speed on NH Route 9 and 63.
- In some areas, line of sight is a concern when turning onto NH Route 9.

- On the NH Route 9 hill, near the Chesterfield/Keene town line, there is a dangerous curve and issues with striping. At the base of the hill, the intersection of NH Route 9 and Glebe Road presents a safety concern.
- In response to past safety concerns, NH Department of Transportation (DOT) removed a passing lane on NH Route 9, near the junction of NH Route 63. The passing lane was replaced with a turning lane and there is a new flash sensor on NH Route 63.
- There should be a left turn lane near the Big Deal Convenience Store.
- In the past, DOT installed rumble strips on the fog line, and this was a significant inconvenience in the opinion of many residents of Chesterfield. The rumble strips were subsequently moved. Rumble strips should be placed on yellow stripes or on the outside of fog lines.

The following concerns and suggestions were shared by participants at the meeting about the diversity of transportation options available in the corridor:

- Adding regional flights to the Keene Airport could alleviate traffic on NH Route 9.
- The Chesterfield Police Department and Principal of Chesterfield School are working together to add and improve pedestrian infrastructure near the school.
- Hinsdale is served by a bus system from Brattleboro, VT, and there is no other bus or transit system that serves this corridor. In Chesterfield, some residents enjoy driving and will resist using public transportation.

The following concerns and suggestions were shared by participants at the meeting about natural disasters and human-caused hazards in the corridor:

- Catsbane Brook crosses NH Route 9, but it doesn't present a threat at this time.
- Beaver dams occasionally cause flooding on NH Route 63.
- Heavy trucks and tankers carry liquid natural gas and other hazardous chemicals on NH Route 9 and 63.
- There is no pull out space for trucks, waiting to enter UNFI in Brattleboro, to safely park and wait.

The following concerns and suggestions were shared by participants at the meeting about infrastructure in the corridor:

- A culvert south of North Hinsdale Road on NH Route 63 has washed out in the past and damaged the road.
- The roundabout on NH Route 9 in Brattleboro, VT backs up traffic into NH during certain times of the day due to a change in striping on the roundabout from 2 lanes to 1 lane.
- There is no major east-west highway in this area of NH, so NH Route 9 has a heavy traffic burden that is influenced by development in Keene and other communities.