



SWRPC

Southwest Region
Planning Commission

NH Route 10 South Corridor Virtual Meeting
Held to inform SWRPC's update to the *Southwest Connects Long Range Transportation Plan*
Thursday September 8, 2022 6:30pm

Southwest Region Planning Commission (SWRPC) held a virtual meeting on Thursday, September 8, 2022 at 6:30 pm focused on the NH Route 10 South Corridor. This corridor runs from Keene to Winchester and also includes the Towns of Swanzey, Hinsdale, and Richmond. 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: Michael Branley (Swanzey, Town Administrator), Leslie Casey (Sullivan), Sara Carbonneau (Winchester), Elizabeth Dubois (Keene Senior Center), Ruth Ward (Stoddard), Keith Thibault (Swanzey, Southwest Community Services), Andrew Smeltz (SWRPC), Lisa Murphy (SWRPC), and J. B. Mack (SWRPC). An additional person listened into the meeting but did not give their name.

The following information was covered and discussed (more detailed information is available by viewing the presentation at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsO8YCoGCyM)

- The NH Route 10 South corridor includes the Towns of Richmond, Hinsdale, Swanzey, Winchester, and Keene. In addition to NH Route 10 this corridor also includes sections of NH Routes 63, 78 and 119 as well as the following non-numbered state highways: Island Street (Keene), Winchester Street (Keene), Swanzey Lake Road (Swanzey), and Swanzey Lake Road (Swanzey). It is a highly trafficked corridor that is important for commuting, tourism, commerce, and other reasons.
- The corridor had seven fatal automobile crashes between 2011 - 2019 and several non-fatal crashes.
- The Towns of Swanzey, Keene, and Hinsdale have complete streets policies and design guidelines to guide safety improvements for the benefit of all road users.
- New Hampshire Department of Transportation sponsored a 2009 road safety audit of NH Route 10/Manning Hill Road.
- Winchester Street (Keene) is currently under construction to convert two conventional intersections into roundabouts.
- Approximately 11,089 commuters per day enter the corridor from outside towns. 9,784 people live on this corridor and commute to outside towns. 9,589 people live and work on this corridor.

- Although limited, this corridor contains some transportation alternatives to the personal automobile. These alternative transportation options include: transit services offered by Home Healthcare Hospice & Community Service (HCS), bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and a volunteer driver program operated by Community Volunteer Transportation Company.

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

- On NH Route 10 on Manning Hill in Winchester near Pauchaug Brook there is a sharp curve in the road that presents a hazard to drivers. This area could be improved with signage and additional guardrail.
- Posted speed limits and vehicle travel speeds on NH Route 10 in the area of West Swanzey Village (approximately North Winchester Street to South Winchester Street) are high. There is no crossing on NH Route 10 in this area. It is difficult and hazardous for people who are not in an automobile to use this area. This area has amenities and housing on both sides of the road, but NH Route 10 bifurcates the area.
- The intersection of NH Route 10 and Base Hill Road in Swanzey is a dangerous intersection, and it is made worse by truck traffic.
- Swanzey Lake Road in Swanzey is a narrow, windy road with no shoulder. Safety improvements on this road may not be practical because the right-of-way is narrow.

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

- There is limited transit available on the corridor.
- SWRPC is working with HCS on a micro transit feasibility study which would provide on demand transit service to Towns in the Corridor. Micro transit is a service that allows individuals to request rides using an app. A computerized algorithm groups ride requests on the fly and creates custom transit routes that adapt to demand.

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

- Wind and rain storms cause trees and tree limbs to fall on Swanzey Lake Road in Swanzey, impacting safety.
- NH Route 78 sustained substantial flooding in the Spring of 2022 in an area adjacent to wetlands, approximately one mile east of Kulick's Market in Winchester.
- In July of 2021, flooding occurred near NH Route 78 in Winchester that inundated the parking lot of Kulick Market.

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

- The area adjacent to NH Route 10 in the West Swanzey Village has experienced seasonal flooding caused by drainage and stormwater issues related to culverts near the intersection NH Route 10 and West Street and near the former site of Nick's Seafood Restaurant. In addition to NH Route 10, this issue is also prevalent on adjacent Town-maintained roads. Some culverts are too small

to provide effective drainage and others are not pitched appropriately. This issue should be studied further and problematic drainage features should be corrected and or replaced.

Additionally, participants also shared the following concerns and suggestions:

- Outside the City of Keene, there are no electric vehicle charging stations on the Corridor.
- More commercial and industrial development would be beneficial; however, opportunities are limited because of water and sewer access.