

# SWRPC

## Commission Highlights

March 2023

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### **Regional Housing Needs Assessment Public Review Period**

SWRPC is accepting public comments regarding its recently released draft of the *Southwest NH Regional Housing Needs Assessment* (RHNA). The public comment period is open through May 12, 2023. The *Southwest NH RHNA* is available for download at <https://www.swrpc.org/housing/>. Please submit comments and questions directly to J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at [jbmack@swrpc.org](mailto:jbmack@swrpc.org) or by sending written comments by mail to SWRPC, 37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH 03431.

### **SWRPC 2025-2034 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan**

At its March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the SWRPC Board of Directors endorsed the Transportation Advisory Committee's recommendation to utilize a \$4.9 million allocation of federal transportation funding in support of improvements to NH Route 10 in the Town of Swanzey from the intersection of North Winchester Street to South Winchester Street as part of the 2025-2034 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TYP) update process. The project seeks to address safety and accommodate growing pedestrian and bicycle demand due to the residential and commercial growth that continues to occur in the project area. To learn more about the TYP and to view SWRPC's recommendation please visit <https://www.swrpc.org/programs-services/transportation/ten-year-plan/>. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at [jbmack@swrpc.org](mailto:jbmack@swrpc.org).

### **New Hampshire Digital Equity Planning Week**

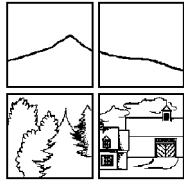
Between March 21 – 24, the National Collaborative for Digital Equity and the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension hosted several sessions on the State of New Hampshire's plan for digital equity and broadband-related funding. Featured sessions included *Aging individuals and those who serve them*, *Diversity, Equity & inclusion advocates and leaders*, *Rural individuals, families and communities*, and more. For more information, please contact virtual summit organizer, Dr. Bob McLaughlin, National Collaborative for Digital Equity at [rmclaughlin@digitalequity.us](mailto:rmclaughlin@digitalequity.us). Recordings of the sessions are available at <http://bit.ly/3U7cZkk>. You may also contact Henry Underwood of SWRPC staff at [hunderwood@swrpc.org](mailto:hunderwood@swrpc.org).

### **Statewide Coalition Seeks Support for Public Transportation**

The City Express of Keene, operated by Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS) is one of eight transit systems that form the backbone of New Hampshire's public and community transportation services. Without increased financial support, New Hampshire transportation agencies and the services they currently provide will not continue to exist in their current shape or form. That is why the NH Public Transportation Coalition is spearheading efforts to secure \$2.75 million in funds annually in the upcoming State budget for the SFY24-25 biennium to support transit and community transportation services statewide. The increase would leverage between \$2.75 million to \$4.125 million of Federal Transit Administration funds already allocated and ready to be put to use in New Hampshire. Currently, statewide funding for public transit operations is \$200,000 annually. This puts New Hampshire at approximately one-fortieth of the median per capita state investment in transit nationally - by far the lowest of the New England States. Securing increased State funding will help to sustain the City Express, Friendly Bus and other transportation services operated by HCS that members of the community rely upon. For more information, please contact Terry Johnson of SWRPC staff at [tjohnson@swrpc.org](mailto:tjohnson@swrpc.org).

## Community Economic Development Funding Opportunities

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, SWRPC co-hosted an information session on the Northern Borders Region Commission (NBRC) Catalyst program. The Program offers \$11 million in federal funding for the State of New Hampshire, with a focus on economic development and infrastructure. Municipalities and non-profits in Cheshire county are eligible. More information for the Catalyst program can be found at <https://www.nbrc.gov/content/Catalyst>. Also during March, SWRPC staff attended sessions on the Community Center Investment program (CCIP) administered by the NH Community Development Finance Authority. The CCIP is designed to support community centers throughout New Hampshire through improvements to existing and new construction with a budget of \$20 million state-wide. For more information related to CCIP, please visit <https://bit.ly/CCIPpdf>. CCIP applications are due April 21<sup>st</sup>; letters of interest are due the same date for the NBRC Catalyst program. For more information, please contact Ben Gradert of SWRPC staff at [bgradert@swrpc.org](mailto:bgradert@swrpc.org).



## Emergency Management Planning

Over the course of the last several months SWRPC staff have completed Hazard Mitigation Plan updates for Alstead, Richmond, Sullivan, Surry, Westmoreland, and Winchester. Currently, staff is assisting Harrisville, Sharon and Windsor with updates with Hancock, Nelson, Stoddard, and Walpole likely later in the year. In addition, Emergency Operations Plans have been completed for Chesterfield, Langdon and Richmond. It is anticipated that staff will soon be assisting Hinsdale, Marlborough and Temple with updates to their plans. As part of the update process, towns assemble a team of municipal staff, town boards and volunteers to contribute information and expertise essential in updating a plan. These meetings are open to the public. For more information, please contact Lisa Murphy of SWRPC staff at [lmurphy@swrpc.org](mailto:lmurphy@swrpc.org).

