

Southwest Region Planning Commission
37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH 03431 603-357-0557 Voice 603-357-7440 Fax

**Transportation
Advisory Committee**

Kendall Lane, Chair
Keene

Frank Sterling, Vice Chair
Jaffrey

Susan Ashworth
HCS Community Services

Brian Barden
Dublin

Leslie Casey
Sullivan

William Faulkner
Pathways for Keene

Dale Gray
Winchester

Leandra MacDonald
Peterborough

Cheryl Mayberry
Walpole

Ed Smith
Hinsdale

Bruce Tatro
Swanzey

Ruth Ward
Stoddard

with

John Kallfelz
NHDOT District 4

and

Lucy St. John
*NHDOT Bureau of
Planning & Community
Assistance*

Transportation Advisory Committee

**September 12, 2022
2:00 p.m.**

**Delegation Hall
Historic Cheshire County Courthouse
12 Court Street, Keene, NH**

Attendees may also attend the meeting online:

<https://bit.ly/Sep12TAC22>

Meeting ID: 860 5255 6759

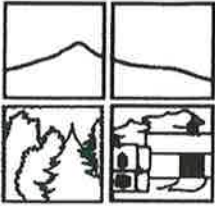
Password: 685244

Telephone: (646) 558-8656

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Minutes of June 6, 2022
- III. 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan Project Review Process
- IV. Transportation Program Updates
- V. Next Meeting: October 3, 2022
- VII. Adjourn

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37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH 03431 603-357-0557 Voice 603-357-7440 Fax

Southwest Region Planning Commission

Transportation Advisory Committee

Minutes

June 6, 2022

Present: Kendall Lane, Chairman, *City of Keene*; Susan Ashworth, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services*; Brian Barden, *Town of Dublin*; Leslie Casey, *Town of Sullivan*; William Faulkner, *Pathways for Keene* (remote); Leandra MacDonald, *Town of Peterborough*; Cheryl Mayberry, *Town of Walpole*; Ed Smith, *Town of Hinsdale*; Frank Sterling, *Town of Jaffrey*; Ruth Ward, *Town of Stoddard*; Lucy St. John (ex officio) *NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT)*.

Staff members present: J. B. Mack, Principal Planner; Rebecca Baldwin, Office Manager; Henry Underwood, *GIS Specialist/Planner*; Rich Clough, *Office Support Specialist*.

Guests present: Laurie Ridenour-Patterson, Bill Watson, *NHDOT* (remote).

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Lane called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. He acknowledged that a quorum of the membership was attending in-person with one attending remotely. He announced that the meeting was being recorded and that all votes would be taken by roll call.

II. Minutes of April 4, 2022

Motion: To approve the minutes of April 4, 2022 as presented.

Motion by Frank Sterling, seconded by Brian Barden. Minutes were approved by unanimous roll call vote with Susan Ashworth and Ruth Ward abstaining.

III. Transportation Program Updates

J. B. Mack referred to the transportation program updates that were included in the agenda packet. He drew attention to the transit and shared ride feasibility study noting that two public meetings have been scheduled to take place in Peterborough on July 20th and Keene on July 21st. SWRPC's consultant will be in attendance at the meetings, which will focus on various transit options available in our region including microtransit.

J. B. Mack also referred to the June 10th deadline to provide NHDOT with recommendations on where to place electric vehicle charging stations along specific corridors throughout the State. Within our region the State is currently considering locations on Route 9 and Route 101. TAC members asked about Route 12 and Route 202. J. B. Mack responded that those locations are not currently under consideration because they are not part of the federally designated Alternative Fuel Corridor system, but Route 9 and Route 101

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are part of that system. Leandra MacDonald questioned how far from the corridor a charging station can be located and was told one mile.

Prior to discussing the Draft 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan guidance, Chairman Lane asked what the status was of the FY 2023-2032 Ten Year Plan Update and Lucy St. John reported that it has gone through the legislative process and been passed on to the Governor for his signature.

IV. Draft 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan Guidance

J. B. Mack summarized the guidance provided by NHDOT regarding the 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan (TYP) that was included in the agenda packet. NHDOT shared the information with each of the nine regional planning commissions and is requesting that any comments be provided to them by June 10, 2022. He noted that staff has already reviewed the materials and have several comments regarding the schedule and criteria documents that will be provided to NHDOT along with anything that evolves from today's discussion. He noted that the weights associated with the criteria have not changed since the last cycle and TAC will need to determine if they want to review or make any changes to them for this cycle.

J. B. Mack referred to the document sent by NHDOT entitled *RPC 2025-2034 TYP Approach* that is asking the RPCs to confirm if existing projects in the TYP are still regional priorities. He explained that staff is in the process of sending letters to each of the municipalities in the SWRPC planning district to determine if they continue to support projects listed in the current TYP. Based on a formula that involves population and federal-aid lane miles our region will have \$4.289 million of the \$50 million set aside for the nine regional planning commissions to nominate regional priority projects. This figure is similar to what was made available during the last cycle. In addition, NHDOT is considering making an additional \$10 million available to the RPCs. NHDOT has asked for input from the RPCs if this should be distributed the same way the \$50 million is or be treated as stand alone funding to be awarded through a competitive process. Lucy St. John confirmed that no decisions have been made to date regarding the distribution of the added \$10 million. Chairman Lane noted that the best way to make sure we benefit from the \$10 million is to distribute it the same way the \$50 million is done. Chairman Lane pointed out that a lot of the funding coming from the BIL will be competitive both statewide and nationally and will not provide much benefit to our region. Lucy St. John explained that there are a lot of new programs associated with the BIL and we are all learning about them as they are released. NHDOT is trying to see how the majority of our regions can benefit from these new programs and will keep everyone posted as we proceed.

Motion: To have SWRPC staff recommend that NHDOT use the same formula to distribute the \$10 million in BIL funding as the one used to distribute the \$50 million in TYP funding.

Motion by Leandra MacDonald, seconded by Ed Smith. Approved by unanimous roll call vote.

J. B. Mack pointed out that another change noted on the TYP process document requires that all new projects proposed by the RPCs must have undergone engineering review by a professional engineer registered with the State of New Hampshire. He noted that the on-demand engineering services (an item that will be discussed during the next agenda item) will assist in screening projects for the TYP.

J. B. Mack referred to the handout that explains the regional project review process including the types of projects TAC can review, the eight criteria that are associated with our evaluation and the fourteen sub-criteria that relate to the impact or need of a project. Scoring will be on a scale of 1-10 and weights discussed earlier will be applied to those scores. Staff will provide TAC with objective data for each of the projects to assist in the scoring process. He noted that it would be advisable to conduct a refresher meeting to go over each of the criteria if TAC wants to change any of the weights that were established during the last cycle. Chairman Lane noted that since the criteria and weights haven't changed since the last cycle he doesn't see an advantage to changing them for this cycle. Wink Faulkner noted that the process TAC used

two years ago to develop the weights was very thorough. J. B. Mack noted that Bruce Tatro is the only TAC member that hasn't gone through the TYP scoring process before and volunteered to work with him to bring him up to speed on the process. Chairman Lane noted that it would be useful to review the criteria prior to scoring projects to have them fresh in our minds, but there doesn't seem to be an advantage to adjusting the weights.

Motion: To use the same criteria weights developed by the SWRPC TAC during the 2023-2032 TYP cycle for the 2025-2034 TYP cycle's project review process.

Motion by Ed Smith, seconded by Ruth Ward. Approved by unanimous roll call vote.

J. B. Mack reviewed the document entitled *2025-2034 NH Ten Year Plan Regional Planning Commission Process* that was included in the agenda packet noting that it provides a basic timeline developed by NHDOT for completing the TYP process. He noted that by November 11, 2022 we need to provide a preliminary ranking of projects to NHDOT. It is anticipated that we would hear back from them in either January or February 2023 with any feedback on the projects. Final TAC recommendations need to be submitted to NHDOT by March 31st.

J. B. Mack reviewed the draft schedule for the FY 2025-2034 TYP based on the guidance provided by NHDOT. He noted that based on today's action regarding criteria and weights that the July 11th and August 8th meetings may not be needed. He noted that the deadline for submitting final project recommendations to NHDOT is March 31st, and that there will be limited time to score projects if SWRPC doesn't hear back from NHDOT until February. Bill Watson asked if there was a way for TAC to send recommendations to NHDOT for review earlier than November since they determined earlier in this meeting that they would not be changing criteria weights. He added that the March 31st deadline for submitting TYP recommendations is prescribed by state law. Leandra MacDonald noted that we need to wait until September for the municipalities to submit their projects. J. B. Mack responded that the time could be shortened but since we have a lot of rural towns we like to give them time to put together their proposals. Bill Watson pointed out if initial project recommendations could be given to NHDOT sooner they would have time to do their work sooner to allow TAC more time to submit their final recommendations. Chairman Lane noted if a Town has a project they want to submit they know about it now and won't need two months to submit it to us. Ruth Ward asked who the town requests are sent to and was told letters go to selectmen, planning boards, police chiefs and public works departments in each of the communities. Cheryl Mayberry suggested shortening the time towns have to submit proposals. J. B. Mack noted that the letters state that the on-call engineering services are set-up on a first come first served basis. Lucy St. John observed that the first come first served approach may not be the best for the region depending on the quality of the proposals. J. B. Mack responded that staff will be screening each of the projects for viability prior to submitting them to the on-call engineer. Ed Smith noted it seems to be in the best interest of everyone to shorten the time municipalities have to submit proposals by 30 days.

Motion: To move the date for submitting TYP proposals from the end of August to the end of July.

Motion by Ed Smith, seconded by Cheryl Mayberry. Approved by unanimous roll call vote.

J. B. Mack noted that he would revise the schedule for the TYP process so proposals could be submitted earlier to NHDOT who in turn would provide us with earlier feedback. Bill Watson agreed noting if we speed up our process by a month they should be able to provide feedback to us between Christmas and New Year's Day.

V. On-Demand Engineering Services Update

J. B. Mack thanked Leandra MacDonald, Cheryl Mayberry, John Kallfelz and Henry Underwood for assisting with the procurement process for on-demand engineering firms. He explained that three responses were received, reviewed and scored, which resulted in holding interviews with each of the firms. The decision was unanimous as to which firm would best suit our needs. He noted that he is unable to release the name of the firm at this time because negotiations are still underway. Moving forward, staff will screen projects submitted for the FY 2025-2034 TYP to make sure they are feasible and eligible for federal funds and at that point if there are more projects than funding available for engineering services TAC may be asked to weigh-in on the best way to proceed.

VI. Next Meeting

J. B. Mack announced that the next meeting of TAC will likely take place in August rather than on July 11th based on action taken at today's meeting. He stated that he will coordinate with the Chair and Vice Chair on the next meeting date.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin
Office Manager



Southwest Region Planning Commission

37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH 03431

603-357-0557 Voice

603-357-7440 Fax

Agenda Item III

Date: September 12, 2022
To: Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Staff

RE: 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan Project Review Process

Background

As discussed at the TAC meeting on June 6th, SWRPC solicited local officials representing the thirty-four municipalities comprising the SWRPC planning district, inviting them to submit new project nominations for New Hampshire's 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan (TYP) by July 29th. Municipal officials were also invited to submit written notice supporting or disagreeing with projects in the current 2023-2032 TYP. SWRPC's outreach included letters addressed to boards of selectmen, Keene City Council, planning boards, police chiefs, and public works officials. Follow up notice was advertised in SWRPC's *Highlights* newsletter and *Happenings* e-newsletter. Local officials were invited to contact SWRPC staff directly for additional guidance.

SWRPC received seven TYP nominations from Hinsdale, Keene, Richmond, Swanzey, Temple and Westmoreland by the nomination deadline. In addition, the City of Keene and Town of Walpole submitted letters of support for the following projects: Lower Winchester Street Reconstruction (Keene 40666), NH 101 Reconstruction and Improvements to Intersection at Swanzey Factory Road (Keene 41590), Marlboro Street Rail Trail (Keene 42515), West Street Improvements (Keene 43543) Transportation Heritage Rail Trail (Keene 43737) and Rehabilitation of the Vilas Bridge (Walpole 41720). More information about the 2025-2034 project nominations as well as letters from Keene and Walpole regarding projects in the 2023-2032 TYP are attached to this memo.

As part of the two-year process for developing the 2025-2034 TYP, each NH regional planning commission (RPC) must submit a list of its preliminary top ranked projects to NHDOT by November 11, 2022. The list should not exceed the equivalent of SWRPC's regional budget plus two additional projects, and projects must include backup documentation that includes SWRPC's project scores, as well as completed project applications (including cost estimates derived from a NH licensed professional engineer). Although regional budgets have not been officially finalized by NHDOT at the time of writing, SWRPC estimates its budget to be approximately \$5.12 million in 2033 and 2034 dollars. RPC budgets are based on federal revenue that New Hampshire expects to receive during the two final years of the TYP.

Two of the project nominations submitted to SWRPC are substantially complete and include cost estimates generated by a NH licensed professional engineer. For the other projects, SWRPC has been negotiating with its recently procured engineering firm, BETA Group, Inc., to arrive at a scope of services that will provide the TAC and NHDOT with the engineering technical assistance needed to complete the TYP project evaluation. SWRPC's set-aside on-call engineering services budget for this purpose, \$20,000, was unfortunately not enough funding to evaluate every project nomination. The negotiation process resulted in SWRPC staff needing to screen projects against

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the TYP project criteria to determine the two nominated projects that would score poorly. The two projects were the Town of Richmond's nomination for a safety project at the intersection of NH 119 and Tully Road and the Town of Temple's nomination for a project to potentially upgrade a culvert to a bridge on East Road, a local road that has experienced seasonal flooding. Although these two projects were eliminated from the list of projects to consider, SWRPC staff plan to work with the Towns to look into alternative sources of funding. The resulting list of projects for the TAC to evaluate includes five projects.

At the meeting on September 12th, SWRPC staff will provide an update and request the TAC's feedback on the following items:

1. An updated staff proposal covering the process and timeline for determining the final ranking for priority projects for the 2025-2034 TYP. More detail associated with the proposal will be presented at the September meeting.
2. Additional detail on an update to the scope of services with BETA Group, Inc. referenced above.
3. A presentation on the five project nominations for the 2025-2035 TYP, followed by an opportunity to ask project sponsors preliminary questions about their projects. To facilitate the TAC's preparation for this segment of the meeting, brief descriptions of these projects are attached to this memo.

After SWRPC's preliminary ranking of projects is submitted to NHDOT in November, NHDOT will review the projects and develop any feedback it has on the project scopes, cost estimates and potential sources of funding. NHDOT has indicated that this response will come in January or February of 2023. After NHDOT submits its comments back to SWRPC, staff will work with the TAC to determine the final project ranking, which is due back to NHDOT by March 31, 2023. Following the March deadline, NHDOT will begin compiling a draft 2025-2034 TYP, which will be finalized towards the end of the summer of 2023 in time for autumn hearings on the TYP as facilitated by the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation.

Recommendation

For your information.



City of Keene

New Hampshire

July 26, 2022

J.B. Mack, Principal Planner
Southwest Regional Planning Commission
37 Ashuelot Street
Keene, NH 03431

RE: New Hampshire 2025 – 2034 Ten-Year Transportation Plan

Dear J.B.,

This is in response to your June 8, 2022 letter on existing City and regional projects in the State Proposed 2025-2034 Ten Year Transportation Plan (TYP).

I would like to begin by affirming the City's commitment to the Lower Winchester Street Reconstruction Project (Keene 40666). This remains our highest priority within the Ten Year Plan. Winchester Street/NH Rt. 10 is a gateway corridor into the City. It is also a critical regional transportation link. The City has programmed over \$1.8 Million in our Capital Improvement Program (CIP) starting in FY21 to cover our share of the project. The City has also budgeted \$637,500 of utility funds to cover the non-participating utility costs associated with the project. The replacement of the Winchester St. Bridge over Ash Swamp Brook (Bridge No. 118/051) is of particular concern. This bridge has been on the State's Red List and is in need of replacement. This project is a joint effort with the Town of Swanzey with the scope expanded to provide safety and pedestrian improvement in Swanzey. The City has signed a project agreement with the State Department of Transportation and the design process is underway. The City hopes that every effort is made to keep this critical project on track.

Reconstruction of NH 101 from .4 Miles East of Optical Avenue to Marlborough Town line (Keene 41590) is an important project to the City because it is providing improvements to this critical east-west corridor through the City for both vehicle, pedestrian and bicyclist. This project will be addressing a difficult intersection, Swanzey Factory Road and NH Rt. 101, which comes in at an askew angle and can be very difficult to navigate. This project will also provide the City the opportunity to replace a 1914 water line. The City has budgeted \$1.36M of utility funds in the City's CIP for this purpose.

Marlboro Street Rail Trail (Keene 42515) is an important complete street projects. This project is the continuation of the City's Marlboro Street Corridor Improvements. The City has completed sewer and water upgrades and replacement in this corridor. This project provides for pedestrian and bicycle improvements on an important east side corridor street. It implements a complete street design and provides traffic calming measure along the roadway. It will also provide a connection to the Cheshire/Industrial Heritage Multi-Use Trail and to the City's important separate multi-use trail system. The City has funded its 20% share of this project.

The Corridor Improvements to West Street from Intersection of NH 9/10/12 to School Street (Keene 43543) is a critical project to the City and the region. West Street serves as an important regional hub for retail (Kohl's and Hannaford's Shopping Plazas), commercial, medical and recreational (Ashuelot River Park) amenities that serves both Keene residents and the residents of the surrounding communities. The transportation infrastructure in this corridor are simply not meeting the current needs. This project will create a more inviting street for commercial, retail, and residential development, provide multi-modal transportation facilities including adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and increase the efficiency and safety of the corridor for vehicle traffic. The City has placed in its CIP in FY27 its share of the Preliminary Engineering effort.

The Construct 4, 100 LF of Rail Trail from Eastern Avenue to the Northern side of NH Route 101 Keene (Transportation Heritage Trail Phase I, Keene 43737) project is an important multi-modal transportation project and a critical link in the City and region's multi-use trail system. This project is the first phase of a multi-phase project that will extend the Cheshire Multi-Use Trail to the Keene-Swanzey town line connecting to the multi-use trail system that leads into Massachusetts. This first phase improves the trail surface along with drainage and provides a safe turnaround at the intersection with NH Rt. 101/Marlboro Road. This supports the next phase of a larger project that will use three historic bridges to span NH Rt. 101, the Branch River and Swanzey Factory Road. This project supports both City goals and regional goals to provide an alternative transportation link for both recreational and alternative travel purposes.

The City appreciates and request the on-going support for these key projects. If you have any questions, please contact me at 352-6550.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth A. Dragon
City Manager

CC: Kurt D. Blomquist, PE, Assistant City Manager/Public Works Director
Jesse Rounds, Community Development Director
Donald Lussier, PE, City Engineer

TOWN OF WALPOLE

New Hampshire

OFFICE OF THE SELECTBOARD

July 28, 2022

Southwest Regional Planning Commission
J.B. Mack, Principal Planner
37 Ashuelot Street
Keene, New Hampshire 03431

Re: NH 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan, Transportation Improvement Projects

Dear J.B.:

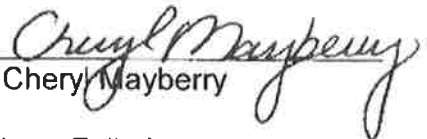
The Town of Walpole does not intend to nominate any new projects for the 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan cycle at this time. We will, however, continue to support the Rehabilitation of the Vilas Bridge (Project # 41720) which carries Bridge Street over the Connecticut River. We are very appreciative of the support provided by Executive Councilor Cinde Warmington and the ongoing support of the SWRPC staff towards getting the bridge back on the 10-year plan with 100% funding.

The Vilas Bridge is a historic bridge that connects Walpole to our neighbors in Bellows Falls, Vermont. It has also served as an economic link between the center of Bellows Falls and Walpole for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. As you know, the town also has a wastewater line that runs underneath the bridge, and our hope is that the State of New Hampshire continues to support the bridge's rehabilitation in order to avoid any potential environmental hazards or disruption to our wastewater service line.

Sincerely yours,
Town of Walpole, NH Selectboard


Steven Dalessio, Chair


Peggy L. Pschirrer


Cheryl Mayberry

Cc: North Walpole Village Commissioners, Rockingham-Bellows Falls Municipal Manager

PO Box 729 • 34 Elm Street • Walpole, NH 03608

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2025-2034

NEW HAMPSHIRE TEN YEAR PLAN TRANSPORTATION PROJECT NOMINATIONS IN SWRPC PLANNING DISTRICT

PROJECT OVERVIEWS

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Project 2 – Keene NH 12 & 32 Intersection Improvements.....	2
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Project 5 – Westmoreland River Road Bridge Replacement	6

PROJECT 1 – HINSDALE FORT HILL BRANCH RAIL TRAIL TRESTLE BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION

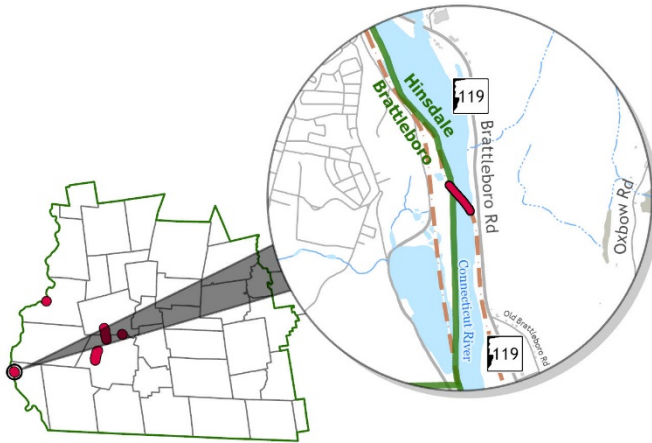


Figure 1 - Photo by Henry Underwood (November, 2020)

PROJECT TYPE(S)

Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements (sidewalks, bike trails, multi-use paths, traffic calming improvements)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to support connection of the New Hampshire and Vermont rail trail systems.

NEED

In Hinsdale there are few low stress places to walk or bicycle safely. The rail trail system is a great option, but it isn't connected to Brattleboro, VT. Route 119 is a high traffic area. Many people commute to Brattleboro VT for work and if they chose to walk or bicycle they have no other means except to utilize the road. Currently the rail road trestle bridge crossing the Connecticut River is not accessible to pedestrians or bicyclists. If the bridge was decked and safe, it would allow pedestrians, bicyclists and even fishermen to use the bridge. The NH rail system stretches to Keene NH. With Hinsdale as a border town to Brattleboro, VT, this bridge would open up opportunity to travel on to the West River Rail Trail System in Brattleboro, VT as well.

DESCRIPTION OF SCOPE

The proposed improvements would involve re-decking the bridge, improvements to the trail surface in the vicinity of the abutments, and the creation of a combination parking area and connection between the trail and NH 119. Cost information was not provided with the nomination.

PROJECT 2 – KEENE NH 12 & 32 INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION

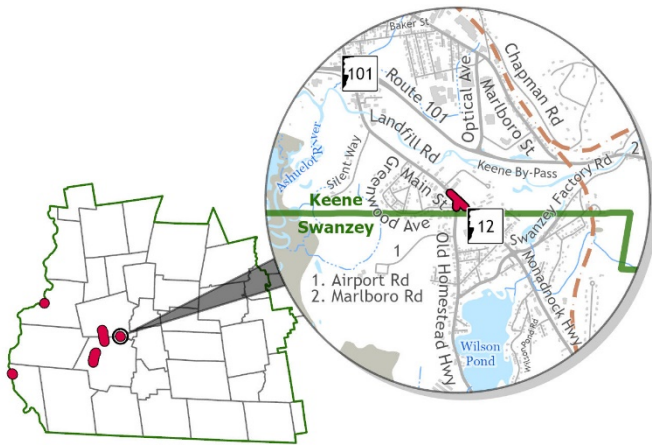


Figure 2 - Photo by Google (November, 2019)

PROJECT TYPE(S)

Highway Improvements (operational improvements, access management, intelligent transportation systems, widening, technology operation improvements)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to create a safe, efficient intersection at the Junction of Rt. 32 (Old Homestead Highway) with Rt. 12 (Main Street).

NEED

The junction of Rt. 12 and 32 is currently configured as a “Y”, with an angle of approximately 45°. This makes it very difficult for north-bound motorists on Rt. 32 to appreciate north-bound traffic on Rt. 12. In addition, the volume of traffic on Rt. 12 makes it challenging for vehicles to enter during peak hours. As part of the project, the intersection will be evaluated to determine if a signalized intersection or some other type of control would improve overall efficiency. The project will also alleviate a significant safety concern. In the last ten years, Keene Police have recorded approximately 20 motor vehicle accidents resulting in 5 injuries at this location.

DESCRIPTION OF SCOPE

Re-align the intersection to create a 90° Tee. If warranted, install efficiency improvements (e.g., traffic signal, roundabout, etc.). Reconstruct the roadway for approximately 300 feet in each direction. Cost information was provided with the nomination and was estimated to be \$2,190,000 in 2034 dollars based on a 3% annual inflation rate without a signal. The City of Keene is also developing a separate cost estimate for a roundabout, which it intends to submit to SWRPC in the coming days.

PROJECT 3 – KEENE-SWANZEY BASE HILL ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION

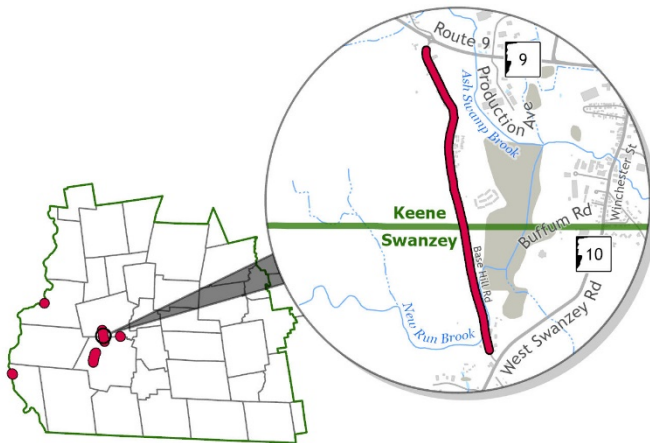


Figure 3 - Photo by Google (November, 2019)

PROJECT TYPE(S)

Highway Improvements (operational improvements, access management, intelligent transportation systems, widening, technology operation improvements)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to improve the alignment, width, drainage and safety of Base Hill Road, between Rt. 9 and Rt. 10, to handle the increased traffic and heavier loads that it has carried in recent years.

NEED

Over the last several years, the City of Keene and Town of Swanzey has observed increasing traffic counts on Base Hill Road. In particular, heavy truck traffic has become routine. Most of this increase appears to be due to increases in through traffic traveling between Rt. 10 and Rt. 9, rather than development along Base Hill Rd. itself. Base Hill Road was not constructed with adequate structural fill or drainage features to handle these heavy loads. As a result, the pavement is in a poor state of repair and municipal maintenance efforts offer only short-lived relief. In addition, the narrow width of the roadway leaves no safe accommodation for pedestrians or bicyclists. Over the past 10 years, Keene Police have recorded over 80 motor vehicle accidents resulting in 29 injuries.

DESCRIPTION OF SCOPE

This project proposes to widen approximately 1.5 miles of Class V highway to a consistent cross section of 32 feet. This will allow for 12 foot travel lanes and 4 foot shoulders on each side. It is believed that most of the existing road base is not constructed with adequate structure. Therefore, existing base will be improved or replaced with property specified gravels. Design alternatives will evaluate the use of imported virgin material, full depth reclamation with soil amendment and/or the use of reinforcement geotextiles. In addition, roadside drainage ditches and culverts will be constructed to prevent saturation of the base material.

PROJECT 4 – SWANZEY NH 10 WEST SWANZEY IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION

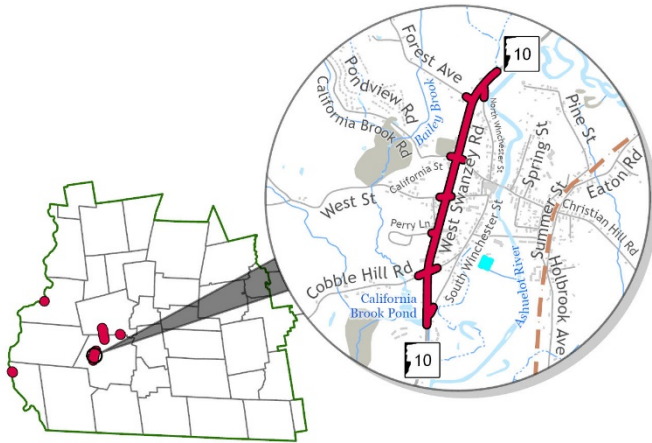


Figure 4 - Photo by Google (November, 2021)

PROJECT TYPE(S)

- Highway Improvements (operational improvements, access management, intelligent transportation systems, widening, technology operation improvements)
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements (sidewalks, bike trails, multi-use paths, traffic calming improvements)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to provide access management, traffic calming, intersection improvements, and complete streets improvements to increase non-motorized activity and protections for pedestrians on West Swanzy Road (NH 10) between North and South Winchester Street. There are three existing, one under construction, and one proposed multi-family developments within the proposed project area. These improvements will accommodate safety measures for the increased population density and serve existing and future economic development.

NEED

This section NH 10 bifurcates the community resulting in unsafe conditions for cars, pedestrians, and other non-motorized travel. It is an area of mixed development with several multi-family housing developments and a concentration of commercial and community activity. This portion of the corridor represents the heart of West Swanzy Village, home to the highest population density along the RT 10 corridor between Keene and Winchester. Introducing traffic calming measures and improving pedestrian safety would increase resident access to local community and recreational assets and will increase economic activity along the corridor. The Swanzy NH RT 10 Corridor Study identified 86% of traffic exceeded the posted 40 mph speed limit at the West St intersection with NH 10. There are limited, unconnected sections of sidewalk in the proposed project area and there are no crosswalks providing safe passage for pedestrians across NH 10.

DESCRIPTION OF SCOPE

Install crosswalks with rapid flashing beacons at the intersections with California St, West St, Cobble Hill Rd, and South Winchester St. Install a vegetative median with left turn pockets in place of the existing two-way left turn lane between California St and Cobble Hill Road. Install other streetscaping and traffic calming infrastructure. Make improvements to intersections. Extend / install sidewalks south to the Evergreen Knoll development and north to California Street on east and west sides of NH 10. Cost information was not provided with the nomination.

PROJECT 5 – WESTMORELAND RIVER ROAD BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

LOCATION

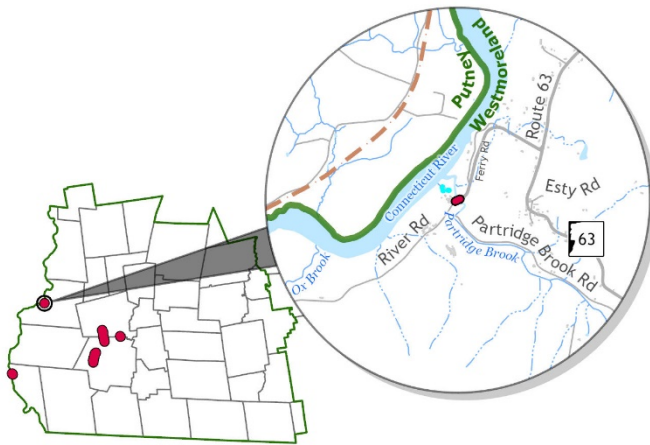


Figure 5 - Photo by NHDOT (July, 2011)

PROJECT TYPE(S)

Asset Management (bridge rehabilitation, bridge replacement, pavement repair/replacement)

PURPOSE

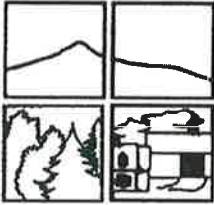
The purpose of this project is to replace bridge 89/100 that was placed on the NHDOT red list in 1996.

NEED

Bridge 089/100 is a major access route to the Cheshire County Nursing Home (Maplewood Nursing Home) and River Rd. NHDOT red listed the bridge in 1996. The Westmoreland Board of Selectmen placed a 10-ton weight restriction in 2013.

DESCRIPTION OF SCOPE

The bridge needs replacing to once again be safe for commercial traffic and for access to the Cheshire County Nursing Home. Cost information was not provided with the nomination.



Southwest Region Planning Commission

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Agenda Item IV

Date: September 12, 2022
To: Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Staff

RE: Transportation Program Updates

Background

Several transportation-related items of interest are summarized below. These items can be discussed further during the September 12th meeting. In addition, staff from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services will be at the meeting to provide a brief announcement about funding available through the NH Clean Diesel Grant program.

- a. Transit and Shared Ride Feasibility Study: Since the June TAC meeting, SWRPC and its consultant, Via Mobility, Inc. (Via) have held one advisory work group meeting and three public meetings to gather input on potential fixed route transit and microtransit zone services in select parts of the Monadnock Region. Using this feedback, Via has been working with SWRPC and Home Healthcare Hospice and Community Services (HCS) to begin modeling a variety of transit services targeting riders in Keene, Greater Keene (Keene and urbanized portions of Swanzey and Marlborough), the Route 10 Corridor from Keene to Winchester, the US 202 Corridor from Peterborough to Rindge, NH 101 between Peterborough and Keene, and NH 9 between Keene and Brattleboro, VT. The model will estimate ridership, number of vehicles needed, capital and operational costs and other useful information to assist in determining their feasibility and potential. For more information about this study, visit <https://www.swrpc.org/featured-projects/transit-and-shared-ride-improvement-feasibility-study/>.
- b. Monadnock Region Coordinating Council (MRCC) and Mobility Management: Since the release of a solicitation for Transportation Equity Project proposals in March 2022, five community transportation improvement projects have been selected for funding by the MRCC. A total of \$152,000 in funding has been approved through August 2022. Supported with funding from the NH Department of Health and Human Services (NH DHHS), Transportation Equity Projects must serve high-risk, underserved, and/or racial and ethnic minority populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Funded projects include the expansion of a shopping shuttle services provided by HCS; youth transportation services for children participating in Keene Housing Kids Collaborative after-school programs; and funding for a Community Volunteer Transportation Company staffer to conduct outreach to potential riders and volunteer drivers in underserved communities. An additional \$55,460 in NH DHHS funds have been issued to Monadnock Region transportation providers to meet increased expenses and demand for transportation services for seniors and individuals with disabilities over FY 2023. In June 2022, SWRPC executed an agreement with Cheshire County to serve as the MRCC's Mobility Manager. Mobility management can be broadly defined as creating and managing mobility options, at both the systemic and system-to-customer levels, to improve the reach, efficiency, and affordability of public transportation services

TDD Access: Relay NH 1-800-735-2964

web site: www.swrpc.org

- c. Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST): MAST is currently soliciting proposals as part of their 2022 Complete Streets Implementation Grant opportunity, made possible by a donor through the *You Have Our Trust* fund. Through the grant round, up to \$95,000 dollars will be available to support complete streets construction projects and non-infrastructure activities (planning, preliminary engineering, “pop-up” events, development of complete streets policies, etc.) in the Monadnock Region of New Hampshire. The deadline to apply is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 23rd. Communities interested in submitting a proposal are encouraged to reach out to SWRPC staff. To date, MAST has awarded funds to 13 projects in 9 communities to support complete streets. MAST’s Annual Meeting on July 20th in Keene included an update of the 2021-2030 Action Plan, a review of sustainable transportation projects completed in 2021, and presentations from municipalities (including Harrisville, Jaffrey and Swanzey) that successfully implemented complete streets projects through support from MAST.

- d. Southwest Connects Long Range Transportation Plan Update: Starting in July, SWRPC began holding public input sessions for the eight corridors identified in the *Southwest Connects* Long Range Transportation Plan as part of SWRPC’s update to the Plan. To date, meetings have been held on the NH 9 West Corridor and NH 9 East Corridor, and a meeting for the NH 10 South Corridor will take place on September 8th. The meetings begin with a short presentation orienting meeting attendees to the corridor including a description of transportation features on the corridor, population and employment, traffic levels, traffic safety data and more. Most of the meetings, however, are set aside to gather input from stakeholders to learn about transportation related issues, challenges, opportunities and project ideas. For more information about these corridor meetings, visit <https://www.swrpc.org/swconnects/>.

- e. Asset Management Planning: During the month of August, SWRPC kicked-off two transportation asset inventory projects in Greenville and Harrisville. Both projects utilized assessment protocols developed by the University of New Hampshire, New Hampshire Department of Transportation, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and others. In Greenville, SWRPC completed a field inventory and assessment of all pedestrian features (including sidewalks, crosswalks and curb ramps) and all Town-maintained paved roads. Greenville will use this information for capital improvement planning purposes. In Harrisville, SWRPC began collecting information to assess all Town-maintained culverts and stream crossings. This assessment work will inform decision-making on everything from routine maintenance to repairs and replacements to evaluating flood risk during different-sized precipitation events. You can also learn more about SWRPC’s other transportation-related asset management work at www.swrpc.org/asset-management.

- f. SWRPC Selected to Present at NH Municipal Association Annual Conference: In a leadership role representing the NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs), SWRPC is putting together a panel discussion and presentation on Road Surface Management System (RSMS) assessments and how they can help municipalities with their capital improvement planning needs at the NH Municipal Association’s Annual Conference, scheduled for November 16th and 17th in Manchester. SWRPC will be joined by staff from several other RPCs across New Hampshire to deliver a presentation about RSMS projects that have been implemented around the State.

- g. Planning for Electric Vehicles: SWRPC staff has been in communication with Drive Electric New Hampshire (DENH) regarding development of NH Municipal Electric Vehicle Toolkit. DENH is hosting a University of New Hampshire Sustainability Fellow to develop the toolkit this summer. SWRPC staff met with the sustainability fellow on two occasions to provide input on toolkit development. DENH has yet to announce when a final version of the toolkit will be

released, but a draft has been substantially completed. The toolkit will cover topics such as siting of electric vehicle charging stations, relevant land use regulations, municipal fleet electrification, and more.

- h. New Hampshire Strategic Highway Safety Plan (2022-2026): The State of New Hampshire recently completed an update to the Strategic Highway Safety Plan in partnership with a variety of partners, including regional planning agencies. The plan represents the State's master plan for highway safety and establishes a comprehensive approach to reduce the number of fatalities and serious injuries by 50% by 2035, working towards zero by 2050. The document is available at <https://bit.ly/3Q5o1Ts>. Please consider taking a look at New Hampshire's safety performance over time, "critical emphasis areas" (including older drivers, vulnerable road users, speed and more), and specific steps municipalities, planners and others can take to improve safety.

In addition to the above, SWRPC staff and TAC members may suggest other transportation related updates during the September 12th meeting.

Recommendation

For your information.