

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

**Transportation
Advisory Committee**

Transportation Advisory Committee

**November 6, 2023
2:00 p.m.**

**Southwest Region Planning Commission
37 Ashuelot Street, Keene, NH**

Kendall Lane, Chair
Keene

Frank Sterling, Vice Chair
Jaffrey

Susan Ashworth
HCS Community Services

Brian Barden
Dublin

Sara Carbonneau
Winchester

Leslie Casey
Sullivan

Michael Kowalczyk
*Monadnock Region Rail
Trails Collaborative*

Alfred "Gus" Leraudeau
Swanzey

Leandra MacDonald
Peterborough

Cheryl Mayberry
Walpole

Jesse Rounds
Keene

Ed Smith
Hinsdale

Ruth Ward
Stoddard

with

John Kallfelz
NHDOT District 4

and

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

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Minutes of August 28, 2023
- III. Transportation Program Updates
- IV. FY 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan Update
- V. Presentation: Monadnock Region Rail Trails Collaborative
- VI. Other Matters
- VII. Next Meeting: January 8, 2023
- VIII. Adjourn



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Transportation Advisory Committee

Minutes

August 28, 2023

Present: Frank Sterling, Vice Chair, *Town of Jaffrey*; Susan Ashworth, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services*; Brian Barden, *Town of Dublin*; Sara Carbonneau, *Town of Winchester*; Leslie Casey, *Town of Sullivan*; Gus Lerandean, *Town of Swanzey*; Leandra MacDonald, *Town of Peterborough*; Ed Smith, *Town of Hinsdale*; Ruth Ward, *Town of Stoddard*.

Staff members present: Tim Murphy, *Executive Director*; J. B. Mack, *Assistant Director*; Becky Baldwin, *Office Manager*; Jason Cooper, *Planner*.

Guests: Keith Cota, *HDR Inc.*; Frank Dobisky, *Thomas Transportation*; William Rose (ex officio), *NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT)*; Ricky DiCillo and Vanessa Parting, *NHDES* (remote).

I. Welcome and Introductions

Vice Chairman Sterling called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m., welcomed those in attendance, and asked for introductions from attendees.

II. Minutes of June 5, 2023

Motion: To approve the minutes of June 5, 2023 as presented.

Motion by Gus Lerandean, seconded by Ed Smith. Approved by unanimous vote with Ruth Ward abstaining.

III. Transportation Program Updates

J. B. Mack referred TAC members to the transportation program update information that was included in the agenda packet. He drew attention to the deadlines for submitting proposals to both of the NHDES grants which are September 15, 2023 for the Clean Diesel program and October 13, 2023 for the Granite State Clean Fleets program. Gus Lerandean asked if any funding has been awarded to-date and Ricky DiCillo responded that Fitzwilliam received funding to purchase a new fire truck. J. B. Mack noted that staff has sent information on these grants to each of our municipalities.

IV. FY 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan Update

J. B. Mack gave an overview of the Ten Year Plan (TYP) update process and noted that the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) hearings will be taking place this fall. William Rose of NHDOT provided a high-level overview of the FY 2025-2034 TYP update using a [NHDOT presentation that will be delivered at the upcoming GACIT hearings](#). He noted that new programs have been added to this update including Bridge, National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure, PROTECT, and the Carbon Reduction Program. He also reviewed the state funding which comes from road toll revenues and noted that any reduction in traffic volume corresponds to a reduction in available funding. He explained that since the last TYP update steel, concrete and asphalt prices have increased significantly. In addition, the projected inflation rate used for the TYP was increased from 2.8% to 3.7%. William Rose noted that 84% of the TYP update is dedicated to roads and bridges, the remaining 16% is reserved for railroads, transit, and airports. For the 2025-2034 TYP, nineteen projects were submitted for consideration by regional planning commissions statewide with a total projected cost of \$68 million. The Swanzey Project #44218, the top priority submitted by the SWRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), is included in the draft TYP.

Leandra MacDonald asked who determines the awards for the PROTECT funding and William Rose explained that this is in the development stage at present.

William Rose noted that the GACIT hearings for Southwest NH are scheduled for September 25th at 6:30 p.m. at the Keene Recreation Center and October 17th at 7:00 p.m. at the Jaffrey Fire Station. He added that a schedule of all the hearings in the State is available on the NHDOT website. Tim Murphy asked if there will be an opportunity for staff to present at the hearings and William Rose responded that staff will be given five minutes for their presentation. J. B. Mack noted that individual TAC members can also speak when the hearings are opened for public comment.

Ed Smith questioned why NH receives the lowest amount of funding in the entire country. William Rose said that many share the same frustration, but the method for allocating funding to states is a federal process that NHDOT doesn't have control over.

J. B. Mack asked if anyone present is planning on attending the GACIT hearings. Sara Carbonneau noted she would attend the Keene hearing and Frank Sterling volunteered to attend and testify at the Jaffrey hearing. Tim Murphy noted that anyone can provide testimony at the GACIT hearing but if they are speaking as a representative of TAC what they present should represent the consensus of the Committee. J. B. Mack stated that he would provide a list of talking points for TAC Chair Lane and Vice Chair Sterling to provide at the Keene and Jaffrey GACIT hearings, respectively.

V. Presentation: Planning for Electric Vehicle Charging

J. B. Mack introduced staff member Jason Cooper who provided a presentation on planning efforts that have taken place to-date regarding the development of infrastructure to support electric vehicle (EV) charging. In the Spring of 2022 SWRPC conducted a survey to gain input on what municipal officials feel are the largest obstacles/challenges to implementing EVs. The survey results showed that funding opportunities and identifying locations for charging units represent significant concerns. SWRPC has also conducted interviews with several municipalities on the subject and posted several blogs on the SWRPC website. Jason Cooper referenced the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program which is focused on the development of alternative fuel corridors. He noted that an alternative fuel corridor should

have a charging station every 50 miles that is located within 1 mile of the corridor. In the Monadnock Region, NH Route 9 and Route 101 are currently being considered. In addition, SWRPC is currently collaborating with Clean Energy NH and Drive Electric NH to provide information to our communities so that when funding becomes available we will be in a better position to submit proposals. Future efforts will include publicizing funding opportunities, assisting with technical support in helping our communities determine the number of charging units they will need, and helping communities with streamlining the permitting process. Tim Murphy noted that there is an economic development element to this - if we want to encourage tourism, we need to provide ways for EVs to get here. Leandra MacDonald agreed noting that we value our town centers and want to enhance them.

VI. Other Matters

No other matters were brought before the TAC at this time.

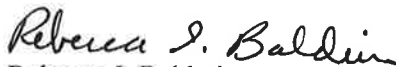
VII. Next Meeting: November 6, 2023

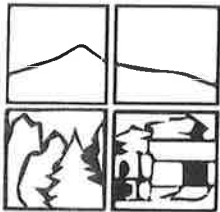
J. B. Mack announced that the next meeting of TAC is scheduled for November 6, 2023 unless there is a need to meet sooner.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Rebecca I. Baldwin
Office Manager



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Agenda Item III

Date: November 6, 2023
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 at the November 6th meeting.

- a. On-Call Engineering Services: On October 27th, SWRPC released a Request for Qualifications to procure on-call engineering services that will support transportation planning efforts throughout the SWRPC Region during fiscal years 2024 and 2025. The efforts include scoping and developing preliminary cost estimates for transportation improvement projects that may be funded with local, state or federal funds (including Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration). On-call engineering services may include but are not limited to developing improvement concepts and providing planning-level engineering assistance for proposed transportation projects in the SWRPC region; preparing preliminary cost estimates for projects and/or alternatives within projects; and meeting with representatives of SWRPC member communities and staff on an as-needed basis to discuss work products. Priority tasks will involve assisting SWRPC in evaluating project proposals for New Hampshire's FY 2027-2036 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan update. **Please note: SWRPC is seeking 2-3 TAC member volunteers to assist staff in evaluating engineering firm proposals.**
- b. NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Community EV Charging Program: Earlier this year NHDES applied to the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) discretionary Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) program for community-based electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE). If the grant funding is awarded, NHDES plans to release a funding opportunity aimed at installing electric vehicle charging stations within communities across New Hampshire. In an effort to proactively plan for the funding opportunity, NHDES is currently seeking input on the development of the potential new electric vehicle (EV) charging grant program and will give a brief presentation and seek feedback from the SWRPC TAC at the November 6th meeting.
- c. New Hampshire Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan: The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) conducted a "soft release" of its new NH Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (Plan) in September, sharing the Plan with regional planning commissions, state agencies and bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders directly involved in the final draft review process. NHDOT is currently planning a more public release of the Plan over the coming weeks. The Plan's three main goals seek to address safety, access and culture providing a roadmap for the next decade of state investment in active transportation. SWRPC staff have requested that NHDOT provide a presentation on the new plan to the SWRPC TAC at a future meeting. TAC members

interested in reviewing the draft Plan can find it at https://www.swrpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/NH-Ped-Bike-Plan_Final_w_appndx.pdf.

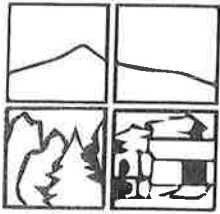
- d. Planning for an Improved Southwest NH Transit System: SWRPC staff continue to work on a two-year project to evaluate transit system operating models for the Southwest New Hampshire Region. At the time of writing SWRPC is finalizing a white paper exploring the pros and cons of different transit operating models. The paper is based on interviews with transit consultants and operators in New Hampshire and around the country. Additionally, SWRPC staff have completed a final draft Request for Proposals to procure a transit consultant to provide technical assistance to the project as well as recruit a project advisory working group.
- e. Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council (MRCC) and Mobility Management: Much of the MRCC's recent focus has been on celebrating Community Transportation Month promotional activities. Throughout the month of October, the MRCC joined the NH Transit Association, State Coordinating Council and other NH regional coordinating councils to celebrate the State's first annual Community Transportation Month. The purpose was to highlight the various forms of community transportation services available across the state and in the region. During the month, Monadnock Region transportation providers conducted promotions to raise awareness about the services they provide. For example, HCS Transportation offered free rides on the City Express and Friendly Bus during the week of October 23rd. The Community Volunteer Transportation Company, HCS and Keene Senior Center teamed up to run full page ads in the Monadnock Shopper and Monadnock Ledger Transcript to show appreciation for the over 100 bus and volunteer drivers who provide rides to the public. The Keene Housing Kids Collaborative held an event to recognize a Thomas Transportation driver who makes it possible for kids from low-income families to attend life enriching programs. All of these community transportation providers are valued members of the MRCC which is dedicated to building an innovative, coordinated, and resilient transportation network that works for all.

Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST): MAST announced a 2023 Complete Streets Implementation Grant opportunity with up to \$120,000 to support construction projects, engineering and municipal complete streets policy development. The deadline for applications was extended to October 27, 2023 and MAST received a total of nine applications. Alstead, Antrim, Hancock, Temple, and Westmoreland applied for technical assistance with Complete Streets policy development; Peterborough and Hinsdale applied for funding for engineering services; and, both Marlborough and Swanzey applied for infrastructure (i.e., construction) funding. A MAST Subcommittee is currently reviewing applications and decisions about awards are expected later this year. Details are available at the MAST website (mastnh.org/2023-complete-streets-grant). Communities that did not apply this round are encouraged to consider ideas for the next funding cycle anticipated in mid-2024.

In addition to the above, SWRPC staff and TAC members may suggest other transportation-related updates during the November 6th meeting.

Recommendation

For your information.



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Agenda Item IV

Date: November 6, 2023
To: Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Staff

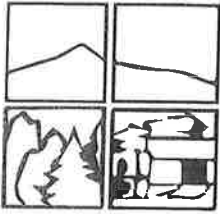
RE: FY 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan Update

Background

Since the August TAC meeting, the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) held hearings in Keene and Jaffrey on September 25th and October 17th respectively. At the November 6th TAC meeting, staff will present and summarize new information that resulted from an analysis of the draft FY 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan update as well as new information and testimony that was shared at the two GACIT hearings.

Recommendation

For your information.



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Agenda Item V

Date: November 6, 2023
To: Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Staff

RE: Presentation: Monadnock Region Rail Trails Collaborative

Background

TAC member Mike Kowalczyk will give a presentation sharing an overview of the Monadnock Region Rail Trails Collaborative including its mission, goals, recent achievements, current activities, and plans for moving forward.

Recommendation

For your information.