

SWRPC

Commission Highlights

December 2023

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SWRPC 2024 Winter Meeting - Save the Date

SWRPC's Winter Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 13th, at 5:00 p.m. in Heberton Hall in the Keene Public Library Annex, 60 Winter Street, Keene, NH. Join us as focus on planning-related bills filed for consideration during the 2024 NH Legislative Session. An announcement will be released in the coming days. To register, please visit <https://forms.office.com/r/rMWwpW61sR> or contact SWRPC at (603) 357-0557.

Broadband Connectivity and Digital Equity

On December 13th, SWRPC submitted comments to New Hampshire's Office of Broadband Initiatives about their plans for \$196.5 million in broadband infrastructure funding through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) relative to the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. SWRPC's comments focus on the importance of connectivity with community anchor institutions, improvements to performance measurement and addressing digital equity. To view SWRPC's comments as well as the draft documents provided by the State, please visit swrpc.org/bead-comments. Additional opportunities to influence the State's plans are coming up. NH's first-ever Digital Equity Plan is available for review at nhdigitalequity.org along with details to join an informal Zoom forum on January 12, 2024 from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Please help to spread the word about this additional opportunity to improve broadband in Southwest NH and throughout the State. For more information, please contact Henry Underwood at hunderwood@swrpc.org or Rod Bouchard at rbouchard@swrpc.org of SWRPC staff.

New Hampshire Rural Technical Assistance Program Training

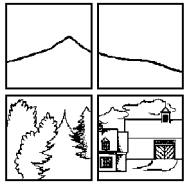
The New Hampshire Rural Technical Assistance Program (NHRTAP), which provides driver and management-level training, technical assistance, and scholarship assistance to rural transit providers in New Hampshire, is offering a series of training sessions in January. Topics include passenger assistance Techniques, disability awareness, defensive driving, and emergency procedures and evacuation. The NHRTAP assists New Hampshire's rural public transit systems in providing safe and effective service through training programs, the NHRTAP newsletter and website at <https://www.newhampshirertap.com/>, and one-on-one technical assistance. NHRTAP resources are available both to Section 5311 and Section 5310 Grantees. Detailed information about training sessions offered can be found on the NHRTAP Training Calendar at <https://www.newhampshirertap.com/calendar>.

Transportation Infrastructure Vulnerability Assessment

SWRPC staff kicked-off work on the region's first-ever vulnerability assessment of transportation infrastructure. The assessment will focus on precipitation-related impacts to publicly owned roads, bridges and culverts. The project will use the Federal Highway Administration's Vulnerability Assessment Scoring Tool to organize and weight many factors including asset condition, age, flood history, and damage potential. This effort will utilize information about climate and weather hazards relevant to transportation infrastructure from the New Hampshire Climate Assessment (2021) as well as identify both short-term and long-term strategies and projects to address vulnerable infrastructure. For more information, please contact Henry Underwood at hunderwood@swrpc.org or Jason Cooper at jcooper@swrpc.org of SWRPC staff. You may also submit your e-mail address at swrpc.org/vulnerability-assessment to be among the first to hear about the results of the project.

Food System Planning

On December 11th, SWRPC staff and the Food Systems Work Group of the Monadnock Farm and Community Coalition, helped to facilitate a focus group discussion on sourcing goods locally. The goal for the event was to bring Monadnock Region restaurants, value-added producers, grocers, and other entities together to discuss opportunities and challenges for sourcing products locally. Highlights of the discussion included success stories from businesses who work to develop partnerships with other regional businesses, a conversation about the logistical challenges with distribution in a rural region and brainstorming of projects and funding opportunities that could help enhance the resilience of our local food system. The discussion will help inform several ongoing efforts, including SWRPC's regional food system assessment. For more information about the Local Sourcing Focus Group, please contact Jason Cooper of SWRPC staff at jcooper@swrpc.org.



SWRPC Supports City Express Route Updates

During December, SWRPC staff supported the City Express bus service, run by Home Healthcare, Hospice & Community Services (HCS) through the creation of a new map to visualize recent transit route updates. Route updates in Greater Keene are based in part on community feedback and include additional service to Kohl's Plaza on West Street, access to Cheshire Medical Center's facility on Maple Avenue, the Monadnock Food Co-op, and more. To learn more about the City Express and its new routes, please visit: <https://www.hcsservices.org/services/transportation/city-express/>.

