

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

Sara Carbonneau
Winchester

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*

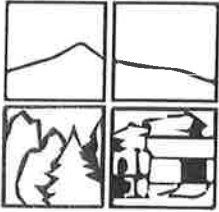
Transportation Advisory Committee

**October 7, 2024
2:00 p.m.**

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

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Minutes of September 9, 2024
- III. FY 2027-2036 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan Scoring Preparation
- IV. Other Matters
- V. Next Meeting: November 4, 2024
- VI. Adjourn



Southwest Region Planning Commission

Transportation Advisory Committee

Minutes

September 9, 2024

Present: Kendall Lane, Chair, *City of Keene*; Frank Sterling, Vice Chair, *Town of Jaffrey*; Susan Ashworth, *HCS Community Services*; Brian Barden, *Town of Dublin*; Sara Carbonneau, *Town of Winchester*; Michael Kowalczyk, *Monadnock Region Rail Trails Collaborative*; Alfred “Gus” Lerandean, *Town of Swanzy*; Leandra MacDonald, *Town of Peterborough*; Ed Smith, *Town of Hinsdale*; Ruth Ward, *Town of Stoddard*; Lucy St. John, *NHDOT Bureau of Planning & Community Assistance (remote)*.

Staff members present: Todd Horner, *Executive Director*; J. B. Mack, *Assistant Director*; Terry Johnson, *Senior Project Manager*.

Guests: Mark Munroe, *NHDOT Highway Safety Program*; Mark Palermo, *NHDOT Highway Safety Program*.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Lane called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m., welcomed those in attendance, and asked for introductions from attendees.

II. Minutes of May 6, 2024

Motion: To approve the minutes of May 6, 2024 as presented.

Motion by Alfred “Gus” Lerandean, seconded by Leandra MacDonald. Approved by unanimous vote, with Sara Carbonneau abstaining.

III. Transportation Program Updates

Chairman Lane asked if TAC members had any questions about the transportation program updates memo in the meeting packet.

Chairman Lane asked if there were any changes to the 2025-2034 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TYP) that was signed into law in August. J. B. Mack reported that the only significant change was the removal of the NH Route 12 bridge over the Cheshire Rail Trail in Surry. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) determined a left turn lane on the approach to Dump Road will need to be installed for safety purposes. NHDOT reported that they are putting that project on pause until it’s appropriate to fully replace the bridge. The bridge is currently in adequate condition and was only scheduled for maintenance at this time. He also reported that the Legislature approved CMAQ funding

which will include a project to build a roundabout at the T intersection connecting NH Route 9, 10, 12 and 101. It was suggested that a roundabout be installed at the intersection of NH Route 9, Ash Brook Road and Production Avenue to better fit in with the free traffic flow patterns on the Keene-Swanzey bypass system including the Winchester Street and Base Hill Road roundabouts.

J. B. Mack noted that SWRPC is awaiting guidance from NHDOT on the 2027-2036 TYP including SWRPC's budget, a timeline for deliverables, and finalized TYP project criteria. He said he expects SWRPC to have between a \$4 to \$5 million budget. There are four projects being looked at for the 2027-2036 TYP round. Keene renominated its project requesting improvements at the NH Route 12 and 32 intersection. A Swanzey nominated project seeks pedestrian infrastructure funding for northern parts of Swanzey including parts of NH Route 12, NH Route 32 and Lake Street. The Town of Marlborough nominated a project that would address stormwater issues along NH Route 124, safety concerns at the intersection of NH Route 101 and 124, and sidewalk and crosswalk improvements on NH Route 101 and 124. With assistance from the Monadnock Regional Rail Trail Collaborative, Hinsdale renominated a project that would involve improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure between Hinsdale and Brattleboro either via a former railroad trestle bridge over the Connecticut River or by improving pedestrian/bicycle accommodations along NH Route 119 to the Charles Dana Bridge.

J. B. Mack said SWRPC is preparing TYP "project profiles" for the TAC. Project profiles are documents that provide information and analysis relating to the TYP criteria that TAC members can use for scoring projects. He also noted that the firm VHB, Inc. has been hired to complete engineering work for the Marlborough and Swanzey projects. The Keene and Hinsdale projects received engineering assistance during the last round. SWRPC plans to review the four projects with the TAC at the October 7th meeting.

Sara Carbonneau commented on the number of accidents occurring on NH Route 9 near the Sullivan-Roxbury area and in Chesterfield. She asked if funding is being looked at to address this. J. B. Mack indicated the Highway Safety Improvement Program as a potential source of funding and he can alert Bill Lambert, State Safety Engineer to include the recent crashes as part of his planned visit to the District 5 Maintenance area. It was mentioned that previous road improvements to the area have caused traffic speeds to increase.

IV. Presentation: Creating a "Next Generation" Public Transportation System for the Monadnock Region

Terry Johnson provided an update on activities of the Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council (MRCC). He reported that COVID equity funding from the NH Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS) expired at the end of FY24. The MRCC used the funding to launch and implement multiple transportation projects including expanded HCS shopping shuttles services, volunteer driver recruitment campaigns by Community Volunteer Transportation Company and Keene Senior Center, and a new youth transportation program by Keene Housing Kids Collaborative (KHKC). The projects contributed to a doubling of trips provided during FY23 as compared to FY24. The Region's volunteer driver corps rebounded significantly from a low of 32 during the pandemic to over 70 currently. The KHKC Board approved a budget allocation to sustain the youth transportation program through the 2024 calendar year. With the expiration of NHDHHS funds, HCS made the decision to eliminate the Winchester shopping shuttles leg which experienced low ridership during the funding period. NHDHHS funding also supported full-time mobility management services on behalf of the MRCC which were provided by SWRPC.

Terry Johnson reported that, with creative use of NHDHHS and NHDOT Section 5310 funds, the MRCC was able to conserve sufficient funds to sustain FY24 levels of transportation and mobility management services through FY25, the end of the current two-year Section 5310 funding cycle. MRCC funding is expected to be significantly less during the upcoming FY26-27 funding cycle. The MRCC will need to

decide the appropriate budget allocations for transportation and mobility management services when preparing its application which is due during the Spring of 2025. NHDOT is considering adopting a new funding methodology for allocating funds to Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) during the next funding round. The RCCs will have an opportunity to weigh-in on the methodology via a survey distributed by NHDOT.

Terry Johnson provided an update on the *Creating a "Next Generation" Transit System in the Monadnock Region* project currently being implemented by SWRPC. The purpose of the project is to identify an entity to manage an expanded transit system in the Monadnock Region as recommended in the Microtransit Feasibility and Fixed Route Transit Study conducted by Via on behalf of SWRPC, HCS and the MRCC. Activities to date include the establishment of goals and a method for evaluating prospective operating and governance models. Input was solicited from the project Advisory Task Force (ATF) and the public. Multiple operating models are being considered including Municipal, County, Non-profit, Regional Transit District, and Joint Powers Agreement run systems. Terry Johnson passed out a handout displaying the results of a ranking activity conducted with the ATF and public regarding the goals for evaluating the various models.

Stakeholder outreach was initiated to engage leadership from organizations that could operate or assist with operation of a regional transit service. Next steps include:

- Narrowing the options down to one or two models and conducting a feasibility analysis to determine which model will be the best fit for managing the transit system.
- Continuing stakeholder and public outreach, including engaging citizens as advocacy champions.
- Working through legal issues regarding the structure of the managing entity.
- Selecting an operating and governance model and developing an implementation plan with steps and timeline for establishing the operating agency.

Ed Smith asked if anything is being planned for Hinsdale and whether there is any collaboration with the Town of Brattleboro. Terry Johnson responded that the CEO of The MOOver transit service, which serves Brattleboro, Hinsdale and Walpole is on the project ATF. J. B. Mack added that the CEO has started discussions with The MOOver Board about this expansion opportunity. Ed Smith noted that Walmart in Hinsdale is a key destination.

Kendall Lane asked if current transit services are picking people up at their homes. Susan Ashworth explained that the HCS City Express is a fixed-route service with bus stops along a route and the Friendly bus, which requires a reservation, picks people up at home.

Leandra MacDonald asked where people want to go. Terry Johnson responded that medical and shopping trips are the most popular. He explained that older adults and people with disabilities are the primary demographics served. Susan Ashworth added that some riders are younger people without a car. She said shopping trips are popular among Friendly Bus riders and that some people are using the City Express to go to work.

Leandra MacDonald asked about the number of riders that travel by multiple services. Susan Ashworth responded that HCS provides 2,300 trips per month. Six hundred trips are door-to-door where driver assistance is needed. Riders needing wheelchair access can call the Friendly Bus.

Frank Sterling asked how far people must walk to get public transportation. Susan Ashworth explained that routes are designed to stop at senior housing. She added that bike racks are mounted on vehicles and that sometimes people bike to the bus stop.

Kendall Lane noted that there are new multi-family housing units in Swanzey. He asked if transit routes will be adjusted to serve them. Susan Ashworth responded that routes will probably not be adjusted. HCS' City Express currently experiences a one-hour headway. Increasing the number of stops could lead to a drop-off in ridership. J. B. Mack added that land use is a key aspect of transit service design. When new stops are added, such as the Cheshire Medical Center outpatient clinic on Maplewood Avenue where the stop is located off the main road in the back of the building, it increases the time to complete the route. Transit service challenges are also caused by creating new stops at new housing developments located beyond the reach of current routes.

V. Other Matters

J.B. Mack introduced Mark Munroe, NHDOT Highway Safety Program Manager, who was invited to present on the Driving Towards Zero (DTZ) campaign. A slide deck accompanied the presentation (see attached). Mark Munroe introduced DTZ as an effort to eliminate deaths on NH roadways. Ninety traffic deaths have occurred so far this year, higher than occurred at the same point last year. The focus is on increased safety for all travelers on NH roadways including by car, motorcycle, truck, bicycle or foot. The aspirational goal is to reduce the number of roadway deaths by 50% by 2030 and continue the program until there are zero roadway deaths through creating a culture of safety.

Critical emphasis areas for the campaign include impaired driving, distracted driving, speeding, vulnerable roadway users, and others. Mark Munroe cited distracted driving as the number one emerging problem. The campaign approach involves "socializing highway safety" through a variety of project delivery and program management tactics. A key focus is on educating drivers and community partners about what they can do to improve roadway safety. He encouraged TAC members to let NHDOT know if there are any events they could attend.

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

VI. Next Meeting: July 1, 2024


J.B. Mack announced that the next meeting of the TAC is tentatively scheduled for October 7, 2024.

VII. Adjourn


The meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Johnson
Senior Project Manager




Mark Munroe
NH DOT Highway Safety Program Manager



1


Driving Toward Zero (DTZ)

- An effort to eliminate deaths on New Hampshire roadways
- A vision for all who travel on New Hampshire's roadways by car, motorcycle, truck, bicycle or foot.
- Is a data driven effort focusing on identifying and creating opportunities changing the culture as it relates to highway safety in New Hampshire.
- The mission of DTZ is to create a safety culture where even one roadway fatality is one too many!




2

Key Messaging



- Roadway crashes are preventable, not inevitable
- New Hampshire's goal is to reduce the number of roadway deaths 50% by 2030 and continue the program until there are zero roadway deaths.
- Zero Deaths is the only acceptable goal we can all live with.
- People must accept responsibility for driving safely.
- We are creating a culture of safety on our roadways.



3

DTZ Critical Emphasis Areas

- Impaired Driving
- Distracted Driving
- Speeding
- Adolescent Drivers
- Older Drivers
- Crash Locations
- Motorcycle's
- Vulnerable Roadway User's



4

Socializing highway safety at NHDOT

Project Delivery

- Provide Highway Safety subject matter expertise
- Conduct Road Safety Audits in a timely manner
- Implement recommended safety projects as funding allows.
- Conduct Road Safety Audits (RSA)

Program Management

- Provide data analytics and highway safety planning
- Promote awareness of highway safety strategies
- Coordinate with highway safety partners
- Implement SHSP action items
- Produce required reports



5

What can you do?



- Understand relationship between design elements and driver behavior
- Recognize opportunities to implement proven safety countermeasures
- Be an advocate for highway safety within the DOT and with project partners
- DRIVE DEFENSIVELY!



6



7