



SWRPC

Commission Highlights

December 2015

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GACIT Sends Ten Year Plan Recommendations to Governor

After holding sixteen public hearings across the State, the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) provided its FY 2017-2026 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TYP) recommendations to Governor Hassan. Some highlights of the recommendations include a proposal to finance a new Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge with construction starting in 2019 as well as a proposal to advance the construction of improvements to the Rts. 202/124 intersection in Jaffrey to 2020. The Governor will review GACIT's recommendations, and forward her own recommendations to the NH Legislature. By law, the Legislature and Governor will work together to pass a final FY 2017-2026 TYP before July 2016. For more information about GACIT's recommendations, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff or visit www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/typ/index.htm.

State of NH Rest Area Study

The NH Department of Resources and Economic Development and NH Department of Transportation held a public meeting at SWRPC on December 3rd to discuss the future of the now closed rest area on NH 9 in Antrim. It was one of five public meetings across the State to discuss the future of NH rest areas. The state agencies have hired a consultant to conduct a study to evaluate traveler services at the rest areas and to identify recommendations to improve services. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the Keene event including state representatives, directors from three area chambers of commerce, local selectmen and planning board members, and members of the SWRPC Transportation Advisory and Economic Development Advisory Committees. Meeting attendees strongly supported the reopening of the Antrim rest area. A copy of the presentation is available on the SWRPC transportation webpage at www.swrpc.org/trans. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce Regional Issues Series

On December 15th SWRPC staff participated in the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce's Regional Issues Series event, titled "Broadband Connectivity & Economic Development." The event featured presentations by Charlie French, Program Leader, Community & Economic Development, UNH Cooperative Extension, George Fryburg, Director, ConnectNH, Rouzbeh Yassini, Executive Director, Broadband Center of Excellence, and others. Presenters and audience members discussed many of the broadband needs in Southwest NH, touching on open access networks, last mile connections, so-called "gigabit cities", and the needs of local businesses to connect to high-quality internet services. To learn more about SWRPC's broadband planning initiative, please visit the Southwest New Hampshire Broadband Plan at www.swrpc.org/regionalplan or contact Henry Underwood of Commission staff.

Change in Community Transportation Service Delivery Endorsed by MRCC

The Monadnock Region Coordinating Council for Community Transportation (MRCC) met on December 8th and approved a proposal by the American Red Cross-NH West Chapter to begin transferring its long-standing volunteer driver transportation program operations and customers to the Contoocook Valley Transportation Company (CVTC). The Red Cross is making a nationwide shift away from providing transportation services in order to focus on their core mission of providing assistance and relief for emergencies and disasters. The proposal transfers volunteer driver responsibilities to CVTC for residents of Dublin, Greenfield, Hancock, Jaffrey, Peterborough, Rindge, and Sharon beginning January 1, 2016. Volunteer driver services are targeted specifically to seniors and people with disabilities for rides to medical appointments and other trip needs. The MRCC is tasked by the NH Department of Transportation to manage community transportation coordination issues, including decisions on the apportionment of some federal funds to improve community transportation in the Monadnock Region. SWRPC provides administrative and technical assistance to MRCC. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

Community Development Block Grant Implementation Workshop

SWRPC staff attended the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Implementation Workshop on December 1, 2015 hosted by the NH Community Development Finance Authority. The workshop covered the following CDBG topics: use of the online grants management system, municipal adoptions/approvals, environmental reviews, subrecipient agreements, monitoring, procurement, financial management, construction management, municipal responsibilities, housing rehabilitation, acquisition and relocation, and job counting. For more information, please contact Rebeckah Bullock of Commission staff.

Advanced Facilitation Training

On December 5th, SWRPC staff attended an all-day advanced facilitation training workshop hosted by NH Listens. SWRPC works to keep staff skilled in facilitating effective meetings, events, and focus groups, not only for SWRPC advisory committees and regional planning initiatives, but also to provide neutral facilitation services on behalf of member communities. For more information, please contact Lisa Murphy of Commission staff.



Greater Keene Air Quality Education and Outreach Campaign

SWRPC has partnered with Keene State College as EPA Healthy Communities Grant awardees to better understand the link between woodsmoke and respiratory health in the City of Keene, and to make this information available via presentations, educational curriculum, and updated outreach materials. To view current air quality conditions, please visit www.swrpc.org/airquality. There are still vouchers remaining for the woodstove changeout program being administered by the American Lung Association. If you are a resident of Cheshire County and would like to participate, please visit www.lungne.org/woodstove for more information. If you know of a community group that would be interested in learning more about woodsmoke, small particle air pollution, and ways to help prevent poor air quality days, please contact Henry Underwood of Commission staff.

Southwest Region Planning Commission

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