

# SWRPC

## Commission Highlights

February 2016

Vol. 22 - No. 2

### **Regional Transportation Forum**

SWRPC has teamed-up with the Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce (GKCC) to co-sponsor a forum entitled *Transportation in the Monadnock Region: Linkages for a Vibrant Community into the Future*. The event, part of the GKCC regional issues series, is scheduled for March 10, 2016 from 7:30 – 9:30 a.m. at Centennial Hall of the Alumni Center at Keene State College. The program will feature an overview of transportation assets and issues in the Region, a State perspective offered by Victoria Sheehan, Commissioner of the NH Department of Transportation, and a panel discussion. There is no cost to attend, but advance registration is requested. For additional information or to register, please go to [www.keenechamber.com](http://www.keenechamber.com).

### **2016 Winter Commission Meeting**

SWRPC held its 2016 Winter Commission Meeting on February 16, 2016 at Papagallos Restaurant in Swanzey, NH. Guest speakers included Judy Silva, Executive Director and Cordell Johnston, Attorney/Lobbyist from the NH Municipal Association who provided information on the New Hampshire 2016 legislative session. For more information, please contact Becky Baldwin of Commission staff.

### **The Power of Data**

The availability of data is vital to informed planning and the volume of information can be overwhelming. SWRPC staff have supported a variety of planning-related efforts by navigating the many agencies and resources available. In February, SWRPC updated a variety of regional statistics based on updated information released by the U.S. Census Bureau, NH Office of Energy and Planning and the NH Departments of Employment Security and Revenue Administration. Topics include trends in population, housing, educational attainment, building permit data, employment, income, and municipal tax rates. Together, this information can be used to identify basic trends pertinent to understanding changes in population, the availability of housing, and other topics. Each theme is readily available at [www.swrpc.org/data](http://www.swrpc.org/data). For more information, please contact Henry Underwood of Commission staff.

### **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Workshops**

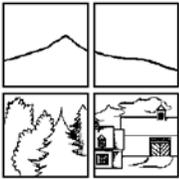
On February 10, 2016 SWRPC staff attended a training hosted by NH Housing on the HUD Environmental Review process. Topics covered included an overview of the process, appropriate steps to be taken to conduct the review, and references to online resources. On February 17, 2016 staff attended the 2016 CDBG Economic Development Workshop hosted by the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Topics covered included an overview of administering CDBG projects, a review of changes to the application, summary of the online Grants Management System, and review of minimum underwriting standards for applications. For more information about the workshops or the CDBG program, please contact Rebeckah Bullock of Commission staff.

### **Local Master Plan Updates**

SWRPC continues to assist several communities in our region on Master Plan Updates. The New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning recommends that Master Plans be updated every 7-10 years. Keeping the Master Plan current will help to maintain an overall vision for the future, provide guidance in land use decisions, and offer updated statistics and data. It can also create an advantage in applying for competitive grants by providing updated socioeconomic and demographic information. For more information, please contact Lisa Murphy of Commission staff.

## Addressing Small Particle Air Pollution

On February 2, 2016, SWRPC, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES), and Keene State College co-hosted an Air Quality Workshop to continue promoting public awareness of small particle air pollution issues. Surveys prepared by Keene State College were used during the workshop to measure the effectiveness of the information as well as what participants learned about small particle air pollution and appropriate wood stove use. On February 13, 2016 SWRPC staff attended the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Seed Celebration and Sustainability Fair to promote the air quality education and outreach campaign. On February 18, 2016 staff also presented at a meeting of the Elm City Rotary Club. Topics covered included the background information on small particle air pollution levels in the greater Keene area, the health and regulatory impacts of small particle pollution, how residents can play a role in keeping our air clean, and the Cheshire County Woodstove Changeout Program. SWRPC staff are available to attend additional meetings on this topic. For more information, please contact Henry Underwood or Liz Kelly of Commission staff or visit [www.swrpc.org/airquality](http://www.swrpc.org/airquality).



## Spring Season Hazards Reminder

As spring approaches, the weather can be quite unpredictable. Now is a great time to hold a meeting with emergency management staff and volunteers to review actions previously approved in the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. These actions should be reviewed annually as a way to monitor the Plan and determine what actions can be taken to prevent or reduce the impact of hazards such as flooding and severe wind events. For additional information or for assistance, please contact Lisa Murphy of Commission staff.

**Southwest Region Planning Commission**

37 Ashuelot Street Keene, NH 03431 603-357-0557 [www.swrpc.org](http://www.swrpc.org)

---

