



SWRPC

Commission Highlights

May 2018

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2018 SWRPC Annual Meeting

There is still time to register for the Southwest Region Planning Commission's Annual Meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, June 12, 2018 beginning at 5:00 p.m. at Centennial Hall at Keene State College. The program will focus on "Celebrating Monadnock" and our guest speaker is Alan Rumrill, Executive Director of the Historical Society of Cheshire County. For more information or to register, please contact Becky Baldwin of Commission staff.

Critical Freight Corridors

On May 7th, the SWRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) met and began a discussion to help identify Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFCs) in Southwest New Hampshire. CRFCs are segments of highways that are considered "vital to improve the efficient movement of freight of importance to the economy." The NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) is responsible for designating up to 150 miles of highway as CRFCs and 75 miles of Critical Urban Freight Corridors to augment the State's Interstate System as New Hampshire's portion of the National Highway Freight Network. These designations are to be made as part of NHDOT's efforts to develop a State Freight Plan. Highways designated as critical freight corridors are eligible for federal National Highway Freight Program funding, of which approximately \$4.5 million is available annually to New Hampshire through 2020. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

Ashuelot Rail Trail Planning Pilot Project

On May 3rd, SWRPC hosted the first meeting of the Ashuelot Rail Trail Planning Project Advisory Committee, a group formed to aid and guide staff in the development of a vision and plan for the Ashuelot Rail Trail. The Ashuelot Rail Trail extends from its intersection with Emerald Street in Keene approximately 21.5 miles south through Swanzey, Winchester, and Hinsdale. SWRPC plans to engage all four communities and several other stakeholders to identify, review and prioritize solutions to issues and needs. The result of the 12-18 month planning process will be the development of a planning document to guide future improvements to the trail. For more information, please contact Henry Underwood of Commission staff.

Community Development Block Grant Funding

For municipalities and organizations thinking about applying for the July 2018 round of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, now is the time to start the application process. Housing and Public Facilities CDBG funding is available to municipally-sponsored projects in January and July of each year. Eligible projects can receive grants of up to \$500,000 for infrastructure or housing projects with a direct benefit to low and moderate income individuals and families. Economic Development CDBG funding is also available for municipally-sponsored projects year-round on a first come, first served basis starting in January. Up to \$500,000 is available for economic development projects that help create job opportunities for low to moderate income individuals and families. Feasibility studies can also be funded for up to \$12,000. For more information, please contact Rebeckah Bullock of Commission staff.

SWRPC Welcomes Student Interns

During May, SWRPC staff welcomed three student interns that will assist with transportation-related fieldwork including traffic counting, culvert and road/stream crossing inventories, road pavement assessments, and other ongoing projects throughout the summer. Zane Atwood, Christopher "CJ" Klem and Samantha Menke are students from Keene State College and all have completed coursework through the Geography Department. Please join us in welcoming Zane, CJ and Samantha.

Subcommittee to Consider Existing Bridges

On May 22nd, the Existing Bridges Subcommittee held its initial meeting. The Subcommittee was formed at the request of the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge Project Advisory Committee with assistance from SWRPC, the Towns of Hinsdale and Brattleboro, Windham Regional Commission, NHDOT, and the Vermont Agency of Transportation. The purpose of the Subcommittee is to develop a vision for the Charles Dana and Anna Hunt Marsh Bridges and Hinsdale Island which represents the current river crossing area to be replaced by a new single-span Connecticut River bridge. For its work, the Subcommittee will take into account the envisioned activities and uses of the bridges and island, physical changes, management and maintenance considerations, and expected impacts on economic development, tourism, transportation/access, and recreational opportunities. During its kick-off meeting the Subcommittee discussed its purpose, membership, 24-month timeline, and plans for gathering information and input to recommend a vision for the bridges and island area. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.



ReadyNH Website

New Hampshire residents are encouraged to be prepared for storm and other disaster events. The NH Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's ReadyNH website can help residents, businesses and others increase their preparedness for such events. The website includes information on how to prepare for disasters, assembling emergency kits, developing family plans and signing-up for emergency alerts. It also contains resources that municipalities can use to help their residents become more prepared, such as sample Public Service Announcements for TV or radio. For more information, please visit the website at www.readynh.gov or contact NH HSEM staff at (603) 271-2231.

Southwest Region Planning Commission

37 Ashuelot Street Keene, NH 03431 603-357-0557 www.swrpc.org

