



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 Care

Brian Barden
Dublin

Leslie Casey
Sullivan

William Faulkner
Pathways for Keene

Mia Gagliardi
Hancock

John Gomarolo
Winchester

Rhett Lamb
Keene

Gus Lerandean
Swanzey

Cheryl Mayberry
Walpole

Leandra MacDonald
Peterborough

Ed Smith
Hinsdale

with

John Kallfelz
NH DOT District 4

Transportation Advisory Committee

**October 1, 2018
2:00 p.m.**

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

Agenda

- I. Minutes of September 10, 2018
- II. Transportation Program Updates
- III. Transportation Alternatives Program - 2018 Round
- IV. 2021-2030 Ten Year Transportation Plan
- V. Next Meeting: November 5, 2018
- VI. Adjourn



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Transportation Advisory Committee

Minutes

September 10, 2018

Present: Kendall Lane, *Chairman, City of Keene*; Frank Sterling, *Vice-Chairman, Town of Jaffrey*; Susan Ashworth, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services*; Brian Barden, *Town of Dublin*; Kevin Belanger, *New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) District IV (sitting in for John Kallfelz)*; Leslie Casey, *Town of Sullivan*; William Faulkner, *Pathways for Keene*; John Gomarlo, *Town of Winchester*; Rhett Lamb, *City of Keene*; Gus Lerandean, *Town of Swanzey*; Leandra MacDonald, *Town of Peterborough*; Cheryl Mayberry, *Town of Walpole*; Ed Smith, *Town of Hinsdale*.

Staff members present: Tim Murphy, *Executive Director*; J. B. Mack, *Principal Planner*; Rebeckah Bullock, *Community Development Specialist*; Todd Horner, *Planner*; Henry Underwood, *GIS Specialist/Planner*.

Guest: Tom Giancola, *Congresswoman Ann McLane Kuster's Office*; Lucy St. John, *NHDOT*.

Chairman Lane called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m., welcomed those in attendance, and introductions were made.

I. Minutes of June 4, 2018

The minutes of June 4, 2018 were approved as submitted by unanimous vote.

II. Transportation Alternatives Program - 2018 Round

Todd Horner provided an overview of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) 2019-2020 funding round and discussed the role of TAC for the program round. He explained that it is administered by the NHDOT, and is a federally-funded program focusing on the development of non-motorized transportation primarily for pedestrians and bicyclists. The program was first enacted in fiscal year 2012 under the federal Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) law and is currently authorized under Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act through fiscal year 2020. The program consolidates programs that were previously separate, including the Transportation Enhancements and Safe Routes to School programs. He reviewed the eligible activities, which include the construction, planning, and design of off-road trail facilities and safe routes for non-drivers, conversion and use of abandoned railroad corridors for non-motorized transportation users, and safe routes to school program infrastructure activities.

Todd Horner reviewed the distribution of federal program funds for fiscal years 2019 and 2020 of the program. Of the \$7.78 million dollars of TAP funding available in New Hampshire for the two-year cycle, \$2.53 million dollars are designated for the Recreational Trail set-aside and administered by the

NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The remaining \$5.25 million dollars administered by NHDOT is split between communities with populations under 5,000 (\$1.11 million), populations between 5,000-200,000 (\$0.90 million), populations over 200,000 (\$0.62 million), and flex funding that can be spent in any area (\$2.62 million). He also reviewed the NHDOT project funding parameters, which include federal funding availability at a minimum of \$320,000 and a maximum of \$800,000 per project. Projects must provide a local match of at least 20%.

Todd Horner described the TAP State Advisory Committee membership, which includes representatives from the regional planning commissions (one urban, one rural), state agencies, Bike Walk Alliance of NH, and HEAL NH. The application criteria are considered and distributed as follows: 37% potential for success; 27% safety; 18% project connectivity; 12% socioeconomic benefits; and 6% regional planning commission ranking. "Stress analysis" is part of the safety score and considers whether the facility is safe for children and what skill level is needed to utilize the facility. For the scoring process, all projects in the state are ranked and are funded in their scoring order until the funding is depleted. The regional planning commissions' participation includes attending informational meetings, assisting communities with applications, assisting the TAC in reviewing and ranking applications, and submitting TAC rankings to NHDOT. He added that the TAC can develop its own weights for the criteria in reviewing and ranking applications. For this round, letters of interest originating from the Southwest Region included projects from Hinsdale, Jaffrey, Keene, New Ipswich, Swanzey, and Troy for a total federal request of \$3.7 million dollars. In terms of the timeline, proposals were due by September 7th and will be awarded in 2019.

Todd Horner discussed proposed steps in the process, which include SWRPC staff and the TAC determining criteria weights during the October 1st TAC meeting. TAC members will then complete at-home scoring of the projects during October. Staff will present the ranking results at the November 5th meetings for TAC approval before sending the final ranking to NHDOT by its deadline of November 9th.

Rhett Lamb asked if staff is recommending an interview process for the project applicants this year. Todd Horner said that TAC could hold interviews, but noted that the State isn't holding interviews this year. J. B. Mack commented that the abbreviated timeframe could make interviews difficult. Kendall Lane asked if staff had received the application packets. Todd Horner replied that the packets haven't been received yet, but they are expected soon.

Frank Sterling expressed concern over each TAC developing its own criteria. J. B. Mack clarified that the TAC will not develop new criteria, but it is free to determine weights for the existing criteria. He suggested that the Committee consider utilizing NHDOT's criteria minus the regional planning commission and socioeconomic benefit criteria and not use 100% for the ranking maximum. Todd Horner added that staff suggests not deviating from NHDOT's criteria weights, in order to stay aligned with the State Advisory Committee's scoring process.

Kendall Lane asked why some recent projects were funded through TAP instead of the Recreational Trails set-aside. Rhett Lamb pointed out that the funding limit for the Recreational Trails program is only \$80,000, and the program has a different funding schedule as well. Frank Sterling asked who made the decision to separate out the Recreational Trails funding. J.B. Mack said that the program was separated out by Congress through the FAST Act.

J.B. Mack asked the Committee their thoughts on keeping the criteria weightings from NHDOT but not using 100% as the maximum. He said that each of the three remaining criteria could be ranked by a scale, and staff would apply the weight. Kendall Lane suggested that the scale be 1 to 10 for each criteria.

Leandra MacDonald asked if maps and project information would be made available. J.B. Mack confirmed that the information would be included with the application materials.

Rhett Lamb asked staff to request that NHDOT consider adjusting the process so that municipalities do not need to drop off applications in Concord.

III. 2021-2030 Ten Year Transportation Plan

J. B. Mack referred Committee members to the Ten Year Plan (TYP) materials in their meeting packets. He explained that he would review the basic guidance for the 2021-2030 TYP process provided to the regional planning commissions, review the timeline, and answer questions. He noted that the process is starting 3-4 months earlier than usual, since NHDOT is requesting more time to ensure that project cost estimates are accurate.

J. B. Mack explained that there are two stages to the project submission process. In December 2018, TAC will need to submit a list of likely top priority projects to NHDOT for engineering review, which will focus on project cost estimates. TAC is able to revise this initial list in the Winter and Spring of 2019. A second and final prioritized ranking is due by May 1, 2019. NHDOT wants the TAC to look at the projects currently in the TYP to determine if there are any changes. In the past, projects haven't been removed. NHDOT would like the regional planning commissions to coordinate with the towns if TAC feels any projects should be removed.

J. B. Mack described NHDOT's proposed regional funding allocation for all regional planning commissions. NHDOT is proposing to allocate \$50 million dollars towards the regional planning commissions for regional priority recommendations. SWRPC's portion of this would be \$4.289 million dollars for two years, which is programed for the "out years" of 2030/2031. In applying this, an inflation rate of 2.55% and indirect rates of 10% will need to be factored into the regional budget. The formula is unchanged from the previous TYP cycle, with 50% based on population and 50% on federal eligible road miles.

Kendall Lane asked if the Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge should be removed. J.B. Mack responded that it should stay in the TYP for now, since construction will extend a few years into this plan.

Tim Murphy pointed out that if the 2.55% inflation and 10% indirect costs are applied to the \$4.289 million dollars for the SWRPC region, it translates to \$2.9 million dollars in the "out years".

J. B. Mack noted that resiliency has been added as a new criterion. Tim Murphy added that this addition is in response to the increased frequency and intensity of severe weather events and the impact on our transportation infrastructure. He noted that there has been some discussion about defining the term more broadly in the future to include, for example, economic resiliency. Lucy St. John clarified that for this round it should relate to natural hazard mitigation.

J. B. Mack referred to the list of criteria in his presentation, noting that TAC can assign their own weights to the criteria. He added that Decision Lens is no longer being used, so we will need to determine weights in a different way this year. He suggested that we undertake an exercise to assign weights individually as homework before the next TAC meeting, and that staff could summarize the results and present them at the October TAC meeting for further discussion.

J. B. Mack summarized the general TYP timeline and the timeline for SWRPC's involvement. The timeline has potential TYP projects being solicited and draft candidate lists developed in August through November 2018, with the draft 2021-2031 TYP being released in June 2019 and the GACIT kickoff meeting occurring in July 2019. The proposed SWRPC TYP timeline has the criteria weights being determined by October 1st, project proposals due by October 17th, TAC review of new TYP project nominations on November 5th, NHDOT comments by February/March 2019, discussing and finalizing

TAC's list of priority projects by April 1st, SWRPC Board of Directors ratifying the list on April 9th, and the list being submitted to NHDOT by May 1st. J. B. Mack noted that the process is moving fast.

Leslie Casey asked if the government oversight costs of administering and awarding the TYP projects have ever been tracked, and suggested that it could be valuable information. Rhett Lamb commented that the TYP should be for projects that improve transportation infrastructure, but in practice it is focused on maintenance activities, and bridges seem to be priorities. Frank Sterling pointed out that the Route 101 project is an improvement project. J. B. Mack added that a few projects, such as the Winchester Street roundabout to Swanzey town line project is an improvement project as well.

J. B. Mack asked the Committee for their feedback as to whether all the projects listed on the TYP handout should remain on the list. Kendall Lane commented that since the projects are already on the TYP list, it is best to leave them on, since removing any would lose our region's place in line for funding. Lucy St. John pointed out that an existing project could move up the list if another farther up the list was removed; in that event the town would need to be notified. J. B. Mack suggested that it only made sense to remove a project if it was no longer relevant. He pointed out that all the projects on the list appear relevant.

Frank Sterling expressed his concern that the SWRPC region isn't receiving a fair share of the available funding, based on population size and percent road miles. He noted that it takes a lot of work to get projects approved for the TYP, and it has taken 25 years to get one bridge project to the point of construction.

IV. Regional Transportation Improvement Program

J. B. Mack presented an overview of the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP). The RTIP is a state requirement for the regional planning commissions, and is also a federal requirement for Metropolitan Planning Organizations. For SWRPC, the RTIP is included as a section of the *Southwest Connects* Long Range Transportation Plan. He described the four lists comprising the RTIP as programmed regional surface transportation capital projects, other programmed transportation projects, unfunded transportation projects, and funded corridor-based planning initiatives.

J. B. Mack went over the proposed RTIP update process. He has been in contact with NHDOT about updating this list once the new TYP has been approved. The proposed timeline includes determining if the updated lists are ready to be released at today's meeting, followed by SWRPC staff preparing the introduction and new maps for a 45-day public comment period. If released in time, the comment period would end before the TAC's November 5th meeting, and staff would report back any comments received at that TAC meeting. TAC would then forward the lists to the SWRPC Board of Directors for ratification in December.

J. B. Mack provided a brief overview including a map of RTIP projects, noting a high density of projects in the Peterborough area.

In reviewing the lists, TAC members expressed that there were a few projects on the "other programmed transportation projects" for the towns of Troy and Peterborough that should be on the "programmed regional surface transportation capital projects." Kevin Belanger discussed a road drainage project that the Town of Antrim is considering, that should be considered for the lists. J. B. Mack suggested that the project be submitted by NHDOT District IV office or the Town. Rhett Lamb suggested that the Fitzwilliam Route 12/Route 119 Intersection project be added to the list. Leandra MacDonald suggested an intersection on Old Peterborough Road in Peterborough that is in need of a flashing light be added to the list as well.

J. B. Mack asked if the Committee was comfortable moving forward with the 45-day comment period with the lists discussed today. Kendall Lane commented that with the edits provided today, the lists should be ready. J. B. Mack added that Committee members can also use the 45-day comment period to provide additional feedback.

Rhett Lamb asked for a description of the purpose of the RTIP. J. B. Mack explained that the purpose is to let the community know about transportation priorities. Kendall Lane asked if the Committee should consider projects on this list as input for the TYP. J. B. Mack replied yes and added that the TYP and RTIP are related processes but differ; TYP projects have detailed applications submitted for their projects, while the RTIP list doesn't have those requirements.

V. Updates

J. B. Mack referred to the agenda item in the meeting packet that provides updates on the following transportation-related matters:

- Hinsdale-Brattleboro Bridge Project
- Ashuelot Rail Trail Planning Pilot Project
- Intermodal Transportation Center Feasibility Study
- Peterborough NH 101 & US 202 Corridor Improvement Study
- Monadnock Region Coordinating Council
- Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation

J. B. Mack reviewed the items briefly and encouraged TAC members to contact him with any follow-up questions.

In addition to the updates above, J. B. Mack provided information on the upcoming Southwest Region Planning Commission Fall meeting, scheduled for October 9th at 5:00 p.m. at the Cheshire County Historical Society in Keene. The meeting program includes a discussion of the Jaffrey Dogleg and Hinsdale Brattleboro Bridge projects by their NHDOT project managers, as well as representatives from the citizen advisory committees for both projects speaking to the community impacts of the projects.

J. B. Mack also stated that NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) staff approached him about presenting on their Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) program at an upcoming TAC meeting. NHDES will have \$1 million in funds available in October 2018 through the program, which helps diesel equipment owners in New Hampshire reduce emissions. DERA provides partial funding for local/state governments and businesses to reduce emissions through idling reduction technologies; exhaust controls; or replacement of older on or off road diesel engines/vehicles/equipment with newer engines/vehicles/equipment.

Motion: To ask NH Department of Environmental Services to submit a written report on the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act program for consideration by TAC.

Motion by Leandra MacDonald, seconded by Edwin Smith. Approved by unanimous vote.

VI. Next Meeting: October 1, 2018

VII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebeckah Bullock
Community Development Specialist

Agenda Item II

Date: October 1, 2018
To: Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Staff

RE: Transportation Program Updates

Background

Since the TAC meeting on September 10th, there are not many updates to provide on the SWRPC transportation program. However, SWRPC staff is preparing for two transportation related meetings on September 25th and will report back on those meetings at the October 1st TAC meeting. These include 1) a kickoff meeting for the Advisory Committee for the Peterborough NH 101 & US 202 Corridor Improvement Initiative, and 2) SWRPC staff will be co-facilitating a meeting with the Windham Regional Commission between the Walpole Planning Board and Rockingham, VT Planning Commission to discuss the Vilas Bridge project and other matters.

Recommendation

For your information.

Date: October 1, 2018
To: Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Staff

RE: Transportation Alternatives Program – 2018 Round

Background

At the September 10th TAC meeting, SWRPC staff reported that NHDOT is requesting that the Commission review and rank Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) projects from the Southwest Region and submit a ranking of applications by November 10th. TAP projects were submitted to NHDOT from Hinsdale, Jaffrey, Keene, New Ipswich and Swanzey.

SWRPC's standard procedure for ranking TAP projects involves the following:

1. All TAC members are invited to score applications, however TAC members representing a municipality abstain from scoring that municipality's TAP application.
2. Proposals are scored using the existing TAP criteria and weights (minus the criteria that do not apply to regional planning commissions which include RPC rankings and socioeconomic considerations.
3. Project rankings are determined by averaging all relevant TAC scores and presented to the TAC for discussion and final ranking.

SWRPC staff are creating an online platform where TAC members can access TAP application materials and score the applications. The weblink to the platform will be presented at the October 1st meeting.

Recommendation

Follow SWRPC's standard procedure for ranking the 2018 round of TAP applications (described above), submit application scores by October 25th, and discuss scores and rankings at the November 5th TAC meeting.

Agenda Item IV

Date: October 1, 2018
To: Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Staff

RE: 2021-2030 Ten Year Transportation Plan

Background

At the October 1, 2018 meeting, staff will present new information SWRPC has received about the 2021-2030 Ten Year Plan since the September 10th meeting, present the results of the TAC member “homework” exercise relating to the weights assigned to TYP project criteria, and review the timeline for sending NHDOT SWRPC’s preliminary ranking of projects.

Recommendation

For your information.