


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
March 11, 2020

Members Present:

Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack Julie Chizmas, City of Nashua Wayne Husband, City of Nashua Peter Kohalmi, City of Nashua Camille Pattison, City of Nashua - NTS	John Savage, City of Nashua – NTS Daniel Hudson, City of Nashua Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham Brian Adams, Town of Wilton
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Others Present

Linda Dusenberry, NH DOT Tim White, NH DES	Leigh Levine, FHWA
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STAFF PRESENT

Gregg Lantos, MPO Coordinator Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner John Goeman, Regional Planner III	Jay Minkarah, Executive Director Derek Stahl, Planning Technician Sara Siskavich, Assistant Director
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CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Lantos called the meeting to order at 12:07 pm with a round of introductions.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 12TH, 2020 MEETING

Lantos referred to the minutes from February 12th, 2020 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1. Husband requested that one of his comments be reworded to state “Husband expressed concern that the addition of an eastbound travel lane was eliminated from the current scope of work based on one property owners’ concerns. If the property is sold to a future property owner who does not share these concerns, the benefits of the eastbound travel lane is lost based on concerns that no longer exist.”

Dusenberry also requested that the following statement by Jennifer Reczek be removed “Reczek stated that if the project doesn’t get approved through the STIP then the project change goes away but the 10 year plan process allows more time for it to be discussed”, as follow-up Reczek indicated she did not state this.

Gowan motioned with a second from Hudson to approve the minutes as amended from the February 12th, 2020 meeting. All were in favor and the motion passed.

LOCALLY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN – REVIEW OF FINDINGS

Waitkins and Goeman began the presentation on the LCTP with an overview and history of the plan. He stated the importance of the LCTP in that it strengthens the region’s ability to serve the transportation needs of the community. Understanding the communities needs allows for better coordination and adjustments to the current services as well as better recommendations and solutions to satisfy those needs. He stated the legal obligation under the FTA section 5310, enhanced mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities program, and that federal law requires projects selected under this funding to be included in a locally developed, coordinated public transit human services transportation plan involving participation by seniors, individuals with disabilities, and the general public. It also must include representatives of public, private, and nonprofit transportation and human services providers. In the past, these project funds have typically been used on Souhegan Valley Rides services as

well as NTS's support of this service. The planning process involved a convened steering committee, the creation of regional and town profiles, and public outreach through surveys, interviews, and meetings to identify community needs. Once the community needs were identified the final step was to generate strategies and prioritized projects for funding.

The indicators that were used to establish regional and town profiles included individuals with disabilities, elderly population, youth population, vehicle access, poverty, and income. Through the use of census data, it was found that the highest percentage of youth population was in Amherst, Brookline, and parts of Nashua. Vehicle access was found to be varying but that there was a larger percentage that do not have access. Poverty levels were found in concentrations in downtown Nashua and to a lesser degree in central Milford and certain tracts through Hudson and Merrimack. Household income was seen to follow a similar trend as poverty. Through the survey, it was found that the largest trip needs were for trips to the grocery/pharmacy, medical appointments, and specific destinations with a frequency of less than once a week or a few times a month. It was also found that the about 75% of riders do not need physical assistance. Service is limited in the western region and out to Peterborough and Manchester. Feedback also stated the need to adjust times of service earlier and later during week days and extended service on weekends. Interviews were conducted with medical facilities and human service agencies. The results from the medical facilities concluded that approximately 25% of patients face transportation challenges which leads to some missed appointments compromising the health of patients and increasing facility costs. There are no staff dedicated to transportation at these facilities and they have limited, non-sustainable funding for transportation. The human service agencies also had a similar number of clients with transportation issues which limits client access to services. Siskavich asked what, if any, qualifications there were for volunteer drivers. Waitkins responded that the drivers were vetted but that there were no other qualifications. Pattison asked where the weekly trip feedback was coming from and Waitkins stated that it came from a senior center in Merrimack. Levine stated he believed that Manchester transit worked cooperatively with certain grocery stores to set up routes among these stores with shared funding and whether there was potential for this in the Nashua region. Pattison confirmed that is the case with Manchester transit and could be a possibility in Nashua with additional funding.

Based on the regional and community profile analysis and the information gathered through the public outreach, community needs were categorized into three categories: rider needs, provider needs, and agency needs that don't provide transportation but may arrange it. In general, the riders have a need for key destinations inside and outside of the region, reduced wait times, weekly service to destinations outside NTS and SVTC areas, simplified paratransit application process, centralized access to information, and an increased awareness to younger populations. The NTS service area has a need for more mobile tech options and expanded service on weekends to employment centers. SVTC service area has a need for expanded fixed route service along 101A, adjusted service hours, and extended service to key destinations outside of the region. For providers, cooperative planning and funding, improved communication among providers, expanded volunteer driver network, and a fostered public-private partnership with regional employers are needed. Other organization needs are access to information about transportation resources, funding for vouchers/rides, and a coordinated system dedicated to transportation for medical facilities.

NASHUA TMA CERTIFICATION REVIEW

Lantos began reviewing the TMA certification review. Levine wanted to thank everyone for their cooperation and pointed out that there were accommodations along with recommendations that were outcomes from the review. Lantos stated that the final report should be out before next meeting and Levine offered that he would be willing to present for the next TTAC. Levine stated that the UPWP guidance document was more directed at DOT. Chizmas asked if blueprint about virtual public involvement as included. Levine responded saying that they recognize and promote the idea of virtual public involvement. Lantos asked whether NRPC could work along with NTS addressing the Civil Rights/ Title VI recommendations. Levine stated the need for discussion of how TIP projects were selected.

SCHEDULE FOR 2023-2032 TYP PROJECT SUBMISSIONS

Lantos began reviewing the timeline for the 2023-2032 TYP project submissions and potential project submissions. Lantos expressed his concerns with the project scoring process, questioning how you can compare a non-motorized project with a motorized project with safety concern using the example of Exit 5. Lantos recommended that if you have TAP projects in mind, apply for both the TAP and TYP funding to ensure project makes a list. White asked what the timetable was for approving current TYP. Dusenberry stated that typically in the past they have been approved in June.

NASHUA INTERREGIONAL TRANSIT EXPANSION STUDY

The meeting with NMCOG to review work scope and services being evaluated which included the Express bus, Local bus, and Shuttle buses from Alewife Station, Cambridge, and potentially other locations to major Nashua employers. Ridership estimation methodology for bus to rail service will use model previously developed and surveys from Boston Express riders are needed. Ridership estimations for transfer to Lowell buses will use the same procedure used in Nashua Transit Expansion Study and possible LRTA on board surveys. Data will be needed for existing employer-based shuttles is needed and will use Middlesex 3 Coalition as a primary source. Savage stated that the parking lot near pheasant lane mall would make it difficult for scheduling services due to the heavy traffic in the area. Pattison asked if a bus from Nashua to Rt 3 Burlington area was being looked into. Minkarah answered that the Rt 3 Burlington area was a location that was originally being looked at.

NHDOT, NHDES, FHWA UPDATES

NRPC – Waitkins: Hudson and Nashua communities concur with revisions

Lantos: The Hudson RSMS project is nearing completion.

Nashua – Put out Biking and Walking in Nashua survey

DOT – Amendment 3 to FWA end of the week.

DES – RFP VW fast charging, were looking for single occupant but the 3 submissions didn't make the requirements. Can request for info by Feb 28th on how to improve RFP and to put in better application next round. Written comments due March 16th.

ADJOURN

Gowan motioned with a second from Husbands to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 1:30pm.