


**NRPC APPROVED MINUTES**  
**NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**11/14/18**

**Members Present:**

Lincoln Daly, Town of Milford	John Savage, NTS
Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham	Camille Pattison, NTS
Wayne Husband, City of Nashua	Brian Groth, Town of Hudson
Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack	Mark Chamberlain, Town of Lyndeborough
Pete Kohalmi, City of Nashua	Linda Dusenberry, NHDOT
Julie Chizmas, City of Nashua	

**Others Present**

Karin Elmer, Town of Merrimack	Victoria Sheehan, Guest Speaker
Suzanne Fournier	Chris Waszczuk, Guest Speaker

**STAFF PRESENT**

Gregg Lantos, Principal Transp. Planner/MPO Coord.	Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner
Jay Minkarah, Executive Director	Cassie Mullen, Reg'l Planner/Mason Circuit Rider
Mason Twombly, Environmental Planner	

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Lantos called the meeting to order at 12:03pm with introductions

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE OCTOBER 10TH, 2018 MEETING**

Waitkins referred to the minutes of October 10, 2018 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1. He asked if there were any corrections; if not a motion for approval.

***Savage motioned with a second from Chizmas to approve the October 10th, 2018 TTAC minutes. Gowen abstained. All were in favor and the motion passed.***

**NEW HAMPSHIRE TEN YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROCESS.**

NRPC was pleased to have NHDOT Commissioner Victoria Sheehan attend this meeting as a guest speaker to discuss the upcoming cycle for the Ten-Year Transportation Plan Development. Victoria was accompanied by Chris Waszczuk, who was presenting with her as well.

Sheehan and Waszczuk began with a brief overview of the PowerPoint presentation. They stated that the outlook is not great, and we will be faced with some daunting challenges. DOT is trying to gain grassroots support for sustainable funding, because currently the U.S. relies on the gas tax which is a declining revenue since vehicles are becoming more and more fuel efficient.

***Draft TYP priorities (2021 to 2030)***

Waszczuk opened the PowerPoint presentations by reviewing the draft TYP priorities from 2021 to 2030:

1. Focus on pavement preservation
2. Focus on Red List bridges and bridge preservation
3. Dedicated TIFIA pledged funds for rural roads
4. Completion of I-93 Salem-Manchester and Exit 4A
5. \$50M total in 2029 and 2030 for RPC priorities
6. Fully constrained TYP (the FAST ACT ends in 2020)

Waszczuk also provided some background information so the group could understand the federal and state funding structure. Current federal aid programs under the FAST ACT include:

- NHPP
- STBG
- HSIP
- R-HCP
- CMAQ
- Metro
- NFP

Each federal program contains specific requirements on eligible uses. Although federal programs fund about 75% of projects, there are still about 1,150 miles of road in New Hampshire that are not eligible for federal aid. State money covers projects that are not eligible for federal aid.

### ***Upcoming obstacles***

Next Sheehan and Waszczuk discussed the major obstacles that New Hampshire and the Nation are going to face in the near future (explained below).

- Declining gas tax revenues. Sheehan and Waszczuk displayed a graphic featuring a line graph of the Highway Trust fund Receipts vs. Outlays. The graph illustrated how outlays are much higher than receipts. There are two major reasons behind this issue: 1.) the gas tax has not been increased since 1991 and 2.) Vehicles get much better mileage now or are electric, resulting in less trips to refuel. We are in dire need of a sustainable program at the federal level to secure funds for the nation. For example, Congress would have to increase the gas tax by 15 cents just maintain the current level of funding and eliminate the gap between receipts and outlays.
- Supplements from Congress. If congress stops supplementing the Highway Trust Fund, there will be a significant drop in funding (50% or more).
- Pending 2020 Rescission. Congress will be rescinding \$7.569 Billion in contract by authority on 7/1/2020 based on unobligated balances as of 9/30/2019. States do not have flexibility to determine which programs the rescission would come from. The impact to NH would be crippling. The main message to the communities is to be proactive and support DOT by taking a position and writing letters to give a local perspective. DOT wants to maintain a stronger connection with the Regional Planning Commissions moving forward.

### ***Turnpike Toll Credits***

The subject of toll credits was discussed next. Toll credits are earned when toll revenue is used to construct, rehabilitate, and/or maintain facilities to serve interstate commerce (entire turnpike system is eligible). Toll credits are a “soft match” that allow 100% federal funds to be used on a non-turnpike project. All federal aid projects in the draft TYP that require state match are proposed to use toll credits. At the end of FY17 the toll credit balance (surplus) was \$268 million.

There are several benefits of a Toll Increase. All increase in revenue (estimated at \$36 million annually) would be directed to turnpike capital and accelerating major turnpike projects. Users would directly benefit from capital investments, and over 54% of the increased toll revenue would be paid by out of state travelers (about \$20 million annually). Travel time, reliability and safety would improve, there would be job sustainment and creation in the construction agency, and there would be funding for the Type II sound wall program and TDM program. In addition, if toll revenue could be used for the expansion of the turnpike system to the Merrimack River Bridge crossing in Concord, \$212 million of federal funds would be freed up to use elsewhere across the state.

**Issues and Challenges**

Sheehan and Waszczuk gave the group a look ahead on issues and challenges for New Hampshire road condition and state bridge condition. Past years of a backlog of paving deficit reduced the state's overall pavement condition from a high of 82% of roads in good/fair condition to a low of 68% in good/fair condition. This is expected to rise to 76%. Regarding state bridges, currently 133 are red listed and by 2028 there is a projected addition of 244 more bridges to the red list. Fortunately, by 2028, 223 bridges are expected to be removed from the red list. Overall the number of bridges being added to the red list has grown. There is very limited state funding for roads that are not eligible for federal aid, and there is no funding for corridor improvement projects. Bridge and pavement improvements are typically funded in the TYP. Otherwise, the state's highway fund is structurally insolvent which contributes to the state not being able to catch up with the growing backlog of infrastructure requiring attention.

**Unfunded Needs**

The presentation was closed with a discussion regarding unfunded needs in New Hampshire and cases that require additional revenue. Overall these needs require \$76 million a year of additional funding. These needs include:

- Operations - \$20M
- State Red List Bridges - \$16M
- Municipal Red List Bridges - \$8M
- Rehabilitation/Reconstruction of non-federal aid eligible state roads - 12M
- Replacement of TIFIA pledged pavement (2026) - 12M
- Funding for culvert replacement program - \$2M
- Funding for state rail trails - \$2M
- Funding for corridor improvements - \$ Undeterminable
- Restoration of state funding for rural transit - \$200K

After Sheehan and Waszczuk concluded the presentation, there was a brief discussion afterwards. Husband brought up how Exit 5 on the Everett Turnpike that isn't eligible for turnpike funds, to which Waszczuk recommended that Nashua work toward making the project a regional priority due to how dangerous the exit is in attempts to find funding. Pattison inquired about the role DOT would like the RPCs to play moving forward. Sheehan responded that the public needs to be educated on the current issues and how infrastructure is an investment, and that the RPCs are needed to assist with this by doing public outreach. Sheehan added that communities are too focused on what is being spent instead of focusing on the investment. Chizmas then brought up the issue of having large projects with the current TYP structure not allowing for phasing of these larger endeavors. Sheehan and Waszczuk stated that phased projects are the reason DOT would like to push for corridor funding and studies.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was discussed.

**ADJOURN**

Lantos asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

***Chizmas motioned with a second from Chamberlain to adjourn. All were in favor and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 1:39pm.***