

March 16, 2016

NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



Program Highlights

In this Issue

- **Probe Data**
- **MTP Projects Update**
- **Preliminary Traffic Count Results on Broad Street Parkway**
- **Introducing NRPC's GIS Open Data Portal**
- **Pavement Condition Map Templates**
- **Regional Utility Mapping**
- **Hudson Emergency Response Time Forecasting**
- **Renewable Energy Tool Belt Helps With Municipal Decision Making**
- **2016 HHW Season Begins April 23**
- **Plan4Health Nashua**

Letter from the Executive Director

NRPC's 33rd Annual Legislative Forum was held on March 2, 2016. This year's theme, The Future of Energy in the NRPC Region yielded a record attendance with over 85 participants. Attendees included representatives from local town boards, elected officials, the Mayor of Nashua, over 20 members of the New Hampshire legislature, and staff from the NH Congressional delegation.

The event featured several displays of NRPC's work related to energy aggregation purchasing and the Northeast Energy Direct Pipeline including products developed through a grant with The Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). This grant has provided NRPC the opportunity to:

- ◆ Promote Best Practices Regarding Pipelines and Land-Use Planning
- ◆ Engage Local Fire/First Responders
- ◆ Advance Public and Inter-Organizational Data Exchange

The forum also featured work by the Hollis Energy Committee. Mike Leavitt and other members of the committee provided a summary information on the successful conversion of town facilities to biomass heat as well as their steps towards installing solar photovoltaic arrays.

The marquee event of the evening was a panel discussion featuring Kate Epsen, Executive Director with the NH Sustainable Energy Association, Jim O'Reilly, Director of Public Policy at Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships and Clay Mitchell, Lecturer at UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture.

Kate Epsen shared her knowledge on net metering and how to work with decision makers in the legislature to improve opportunity for an alternative energy infrastructure in New Hampshire.

Jim O'Reilly led a discussion on energy efficiency in the region and working with decision makers in the legislature to improve the State of New Hampshire's energy efficiency record and the role energy efficiency can play in addressing the difficulty in attracting and retaining businesses in the State.

Lastly, Clay Mitchell shared his expertise on energy in the region and the challenges and opportunities to improving the renewable energy infrastructure at the state and local level. He also provided insight on how to work with decision makers in the legislature to work collaboratively to shape our energy future.

NRPC would like to thank all that attended and look forward to another record breaking turnout for next year!

Tim Roache, Executive Director

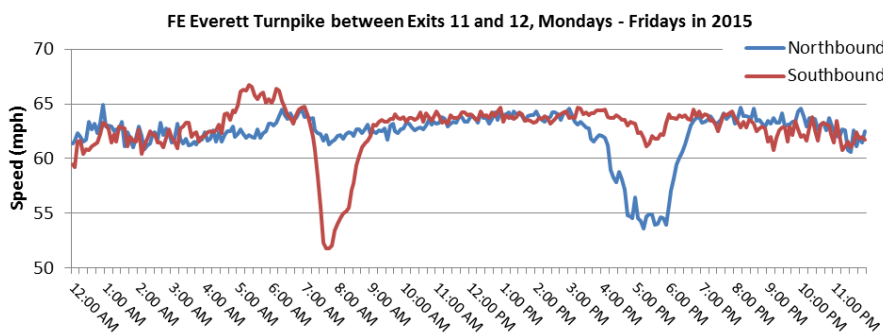
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Probe Data - Beginning in 2013, the Federal Highway Administration acquired a national data set of vehicle probe-based average travel times for use in performance measurement. This National Performance Measurement Research Data Set (NPMRDS) is available to States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations at no cost. Passenger vehicle-based travel time data is obtained from a number of sources including mobile phones, vehicles, and portable navigation devices; freight-based data is obtained through embedded fleet systems. NPMRDS data is available for roads located on the National Highway System, covering about 245 miles in the NRPC region.

NRPC is planning to use the NPMRDS for the development of performance measures to identify the location and severity of congestion and evaluate the transportation system operating conditions. For example, simple graphing of calculated speeds can identify times of recurring congestion; the graph below clearly shows when weekday congestion occurs between Exits 11 and 12 on the FE Everett Tpk.

Various performance measures can be calculated using the NPMRDS. If hourly traffic volumes are available, they can be used with the



NPMRDS travel times to calculate vehicle delay for a given road segment. Delays can be calculated over different time periods, such as monthly, quarterly or yearly. This data will be useful in quantifying project benefits such as the replacement of the main-line toll booths in Bedford (north of Exit 12) with Open Road Tolling.

MTP Projects Update - As part of the ongoing Transportation Planning Process, NRPC is looking to ensure we are considering transportation needs beyond the Ten Year Plan and update the Metropolitan Transportation Plan project listing. To do so, we are working with the TTAC and communities to help us determine what the top transportation priorities are for the region? Are there any projects in the current MTP that are no longer regional priorities? Are there other projects beyond those identified for consideration in the Ten Year Plan that should be added to the list? Is there any new information we should consider?

To answer these questions, NRPC is planning to host a series of public meetings during May and early June 2016 across the region. These big picture conversations will focus on regional corridors: The Turnpike and access across the Merrimack River, the 101 and 101A corridors, and an additional conversation dedicated to rural transportation needs.

NRPC Commissioners are asked to help get the word out as the meetings are scheduled. The end goal is to put forth a list of project priorities for the NRPC region that best achieve the goals of the MTP and focus beyond the Ten Year Plan. The final draft project listing will be complete and posted for public comment mid-November of this year for adoption at the Commission's December 2016 meeting. For more information, please contact Jen Cysz at jenc@nashuarpc.org or Julie Chizmas at juliec@nashuarpc.org.

Preliminary Traffic Count Results on Broad Street Parkway



Preliminary traffic counts taken on Pine Street just north of Central Street indicate that vehicle counts jumped approximately 100 percent immediately following the opening of the Broad Street Parkway. Pine Street leads directly to the southern terminus of the parkway. NRPC will continue to monitor vehicle counts at this point and at others surrounding the parkway throughout the year.

NRPC Upcoming Transportation Activities:

- North Bridge Summit—Northern Crossing of the Merrimack River

NRPC Ongoing Transportation Activities:

- Travel Demand Modeling
- Congestion Management
- RSMS SADES Pilot Program

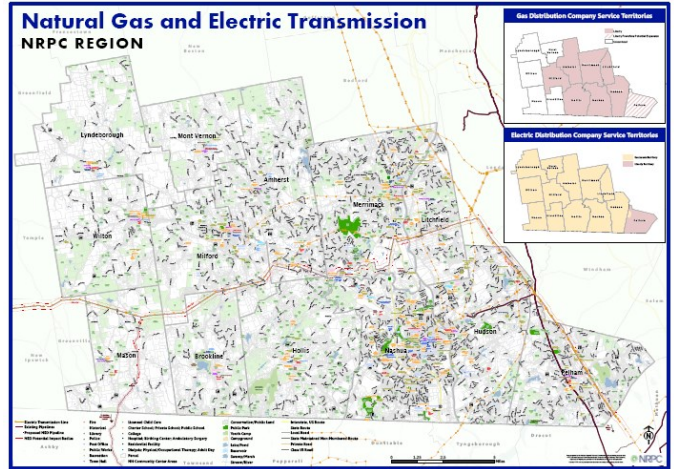
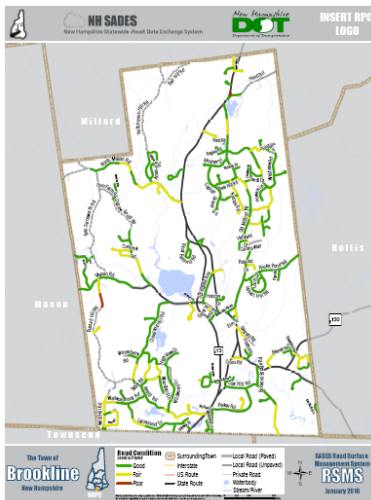
Introducing NRPC's GIS Open Data Portal

NRPC has made commonly-requested GIS datalayers available for no-charge download using ESRI's Open Data Portal framework.

This online application is targeted towards GIS users in the Region who wish to access all or a filtered subset of NRPC's authoritative and fully documented GIS data in a variety of formats including shapefile, KML, spreadsheet, and .csv. Check it out at data.nashuarpc.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets

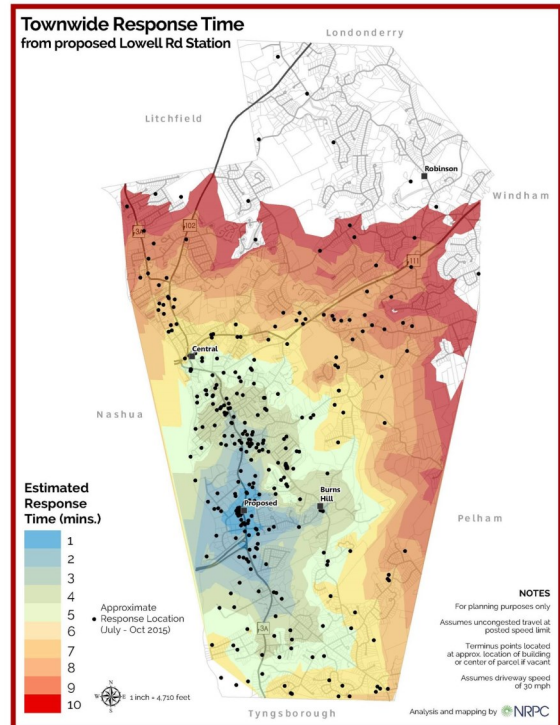
Pavement Condition Map Templates

NHDOT's statewide Road Surface Management System (RSMS) methodology is moving to the NH Statewide Asset Data Exchange System (NHSADES) administered by the UNH Technology Transfer Center. At the request of NHDOT, NRPC was pleased to create standard pavement condition map templates to facilitate existing relative road condition (good, fair, poor) to support RSMS pilot projects being conducted by all NH RPCs.



Regional Utility Mapping To support regional land-use and emergency preparedness planning NRPC has mapped natural gas and electric transmission infrastructure and hard-to-evacuate facilities (e.g. schools, daycares, major medical). These features were featured on posters displayed at the NRPC Legislative Forum in March.

Hudson Emergency Response Time Forecasting



NRPC's GIS staff recently worked with the Hudson Fire Department to forecast emergency response times from a proposed new fire station on Lowell Road. With the aid of ESRI GIS and TransCad modeling software, NRPC mapped every fire department call location from the last six months to predict emergency travel times.

NRPC Upcoming GIS Activities:

- Recreational opportunities mapping including GIS trails
- GIS Open Data Portal Addition: Conserved Lands
- Standard Map Update
- NTS Ridership Prediction Model Update

NRPC Ongoing GIS Services:

- Regional GIS Data Development
- GIS Brownbag Series
- Interactive Online Mapping
- Travel Demand Modelling
- Downloadable Data and Maps
- Custom Mapping

Renewable Energy Tool Belt Helps With Municipal Decision Making - Imagine you are a Local Energy Committee member. You have been tasked with implementing the Energy chapter of your town's Master Plan. You'd like to focus on the recommendation to increase your town's renewable energy use. What would be the most effective way to do that? Should you recommend that the town install its own renewable energy system? Or would it be better to purchase green power directly from an electricity supplier? How would you make the decision?

Imagine next that you are a Facilities Committee member. You are planning for a new Fire Station in town and you'd like it to incorporate renewable energy. Solar companies call you daily to get your business, but is solar really the best option for the building? Would biomass heating work even better? How would you start to compare the two?

These are questions communities across NH face as they work to increase their use of renewable energy. Until now, there has not been a tool to help them begin to compare renewable energy options. With that in mind, the Nashua Regional Planning Commission, in partnership with the Local Energy Solutions Work Group, is developing the "Renewable Energy Tool Belt." The Tool Belt will consist of a series of worksheets and short decision guides that will help communities to compare production potential and return on investment among various renewable energy options. The Nashua Regional Planning Commission is seeking input from municipalities to help develop the Renewable Energy Tool Belt. If you have experience making decisions about renewable energy or you anticipate going through this process in the near future, contact Jill Longval, jill@nashuarpc.org.

2016 HHW Season Begins April 23 - The first Household Hazardous Waste collection of 2016 will be held on Saturday April 23 from 8:00AM to 12:00PM at the Nashua Public Works Garage, 9 Stadium Drive, Nashua. Visit www.nashuarpc.org/hhw for the remainder of the 2016 collection schedule, including a new event in Pelham on August 27. Residents of Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Merrimack, Milford, Mont Vernon, Nashua, Pelham, and Windham are welcome to attend any collection.

There is a \$10 user fee per vehicle, which covers up to 10 gallons or 20 pounds of waste. Residents who bring more than this amount will be charged accordingly to help offset the additional costs. A variety of common household hazardous waste (HHW) products are accepted, including non-latex paints, solvents, oven cleaners, pool chemicals, pesticides, drain openers, and auto chemicals. For a complete list of accepted items, visit www.nashuarpc.org/hhw or call 603-424-2240.

Latex paint is not accepted at collection events; instead it should be dried out and disposed of at your local landfill or transfer station. Electronics and medications are also not accepted at HHW collection events.

Plan4Health Nashua - NRPC staff recently presented the findings of a comprehensive Regulatory Audit as well as a series of Traffic Stress Maps to the Nashua Planning Board on March 3rd. The final touches are currently being made to a comprehensive Complete Streets Guide. This is an engaging guide to educate the public, board members and elected officials on the benefits of Complete Streets and an array of techniques to achieve them. If you are interested in learning more, please attend the upcoming Complete Streets training on Thursday, March 24 from 8:00-10:00 am at the Nashua City Hall Auditorium.

NRPC Land Use & Environmental Upcoming Activities

- Nashua Farmers Market Feasibility Studies
- Parks & Playground Mapping Guidebook

NRPC Land Use & Environmental Ongoing Activities:

- Development Review & Planning Services to Mason, Wilton & Litchfield
- Master Plan Update Services
- Household Hazardous Waste Program
- Regional Competitive Electricity Purchase Aggregation

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