



**MINUTES- NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
6/16/04**

Members Present: Steve Williams, NRPC
Becky Ohler, DES
Susan Klasen, City of Nashua Engineering Dept.
John Whittaker, Nashua Transit System
Bruce Berry, Amherst DPW
Bill Parker, Milford Planning
Art LeBlanc, Hollis DPW

Others Present: Camille Pattison, NRPC Transit Planner
Ryan Friedman, NRPC Transportation Planner GIS
Matt Waitkins, NRPC Transportation Planner
Mark Archambault, NRPC Circuit Rider for Hollis/Brookline
Betsy Hahn, NRPC Regional Planner
Angie Rapp, NRPC Environmental Planner
Steve Wagner, NRPC Circuit Rider for Litchfield/Wilton

Meeting Opened and review of Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Camille Pattison at 3:04 PM. Pattison asked the Committee if there were any corrections to the minutes from the 4/21/04 meeting. John Whittaker moved to accept the minutes and Bill Parker seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Regional Model Update

Ryan Friedman stated that NRPC recently completed an update to its base-year regional travel demand model. For the base year (2002), the model is calibrated to recent traffic counts across the region so that current travel patterns are represented as accurately as possible. A working regional model has many applications, including the forecasting of changes in traffic flow as a result of new roads, residential developments and employment centers. An important point to note is that NRPC's updated model is far more detailed than previous versions, allowing us to analyze projects not only on a regional and town-wide level, but also at a much smaller scale.

In addition to changes in population and changes to the road network itself, projects that involve commercial development can also be simulated. For instance, a community might want to study the traffic flow resulting from a new shopping center or office park. Using trip generation rates based on the types of businesses being proposed, the model will add the correct number of trips to the zone in order to predict the increase in traffic in the surrounding areas. Also, NRPC is currently developing future year networks which include regional and local projects in the Ten Year Plan as well as future population and employment forecast data to the year 2025. This data will allow staff to analyze projects under not only the current conditions but under future conditions as well.

Recently, two communities presented NRPC with projects that demonstrate this capability. The Town of Merrimack wanted to analyze the traffic effects of the upcoming Shattuck Hills Estates development located in the Southwest corner of town, behind Home Depot. The development includes the construction of a new road which would connect Greenleaf Street to Erik Street. The Town wanted to see how much cut-through would take place from the northern part of Merrimack out to Route 101A, bypassing the Continental Blvd - Amherst St intersection. While volumes on Erik and Greenleaf did increase, much of that can be attributed to the trips being generated from the new households associated with the development, mostly heading south out to Route 101A. Conversely, volumes on Dena Avenue and Dahl Road north of the development increased only slightly, leading



to the conclusion that the new road was not being used as a cut-through for trips originating in North Merrimack. Most trips heading north appear to end at Fidelity, off Continental Blvd, and hardly any trips begin or end in the residential areas of North Merrimack.

The NRPC Regional Model was also recently used to study the traffic effects of temporarily closing Tallant Rd in Pelham in order to do bridge work just east of Mammoth Rd (Route 128). The Town wanted to see if closing the road would lead to dramatic increases in traffic in the town center. Most traffic used Brookview Drive as an east-west connection and the town center saw little to no increase at all.

Long Range Transportation Plan

Camille Pattison stated that the NRPC staff is in the process of updating the Long Range Transportation Plan for the Region. The plan is updated every other year and covers a twenty-year planning period. This update will include years 2005 through 2025. In previous years, NRPC has published one document with the following three sections: the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Plan, and the Air Quality Analysis. However, for increased flexibility and ease in locating information, this year's update will produce these three components as individual documents.

The list of proposed projects was mailed with the agenda packet. The list is broken down into three planning periods: 2005-2007, 2008-2014, and 2015-2024. Projects included in years 2005-2007 are part of the Transportation Improvement Program (the first three years of the State Ten Year Plan), projects included in years 2008-2014 are part of the State Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan, and projects planned for years 2015-2024 are included as part of NRPC's Long Range Transportation Plan. It is anticipated that the public comment period and public hearing will be conducted this summer.

Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update

Matt Waitkins presented the Implementation Component, the last major component of the Plan, to the Committee. The implementation strategy is the process by which the goals and objectives of the plan will be accomplished. This component includes an implementation schedule, as well as recommendations for the management, coordination and evaluation effort that will be necessary to facilitate implementation. This component is broken down into three segments.

1. **Action Plan:** The implementation strategy for this plan was developed based on the assumption that the proposed recommendations can be achieved in three phases; short-term (<5 years), mid-term (6-10 years) and long-term (10+ years).
2. **Management, Coordination and Evaluation of Progress:** The overriding purpose of this plan is to increase the incidence of bicycling and walking in the region for destination-oriented trips. This goal will only be reached when the recommendations laid out in the plan are implemented by the agencies that have a mandate to effect such change. A number of entities may assume this responsibility, ranging from state and local government, to NRPC (advisory capacity) to local businesses and school districts. There is currently no coordination at the regional level for implementing any kind of bicycle network and the level of commitment for improving the atmosphere for bicycling and walking locally varies from town to town. The NRPC should work with key local officials, business representatives and private citizens to translate the goals and policies of this plan into reality. An assessment of progress made towards achieving the goals of this plan should be conducted on a regular basis. The assessment effort must be given serious consideration in order to assure the progress of the improvements made in accordance with the recommendations in this plan. Accomplishments and setbacks will be noted, and goals and strategies will be revised accordingly.



3. **Funding:** The recommendations contained in this plan require funding and program support. Some improvements can be part of regular roadway maintenance. For example, making sure that travel corridors are well defined with the proper pavement markings can be part of the annual DPW maintenance schedule. The major goal is to provide consistent funding for the bicycle and pedestrian transportation projects and programs.

The next step is to distribute a draft of plan at a future TTAC meeting and incorporate comments. The intent of this plan is to provide guidance for the planning, development, and implementation of safe, usable facilities for bicycle and pedestrian transportation in the Nashua region. This plan will integrate bicycle and pedestrian travel into the regional transportation system, and it will serve as the bicycle and pedestrian element of the NRPC long-range transportation plan.

Other Business

Becky Ohler stated that the Air Quality Action Days are set Statewide. To date there has not been a day declared. Becky also stated that DES will test public and private fleets of vehicles for free. The project was made possible through CMAQ funding. The community just needs to contact her office to schedule an appointment. DES is currently working on a "No Idling" program to decrease emissions.

Next Meeting, August 18 at 3 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:55 PM.