


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
June 10, 2020

Members Present:

Mark Chamberlain, Town of Lyndeborough Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack Julie Chizmas, City of Nashua Wayne Husband, City of Nashua Daniel Hudson, City of Nashua Pete Kohalmi, City of Nashua Linda Dusenberry, NH DOT	John Savage, City of Nashua – NTS Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham Tim White, NH DES Lincoln Daley, Town of Milford Leigh Levine, FHWA Joan Cudworth, Town of Hollis Jim Battis, Town of Hudson
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Others Present

STAFF PRESENT

Gregg Lantos, MPO Coordinator Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner Mason Twombly, Regional-Environmental Planner	Jay Minkarah, Executive Director Derek Stahl, Planning Technician
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CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Lantos called the meeting to order at 12:06 pm and went the roll call of attendees by community/organization. The protocol for participation in the virtual meeting was presented. It was determined that a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 11TH, 2020 MEETING

Lantos referred to the minutes from May 13th, 2020 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1. There were no comments and the minutes were determined to be approved.

Gowan motioned with a second from Chamberlain to approve the minutes from the March 11th, 2020 meeting. All were in favor and the motion passed.

TYP PROCESS UPDATE

Lantos began by stating that NRPC has notified all necessary personnel that the new biennial round of TYP project submissions is now underway. Lantos stated that the project submission forms should be available in the very near future. He asks to continue internal discussions about possible project submissions. Lantos noted that it is still unknown whether or not TAP will have a project submission process this year; therefore it is strongly encouraged that any project that may be considered for TAP funding be submitted in the TYP and can be later removed if selected for TAP. Chizmas asked to clarify that if the project needs to be completed within 15 years and could be eligible for CMAC/TAP if it should be submitted for TYP. Lantos reiterated that it should be submitted in TYP and can later be removed if alternative funding becomes available. Minkarah added that this is just a suggestion and not mandatory by any means. Lantos asked Dusenberry if there were to be a project removed from the TYP if we would be able to replace that project with another project. Dusenberry answered that yes, typically in the past when an RPC removes a project they have the ability to replace that project. Lantos began going through the remainder of the schedule. In July submissions will be due from municipalities.

In September, NRPC staff will complete project scoring and ranking with review from the TTAC. December 4th the draft project submissions will be ready. In January of 2021, the list of projects will be submitted to be reviewed for project cost by NHDOT through March. The transmittal of the final NRPC submittal to NHDOT will occur at the end of April. Chizmas asked about the funding and allocation and that it seems like most of the funding come from Federal funds. Specifically, in regard to a possible train station in Nashua, Waitkins stated that operations would be more CMAC/TAP funding and that it might be clear after the presentation on the project selection criteria. Lantos then asked communities if they have any possible projects for submissions:

Hollis – No Projects

Hudson – No Projects

Lyndeborough – No Projects

Merrimack – No TYP Projects. Plan to resubmit TAP Project in TAP.

Milford – Intersection improvements at Nashua St and Ponemah Hill Rd. Also, improvements in circle over bridge.

Nashua – Future train station at Crown St and other improvements around Crown St preparing for train station.

Pelham – Possible sidewalk expansion off bridge on Willow St. A pedestrian bridge over Beaver Brook. Main St bridge with sidewalk expansion.

Waitkins then began an overview of the TYP and the project review criteria. The TYP is a fiscally-constrained program of state and federal funded transportation projects. It is updated biennially pursuant to the requirements of New Hampshire RSA 240. The TYP includes projects related to roadway improvements, bicycle and pedestrian travel, public transportation, aviation, and natural hazard resiliency. The process in which projects are identified and prioritized is lead by each of the nine regional planning commissions throughout New Hampshire. The criteria included in the review process is intended to help the RPC's prioritize projects and can be weighted to reflect regional needs. The criterion will be scored by project "Need" and project "Impact" and will receive a score of 1-10 (10 being the highest level of demand/impact). The first criterion is Safety and can be defined as a historical analysis of the safety performance of any location over the past 5 year period for all modes and also a forward looking analysis of how the countermeasures proposed as part of a project would improve safety performance for all modes. The criterion Mobility can be defined as a historical analysis of the mobility need and performance of a location for all modes as well as a forward looking analysis of how interventions proposed as part of a project would improve the mobility performance for all modes. Network Significance can be defined as the extent to which the project is regionally significant based on traffic volume, and the importance of the facility to the local and regional transportation system. The State of Repair criterion is defined as the degree to which the project improves infrastructure condition in the project area and the degree to which the project impacts NHDOT/municipal maintenance. The Equity, Environmental Justice, and Accessibility criterion is the degree to which a project benefits traditionally underserved populations and ensures accessibility by all potential users. Economic development can be defined as the degree to which a project supports economic development needs and opportunities at the local and regional levels. It can also mean the degree to which the project impacts the movement of goods. Lastly, Support can be defined as the degree of support for the project at the local, regional, and statewide levels. Waitkins concluded by asking members to complete a 1 question survey ranking the criterion from most important to least important for weighting purposes.

TRAVEL TRENDS IN CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

Lantos began discussing the current travel trends given the current environment due to Covid-19. He stated that the change in traffic trends can have an impact on numerous areas including transportation plans and programming, an example being the transit expansion study. The system wide totals for weekly traffic have gone from its lowest percent change in mid-April, where it was down 57.6%, to now the last week of May it is down 34.1% from its normal traffic level. The permanent count data shows that the average weekday totals for the

Turnpike at the Bedford Toll is down 41.6%, Exit 5 to Exit 6 in Nashua is down 37.7%, and US 3 (DW Highway) North of Hilton Dr in Merrimack is down 27.4%. Lantos referred to attachment 3c which displays the answers to the question "Thinking ahead to when Massachusetts reopens after the worst of the outbreak, do you expect you will do each of the following more, less or about the same amount as you did before the outbreak?". The biggest changes can be seen from people who would typically ride the subway, bus, or com rail who would rather walk or drive alone following the outbreak. Minkarah reiterated the fact that many existing transit users are planning on changing to driving alone and how this could cause huge impacts within our region, specifically, the rail extension planning as well as the impacts of congestions on highways. Lantos asked Savage if there was any early ridership data since starting back up. Savage responded that NTS is currently seeing about 25% of what they would have typically seen back before Covid. It also has dropped the number of paratransit rides from about 130 trips to 30.

NHDOT, NHDES, FHWA UPDATES

There were no municipal updates.

DOT – No DOT updates.

DES – White stated that the time to submit applications for the Clean Diesel Program deadline is June 3rd. All of the info is on the website and if needed can contact him for questions.

ADJOURN

Chizmas motioned with a second from Gowan to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 1:22pm.