

May 26, 2022 Project Updates

Seacoast Transportation Corridors Vulnerability Analysis (STCVA): RPC has completed work on the STCVA and the final document has been uploaded to the website (www.therpc.org/stcva). This project worked with the New Hampshire Coastal Program, NHDOT, and other stakeholders to conduct an analysis of the impacts of sea-level rise related flooding on the transportation infrastructure in the seacoast. The vulnerability analysis will form the basis of a long-term adaptation framework incorporating coastal hazards and prioritizing resilience in state and local transportation planning. A webinar on March 31 provided an overview of the project as well as discussing findings and recommendations and can be viewed on YouTube (<https://youtu.be/UI3SToZ4xsY>). Staff has also been presenting project findings to the Coastal Adaptation Workgroup (CAW) (3/17), the Seabrook-Hampton Estuary Alliance (SHEA) (4/19), NHDOT Project Review Committee (4/20), Hampton Falls Planning Board (4/26), and Hampton Planning Board (5/18). (*Dave Walker dwalker@therpc.org*).

NH Seacoast Greenway: – Staff from RPC and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (NPS/RTCA) have been meeting with municipal officials in the NHSG corridor communities about potential connections between the rail trail and key destinations in each town. The most recent meetings in May have been in Greenland and North Hampton. Greenland is interested to create a trailhead at the crossing of Breakfast Hill Road. NHDOT identified new State owned land here that came with the rail corridor purchase that can support a small trailhead parking area. Staff will work with NHDOT and Greenland to address encroachment issues here. In April staff gave a presentation on the NH Seacoast Greenway at the NH ACEC Technology Transfer Conference jointly with staff from NHDOT and GPI. Staff also submitted a letter to Congressman Pappas’ office supporting the City of Portsmouth’s Community Project (earmark) request for funding to construct two trailheads with parking and pave the trail within City limits. Trail surface along most of the corridor in New Hampshire will remain stone dust, though is paved on adjacent sections in Salisbury, Newburyport and most more urban areas of the East Coast Greenway. (*Scott Bogle – sbogle@therpc.org*)

Hampton Falls (29610): This study that considered options to address congestion on US 1 through the town center in Hampton Falls was recently completed. An advisory committee was formed and met several times to discuss various aspects of the project. Two public information sessions were held, and a final public meeting is planned to cover the recommendations. Based on feedback from the community, widening of US 1 through the Hampton Falls village is not desired and other methods to try and address the congestion will be prioritized. The final report is available on the RPC website: www.therpc.org/corridorstudies (*Dave Walker dwalker@therpc.org*).

Seabrook-Hampton Bridge Replacement (15904): The Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project was submitted to FHWA for review and permitting and on March 30, 2022 the Federal Highway Administration issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the project. NHDOT is proceeding with final design of a replacement that is fixed (non-movable), is 48 feet off the water, aligned to the west of the current structure, and would widen the navigational channel to 150 feet. The bridge itself will be 50 feet wide with two travel lanes, 8-foot shoulders, and 6-foot sidewalks with bump outs at some piers. Private property impacts are be minimal although there are some

environmental impacts to be mitigated. The life-cycle cost of the new structure is estimated at \$71-\$75 million and the project would take approximately 3 years to construct. The additional funding identified in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will allow this project to proceed more rapidly and without requiring any bonding. The project is anticipated to advertise for construction in September 2023 with construction beginning in 2024. (Dave Walker dwalker@therpc.org).

Hampton 40797: The Ocean Boulevard reconstruction project continues to make progress towards construction. A Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting was held on January 27, 2022 where the NHDOT Project Manager and Consulting Engineers (HDR) covered progress on the environmental process, data collection, and the draft purpose and need statement. The next PAC meeting will occur on May 26, 2022 and will be a workshop format with efforts geared towards finalizing the purpose and need and beginning discussions of improvement options and alternatives for the corridor. (Dave Walker dwalker@therpc.org).

Age Friendly Communities Initiative: Community surveys are nearing completion in five of the six assessment communities and thus far have garnered nearly 1200 responses. Staff have been analyzing survey data and working with local steering committees to plan Community Forums for May-July where survey results will be shared and public input gathered on strategies to address needs identified in the surveys. Thus far Forums have been held in Exeter and Stratham with events planned in Fremont and Hampstead in June and Portsmouth in July. The survey will be fielded in Hampton beginning next week. (Scott Bogle - sbogle@therpc.org)

Statewide Assessment of Senior Transportation Needs: Staff are working with the State Commission on Aging, the Alliance for Healthy Aging, TransportNH and SNHPC on a scope of work and budget for a statewide assessment of transportation needs for older adults in New Hampshire over the next 20 years. This has been recommended by the State Commission on Aging to the Governors Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) for funding with dollars received by the state under the American Rescue Plan. The project has grown out of the thumbnail Transit Needs Assessment RPC developed with COAST in late 2019. While that initial assessment relied on national assumptions from AARP and CTAA on the percentage of non-driving seniors and estimated trip frequency, the goal of this project will be to develop New Hampshire specific needs and strategies.
