

## February 25, 2021 Project Updates

**Seacoast Transportation Corridors Vulnerability Analysis (STC):** RPC is working with the New Hampshire Coastal Program, NHDOT, and other stakeholders to build off the efforts of the Tides To Storms and C-RISE studies, and the Coastal Risks and Hazards Commission to conduct an analysis of the transportation infrastructure in the seacoast anticipated to be impacted by additional flooding due to sea level rise and climate change. The project has created an advisory committee to enhance coordination across state, regional, and local entities working to address transportation networks vulnerable to coastal hazards. The committee met once before the COVID-19 lockdown began and a second meeting was held on November 6, 2020. The vulnerability analysis is in progress and will form the basis for establishing a long-term adaptation framework to incorporate coastal hazards and prioritize resilience in state and local transportation planning and construction. That component will include some estimates regarding the costs of improvements as well as methods for assessing resiliency as part of the project selection process. Staff met with NHDOT, the Coastal Zone Program, and UNH researchers to provide an update on progress and gain feedback from the State agencies and is incorporating that feedback into the analysis. While progress has been slowed somewhat due to COVID-19, the project is still expected to last approximately 18 months and conclude in Summer 2021. (Dave Walker [dwalker@therpc.org](mailto:dwalker@therpc.org)).

**NH Seacoast Greenway** – We learned last week that NHDOT has given GPI engineers a notice to proceed with preliminary design for the Hampton-Portsmouth segment of the NHSG (Hampton-Portsmouth 26485) after a contract approval process lasting over a year. If things proceed as anticipated this would mean going to bid in spring 2022, construction commencing summer 2022 and construction completion in late 2023. McFarland-Johnson has been under contract working on environmental permitting since early 2020. Staff are also developing a proposal to the National Park Service Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program for technical assistance in planning for trailhead design, community connectivity, wayfinding signage and communications strategy. This would build on recent staff work on trailhead access. Parcel data were mapped for each crossing area to identify adjacent municipal or state-owned land that could be used for trailhead parking. Crossings were identified as having walk-on only access, parking potential, or not access potential based on grade separation or private crossings. (Scott Bogle – [sbogle@therpc.org](mailto:sbogle@therpc.org))

**State Planning & Research Grant Proposal:** In early February staff submitted a joint application to NHDOT with COAST and SRPC for FTA Section 5305 State Planning & Research funding to complete two transit planning projects over the next two fiscal years. For SFY22 the proposed project is an analysis of pedestrian and bicycle access to COAST transit stops. For SFY23 the project is an update to the Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan for the Greater Seacoast RCC. (Scott Bogle – [sbogle@therpc.org](mailto:sbogle@therpc.org))

**Road Surface Management Systems Data Collection:** In past years, RPC has worked with NHDOT and the UNH Technology Transfer center to conduct Road Surface Management Systems (RSMS) data for interested communities to help them manage and time road surface improvements. With the current COVID-19 situation and the need for continued physical distancing, data collection is not

possible at this time as it requires multiple people in the same vehicle. If conditions change for summer 2021, communities will be updated and the process will be started. If interested in learning more or signing up for a future collection season, please contact Christian Matthews ([cmatthews@therpc.org](mailto:cmatthews@therpc.org)).

**Kittery-Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Joint Land Use Study (JLUS):** The Town of Kittery and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, with the assistance of the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission (SMPDC) completed the project to define compatibility issues that could impede military operations or continued regional growth around the shipyard. The project developed a set of strategies addressing communications, environmental and economic resilience, transportation, housing, and other land use issues and have been finalized into a series of recommendations and an implementation plan. The Implementation phase of the project will begin this fall and RPC staff will continue to participate. All documentation is available on the SMPDC website, [www.smpdc.org](http://www.smpdc.org), under “Special Projects.” (Tim Roache [troache@therpc.org](mailto:troache@therpc.org) or Dave Walker [dwalker@therpc.org](mailto:dwalker@therpc.org)).

**Plaistow Main Street Traffic Calming (40641):** A public officials meeting was held for this project as part of the Plaistow Select Board meeting on November 16, 2020 and the design team presented on the project approach and solicited feedback on some initial options regarding the design alternatives such as the type and location of pedestrian improvements, roadway shoulders/bike lanes and the use of roundabouts. RPC staff is working with NHDOT to develop a survey of residents and other interested parties to gain some additional insight as to the support for some of the potential alternatives. This survey is expected to be released in March, 2021. (Dave Walker [dwalker@therpc.org](mailto:dwalker@therpc.org)).

**Seabrook-Hampton Bridge Replacement (15904):** The PAC for this project met on January 6, 2021 and a Public Information Meeting was held on January 14, 2021 to provide an update on the progress on the environmental and historic resources analysis, design options, and other aspects of the project. The current preferred alternative is a replacement with a fixed bridge that 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 would be 50 feet wide with two travel lanes, 8 foot shoulders, and 6 foot sidewalks with bump outs at some piers. Private property impacts would be minimal although there are some environmental impacts that will likely need 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 environmental analysis is anticipated to be completed this spring (Public Hearing in March/April) and design of the selected alternative would begin after that. The project is anticipated to advertise for construction in late 2023 with construction beginning in 2024. (Dave Walker [dwalker@therpc.org](mailto:dwalker@therpc.org)).

**Ocean Blvd Reconstruction (Hampton 40797):** This project is working to reconstruct Ocean Blvd in Hampton based on the outcome of the Hampton Beach Transportation Master Plan. Primarily, this project will focus on making improvements to traffic circulation and wayfinding, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, addressing stormwater and drainage as well as other environmental and historic resource issues, and parking. A Project Advisory Committee for this project met on October 29, 2020 and a Public Officials meeting/Public Information Meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2021 beginning at 6:00 PM via Zoom. You can find the information to register for this meeting here: <https://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/hampton40797/index.htm>. (Dave Walker [dwalker@therpc.org](mailto:dwalker@therpc.org)).

**Age Friendly Communities Initiative:** In late January RPC submitted a letter of interest to the Tufts Health Plan Foundation for funding to support a regional Age Friendly Communities pilot project. This would be modeled on work done by the Southern NH Planning Commission as well as SWRPC

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and SRPC. The Rockingham Nutrition Meals on Wheels Program (RNMOW) would serve as fiscal agent and partner for the project along with AARP NH which has also committed funding and staff time. We will learn in February whether we will be invited to submit a full proposal which would be due in mid-March. If funded the project would begin in July 2021. (Scott Bogle – [sbogle@therpc.org](mailto:sbogle@therpc.org))

**Transit Economic Impact Study** – RPC and SRPC are currently working with COAST on a study of the economic impact of transit in the Seacoast. Staff are currently writing up results of the quantitative analysis of COAST spending in terms of regional economic impacts, using a tool from the American Public Transit Association (APTA). The tool shows direct, indirect and induced economic impacts from COAST direct spending. A separate analysis will get at estimated quantitative impacts of the employment, educational and medical access that COAST services provide to individual riders, and in turn to communities. Earlier work has included qualitative analysis in the form of stakeholders of municipal economic development directors, business owners, private developers, chambers of commerce, hospitals and health care providers, housing authorities, and non-profits involved with housing, adult education, and employment services. The project is funded under an FTA State Planning & Research grant administered by NHDOT. (Scott Bogle – [sbogle@therpc.org](mailto:sbogle@therpc.org))

**Transit Coordination Planning for Greater Derry-Salem/Greater Manchester Region** – Staff are working with staff from Southern NH Planning Commission on an update to the Coordinated public Transit/Human Services Transportation plan for the combined Greater Derry-Salem and Greater Manchester regions. This will include analysis of Census and DHHS data (TANF, Medicaid) data on populations likely to have unmet transportation needs; surveys of existing transportation provider agencies, local welfare directors and other non-profit health and human service agencies to gather data on current services and unmet need; and revisiting strategies for service expansion and coordination to improve transportation access in the region. The draft plan will be brought to the TAC for review in June and the MPO Policy Committee for review and adoption in July. (Scott Bogle – [sbogle@therpc.org](mailto:sbogle@therpc.org))

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