

**Transportation Advisory Committee
Rockingham Planning Commission**

**January 23, 2020
RPC Conference room, Exeter NH**

Members Present: R. McDermott, Chairman (Hampton Falls); K. Makinen (Salem); E. Strachan (NHDES); J. Walker (Portsmouth); C. Jacobs (Hampton); L. St. John (NHDOT); C. Cross (Newington)

Staff: D. Walker (AD/Transportation Program Manager); S. Bogle (Sr. Transportation Planner); A. Warhaft (Office Coordinator)

- 1. Chairman McDermott convened the meeting at 9:15 a.m.**
- 2. Minutes of December 15, 2019**

*Makinen moved to approve the Minutes of December 15, 2019 as presented; St. John seconded.
SO VOTED. 2 abstentions*

- 3. 2019 TIP Amendment #3 – D. Walker, RPC**

Walker stated that Amendment #3 of the 2019 TIP covers 4 regional and 5 statewide project changes proposed that need to be addressed in the TIP. Walker reviewed all the projects with funding and/or timing changes. The proposal for replacing State owned commuter coaches has been removed. There is a scope change from rehabilitation to replacement for the bridges on NH 108. Discussion followed on specifics with projects.

K. Makinen asked about the second project for Salem which is not included in the list of projects. D. Walker notes that it is not included and he will update the document to include the project. [Post-Meeting, D. Walker discussed the project (Salem 42885) with NHDOT and it was determined that the project was scheduled for 2023 which is outside of the current 2019-2022 TIP and why it is not included in the document.]

C. Jacobs moved to approve the project changes identified in 2019 TIP Amendment #3; K. Makinen seconded. St. John abstention. SO VOTED.

- 4. Level of Traffic Stress Project Update – S. Bogle, RPC**

S. Bogle reviewed the scope of the grant project, noting that data collection, refined by Plymouth State University, network analysis and developing visualization of the data took place in the fall of 2019. RPC and Plymouth State University are now working on the final report.

S. Bogel discussed what is bicycle level of stress and explained how the public feedback was used to create a model to measure level of stress for various roadways in the region. A model was created, then the initial analysis was opened for public comment via an online interactive map available online and emailed to biking shops and groups, as well as public feedback during the Exeter bike race and farmer's market. It was found that the model tended to underestimate the stress where there was a lot of turning since the model was based on segment data and not intersection data. The model also underestimated stress for roads with wide shoulders but high rates of speed.

The next step is to identify how to use this data. Destination connections were used to estimate stress between two points, such as a proximity to schools or employment centers, giving a score that represents the level of stress. This score can be used for prioritization of projects. Centrality favors town projects and downplays regional connections.

The goal is to make changes to the roadway network so that high stress areas can become less stressful and to interconnect areas of low stress bicycling. Discussion followed.

5. 2020 Highway Safety Improvement Program Performance Targets

D. Walker stated that the data varies substantially from year to year, therefore using 5 year averages can give a better target number. Fatalities were up statewide in 2018 and will bump up the averages. At a regional level fatalities increased, however the overall trend is going downward.

Monitoring motorcycle fatalities is not required by the Federal Highway Administration but is something that the New Hampshire MPOs have agreed to all track. In general motorcycle fatalities are declining Statewide, but regional fatalities are more erratic due to the small numbers causing high percentage changes.

The data for serious injuries are not as accurate as data on fatalities because the definition of a serious injury can vary from town to town and police department to police department, diagnosis at the road side is not accurate, a lack of clarity on what constitutes a serious injury, etc. Recent changes in policy has lead to a more consistent definition of serious injuries and this should result in more stable data moving forward. State and regional levels show there is a decline in the number of serious injuries.

In summary, the number of fatalities and fatality rate current trend is upward, contrary to the goal of a downward trend. At the MPO level we are recommending we continue to support State targets, which are set at lower levels than current trends. The consequences of not making reasonable progress toward reaching the targets is that the State is required to spend all HSIP funds on safety projects. That being said, the state already spends all HSIP funds on safety projects and targets are hard to meet due to the random nature of accidents.

J. Walker moved to approve; R. McDermott seconded. SO VOTED.

6. Age Friendly Communities Grant Proposal – S. Bogle, RPC

S. Bogle states that a letter of interest is being submitted on January 24, 2020 to the Tufts Health Plan Foundation to develop an age friendly communities initiative. AARP has an age friendly communities network, to become part of that network communities do a local assessment to see what needs that older adults have and the extent to how the community is addressing those needs in terms of accessibility, housing and transportation options, recreational opportunities. Portsmouth is the only member of the network in our region. Fifteen towns in NH have regional initiatives. We would be partnering with Rockingham Meals on Wheels to be fiscal agent, because Tufts will only fund non-profit agencies. We would request 45,000 per year over two years to do community assessments for 14 communities in year 1 and year 2 add another 5 communities if interested in participating, as well as pilot projects that we would provide technical assistance to implement recommendations. S. Bogle summarizes examples of initiatives other communities have completed. Full proposals are due in late March and we need to find 14 communities that are interested in participating. Discussion follows.

7. Local Public Agency (LPA) Project Administration – S. Bogle/D. Walker, RPC

Local project administration (LPA) – S. Bogle notes we're meeting with NHDOT and the other planning commissions to talk about ways to improve process and make it less cumbersome. The brainstorming session is on January 27, 2020. D. Walker says that Portsmouth has provided input but thinks that the smaller communities will need to give their input because it is their projects that have failed to get done. S. Bogle states that gathering input from other communities and consultants will be helpful.

8. Project Updates – Update Distributed

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Warhaft, Recording Secretary
