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RPC Technical Advisory Committee
September 28th, 2017
9:00-11:00 AM
RPC Office
156 Water Street, Exeter
(Directions on reverse)

Paper copies of the attachments will be available at the meeting

1. Introductions
2. Minutes of 8/24/17 TAC meeting (**Attachment #1**)— *[motion to approve]*
3. Ten Year Plan Priorities (redux) (**Attachment #2**) — *[motion to approve]*
4. CMAQ Update
5. Draft Long Range Transportation Plan (**Attachment #3**)— *[motion to approve]*
6. MPO Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan (**Attachment #4**) — *[motion to approve]*
7. Project Updates (handout to be distributed at meeting)

TAC MEETING SCHEDULE For 2017 (Next meeting highlighted)

January 26 th	May 25 th	September 28 th
February 23 rd	June 29 th	October 26th
March 23 rd	July 27 th	November 30 th
April, 27 th	August 24 th	

There is **two hour on-street parking** along Water Street and Center Street. There is also long term parking in the lot on Center Street, by the Citizens Bank Drive-thru (Non-numbered spaces), and in the municipal lot behind the Town Offices. Handicapped parking spaces are available on the bottom floor of the parking structure adjacent to the RPC office as well as on Water Street in front of the RPC office.



ATTACHMENT 1

RPC TAC MEETING

Minutes

August 24, 2017
RPC Conference Room

Members Present: Richard McDermott, Chair, Hampton Falls; Tim Moore, Plaistow; Steve Gerrato, Greenland; Richard Hartung, Hampstead; Tavis Austin; Stratham; Andre Garron, Salem; David Baxter, Seabrook; Gregg Mikolaities, Rye; Carol Macuch; NH DOT; and Elizabeth Strachan, NH DES.

Others Present: Tom Morgan, Seabrook.

Staff Present: Tim Roache, Dave Walker, Scott Bogle, Christian Matthews and Roxanne Rines, RPC.

Meeting Opened at 9:01 a.m.

1. Introductions

Attendees introduced themselves and stated what municipality they were from or the agency they represented.

2. Minutes of June 29, 2017, TAC Meeting

Motion: **Moore** made a motion to approve the minutes of June 29, 2017, as written. **Hartung** seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

3. Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) – FY 2017 State Clean Diesel Grant Program

Strachan gave an overview of the DERA grant opportunity. The focus of the program is to either modify current diesel engines or remove older diesel engine vehicles from service. She briefly explained the types of eligible projects and restrictions.

She stated Request for Proposals will be available on DES' website shortly; the first round of applications will be accepted between October 1 - 15. If you have questions, please contact Strachan. Discussion ensued.

4. Ten Year Plan Update

Walker stated staff received 18 new projects, he reviewed the prioritized list that DOT received in May. The regions total budget limit is approximately \$6.6 M for 2 years.

DOT selected projected #2 project (Hampton #6001023, at a cost of \$7,486,250), for addition into the 10-year plan. This option would mean that no other project could be added. DOT indicated that the MPO could instead put forward an alternative package of projects and get the changes made during the GACIT hearings.

Walker reviewed the priority list of 10 projects and explained scenario one and 2. Staff wants to recommend projects of different scales, modes of travel and to have them distributed evenly around the region. The Town of Hampton has two large transportation projects underway. **Walker** stated in order to obtain staff's goal as state above, scenario 2 or something similar is a better fit. Scenario 2 could fund 5 projects: #1, #3, #5, #8 and #10 from the list.

Walker stated staff is concerned about the time given by DOT for comments during the project selection process. DOT was supposed to involve the MPO's.

Discussion ensued about Hampton's lack of support for project #1 and projects that could be funded thru different programs.

Motion: **Baxter** made a motion to consider an alternative to DOT's priority. **Moore** seconded the motion. **Motion carried.** **Baxter** asked if the Hampton project is removed, can they secure funding from another program. **Walker** stated yes, both the TA and CMAQ programs.

Motion: **Baxter** made a motion that the MPO Policy Committee approve projects #1, 3, 5, 8 and 10 as the MPO's priorities. **Moore** seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

5. CMAQ – Projects Submitted and Anticipated Process

Bogle gave an overview of the program and gave a brief description of the letters of interest received, totaling \$15.9M. Statewide there is \$13.5M in funding, statewide 31 letters of interest were send to DOT with the total cost of all projects being \$34.9M.

He stated this round will be have no regional ranking of projects at the MPO level, DOT will decide the rankings. There is concern amongst the planning commissions that both staff and the CMAQ Advisory Committee have been left out of the process. The Executive Directors jointly prepared a letter to GACIT with recommendations, which he distributed. Discussion ensued.

Macuch, NH DOT, gave an update on the CMAQ process progress to date. Discussion ensued. **Walker** stated DOT needs to let them know of the final process with due dates.

6. Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Bogle reviewed the work completed since the last TAC meeting. He stated that the chapters need to be reviewed by persons outside of staff. He asked members if anyone is willing to review a chapter, please let him or Walker know. **Bogle** stated all six draft chapters are complete and are available on the RPC website. The 30-day comment period will start on September 6 and the document will be voted on at the October MPO meeting.

Bogle gave a summary of the chapters and reviewed the remaining work. Discussion ensued. He asked for any comments be sent to either himself or Walker by Friday.

7. Highway Safety Improvement Program – Road Safety Audits

Walker distributed a handout and reviewed the program. The requirement for a HSIP project is that the roadway must have had a fatality within the last 10 years. Proposals/Applications are due December 1. **Walker** is available for help with proposals, crash data and crash data analysis.

8. Project Updates

A handout was distributed with other project updates.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne M. Rines
Recording Secretary

ATTACHMENT 2

Memorandum

DATE: September 22, 2017
TO: MPO Transportation Advisory Committee
FROM: David Walker
RE: Revisiting Ten Year Plan Priorities

On September 13th, the MPO Policy Committee approved five projects (Priorities #1,3,5,8, and 10 in the attached table) as the region's recommended additions to the State Ten Year Plan to replace the Hampton NH 101/US 1 Interchange Project (Priority #2 in the attached table) that is currently included in the draft. Following the Policy meeting, NHDOT's Highway Design Bureau provided RPC staff with updated cost assumptions for many of the projects based on costs of similar projects in recent years. The total cost of the five recommended projects, when inflation to a 2028 construction year and indirect costs are accounted for, is \$18,718,021, well beyond our budget "target" of \$6,643,663. The bullets below indicate the reasoning behind the cost changes for each of the projects in the table:

- **Priority #1:** Cost indicated for the New Castle-Rye was deemed a reasonable assumption by NHDOT Highway Design and no change was recommended.
- **Priority #2:** Cost indicated for the Hampton NH 101/US 1 Interchange was deemed reasonable as well and no change was recommended.
- **Priority #3:** The need to add a southbound through lane, shoulders, and sidewalks combined with limited right-of-way increased the cost of the North Hampton project substantially. NHDOT recommends utilizing an estimated cost of approximately \$3,400,000 when inflation and indirect costs are accounted for.
- **Priority #5:** NHDOT is recommending a 5-lane cross section in this location to deal with expected traffic volumes which comes at a higher cost than was originally anticipated. The cost shown initially for the Seabrook project reflects the less expensive (town recommended) 4-lane cross section, and subtracts out the portion of the cost that Seabrook has indicated would be paid for using private funds from developer exactions (\$1,000,000-\$1,500,000). This was an error on my part as the full cost of the project should have been shown no matter the source of those funds. When a 5-lane cross section is combined with adjustments for inflation and indirect costs, the project now totals \$8,843,605.
- **Priority #8:** The initial cost estimates for the Stratham project were both extremely outdated and did not reflect current understanding of the scope required to provide the expected improvements.

- **Priority #10:** The cost estimate that I included for the Hampstead project should not have been utilized as no meaningful improvement to the intersection could be made for that limited amount of funding. NHDOT indicates that the installation of a signal or a roundabout at that location would likely require approximately \$2,400,000 once inflation and indirect charges are accounted for.

A revised recommendation for MPO project priorities needs to be provided to NHDOT and GACIT. While ranked higher than the other projects under consideration, the North Hampton US 1/NH 111 project is not as critical (or longstanding) a need as some of the projects further down the list. The much larger revised cost of the Seabrook project puts the MPO in the same position as we were initially, where a single project is greater in cost than the budget that is available. In addition, there is some divergence between NHDOT and Seabrook regarding the scope of that project (4-lanes vs 5-lanes). On the other hand, Seabrook has substantial private funds (estimated \$1-1.5 million) to contribute, and they have historically been successful at leveraging that funding to quickly advance projects, thereby reducing inflationary costs as well. The combination of developer funds, and a shorter timeline, could possibly put the project within reach of the budget constraints along with the region's top priority. Practically however, the full cost of the project as anticipated in 2028 must be included in the Ten Year Plan as a starting point, whatever the source of funds. As a starting point for discussion, staff is recommending this revised set of projects as priorities for the Ten Year Plan:

- ***New Castle-Rye NH 1A/1B (Rank #1)*** – Shoulders on NH 1A in Rye from Seavey Creek Bridge to the south end of Odiorne Point State Park & NH 1B from NH1A to the Bridge. Sidewalks on NH1B From Wild Rose Lane to Beach Hill Road, & shoulders Wild Rose Lane to USCG Station. Total inflated cost = ***\$2,799,532***
- ***Stratham NH 108/Bunker Hill Avenue (Rank #8)*** – Signalization and turn lanes and intersection realignment. Total inflated cost = ***\$1,273,479***
- ***Hampstead NH 121/Depot Rd/Derry Rd (Rank #10)*** – Improve [signalize] the intersection of NH 121/ Derry Rd/ Depot Rd in Hampstead, Total inflated cost = ***\$2,405,461***

This provides a geographically diverse set of projects that addresses bike and pedestrian needs, traffic safety, and two long-standing projects from the MPO Long Range Plan. The total cost of the three projects is just under \$6,500,000 and within the budget target. This recommendation, or whatever the final set of proposed projects that comes out of the TAC and Policy Committee meetings, will be presented to the MPO Policy Committee at the October 11th meeting and staff will relay those recommendations to Councilor Prescott and NHDOT at the October 12th (Newmarket) and October 16th (Hampton) GACIT hearings as well as via a formal letter commenting on the draft Ten Year Plan.

In addition to the recommended projects to add to the Ten Year Plan, there are other project specific and policy based comments and recommendations that the MPO should provide to NHDOT and GACIT.

Project Specific Comments

- ***Newfields-Newmarket 28393 (NH 108 over B&M RR) bridge rehabilitations:*** Narrow shoulders on the bridge approaches were one of the primary problems that a now cancelled CMAQ project was intended to fix. We want to ensure that this bridge rehabilitation project includes shoulder widening in its scope to address the immediate safety problem for cyclists and to enable a continuous bicycle shoulder to be completed on NH 108 in the future.

- ***Epping 29608 (NH 125 from NH 27 to NH 87) & 40643 (Signal Coordination on NH 125)***: These two projects are being constructed sequentially and they overlap to some extent. These projects should be consolidated into a single project as a way of reducing project management costs and eliminating any duplicative pavement work that would be part of both.
- ***Epping 29608 (NH 125 from NH 27 to NH 87)***: The scope of this project was always intended to address the bottleneck on NH 125 just to the south of the Route 27 Intersection as well as some capacity and safety improvements at the intersection of NH 125 with NH 87. This is not reflected in the project scope as listed in the Ten Year Plan.
- ***General Sullivan Bridge (Newington-Dover 112385)***: The draft Ten Year Plan shows a slight decrease in the cost programmed for this project (\$31.5 million vs \$33.6 million) compared to the current TIP/STIP. The MPO recognizes the historic significance of the bridge, but the projected cost of the rehabilitation and ongoing maintenance has increased from the estimate in the EIS to the extent that it may no longer be financially prudent. The MPO continues to support NHDOT examining cost effective solutions to maintaining this critical bicycle and pedestrian connection across the bay. The project scope in the Ten Year Plan continues to reflect a rehabilitation of the structure but there is little detail to indicate whether an ultimate decision has been reached regarding rehabilitation, replacement, or some combination of the two that all were under consideration in the recent General Sullivan Bridge Alternatives Study.
- ***Portsmouth 40644 Maplewood Avenue Railroad Crossing upgrade***: During the 2017-2026 Ten Year Plan process the City of Portsmouth and the RPC requested that the Maplewood Avenue Railroad Crossing upgrade project be replaced in the draft Ten Year Plan with an upgrade of the Market Street Railroad Crossing instead. This change was implemented by NHDOT, and project 40644 appears in the approved 2017-2026 Ten Year Plan as occurring on Market Street with a scope that reads "Railroad crossing upgrade north of Russell St." The current draft 2019-2028 Ten Year Plan reverts the project to its original scope and location on Woodbury Avenue and this should be corrected to show the Market Street location and scope instead.
- ***Corridor Studies***: In addition to soliciting projects from communities within the region, one of the primary source for identifying system improvement needs is through the use of corridor studies that take a comprehensive look at the current and future needs of state highways. The financial resources required to conduct these types of studies is beyond the capacity of the planning commissions, and NHDOT has essentially ceased to undertake this type of work in recent years. In the RPC region alone, comprehensive corridor studies are needed on ***NH 111 between Kingston and Salem, NH 108/33 between Exeter and Portsmouth, NH 125 between Kingston and Epping, and NH 101***. The last two iterations of the Ten Year Plan have seen the addition of a few "study" projects that look at a particular location in detail before dedicating any construction funding to a particular set of improvements. The RPC would like to see this practice extended to include the addition of corridor studies as well.

Funding Policies & Priorities in the Plan

- ***Overall Funding Levels***: The RPC continues to believe that transportation infrastructure is underfunded in our state. We have been on record for many Ten Year Plan cycles supporting development of additional revenue for the transportation system - for roads and bridges, but also for transit and for safer facilities for people walking or riding bicycles. The \$0.042 cent gas tax increase in 2014 was a positive step, but is insufficient to meet the identified needs for maintenance and improvement of the system. Part of the "New Hampshire way" is to take the

responsibility to pay for what we use, and that should include our transportation system. The Yankee frugality that is our tradition in New Hampshire is not just about efficient use of resource, but about being smart and investing well. Failing to fund our current and foreseeable future transportation needs is shortsighted and potentially costly. Without adequate maintenance and preservation today, we are compounding those costs in the future. Without adequate investment into future transportation needs we may find ourselves uncompetitive and unresponsive to both residents and employers. As many have pointed out in previous debates, New Hampshire motorists pay a gas tax that is, in real terms, a little more than half of what it was in 1992 to support our current transportation system. We don't believe this is sustainable.

- **HSIP/CMAQ/TAP Funding:** We recognize that the Department of Transportation has the difficult challenge of maintaining the state's existing transportation system with inadequate resources, and we appreciate the Department's commitment to maintaining the popular and valuable set asides for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) at full funding levels.
 - **CMAQ Set-aside for Commuter/Intercity Bus Fleet Replacement (40284):** The draft Ten Year Plan sets aside \$6 million of CMAQ funding for replacement of State-owned motor coaches used on commuter service in the I-95, I-93 and Everett Turnpike Services by C&J and Boston Express. The MPO agrees that it is important to sustain these highly successful services. That said, these capital replacement needs are more appropriately funded through New Hampshire's share of FTA Section 5307 funds from the Boston Urbanized Area (UZA). New Hampshire's share of Boston UZA funds has grown from \$900K/year to over \$2.7M/year in just a few years due to state subsidized intercity commuter bus services (C&J, Boston Express) beginning to report revenue miles to the National Transit Database. It seems appropriate then, that the increase in these funds support the capital needs of that service and in so doing free up CMAQ funds for other uses.
 - **Supporting the Downeaster Train Service:** The Downeaster train service from Portland, ME to Boston, MA has proven itself a valuable alternative for transportation to and through southeast New Hampshire, and carries over 500,000 passengers a year between its 12 stations in three states with 40% of the total system ridership to and from New Hampshire. During this time, New Hampshire's investment and state support for the service has been minimal, consisting of the construction of the three stations in the state and a rail siding. The annual insurance and station maintenance costs are paid by the communities of Dover, Durham, and Exeter, and the service operating subsidy is paid by the State of Maine through their CMAQ program. The MPO urges the state of New Hampshire to provide funding through the CMAQ program or other appropriate means for future Downeaster capital projects to help offset service expenses.
 - **A Balanced Approach to Improving the Transportation System:** Looking back over the last several iterations of the Ten Year Plan, there has been a shift away from primarily large capacity improvement projects towards a list of projects that is almost entirely focused on preservation and maintenance. While this shift has been necessary to address deferred maintenance, the only new projects that are addressing mobility and accessibility needs tend to be those that are smaller in scale and fit within the smaller target budgets provided to the Regional Planning Commissions. What is being left out are the mid-to-large sized improvement projects that may cost \$10-20 million and provide regional or inter-regional benefits as they are too big for the budgets available to the RPCs. The Rockingham Planning Commission recommends that NHDOT and GACIT establish a balanced approach to the Ten Year Plan that continues to address pressing maintenance and preservation needs and regional priorities, but also includes some resources to add improvement projects that are larger in size.
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Adapting the Transportation System to Future Needs

- **Population Demographics, Changing Transportation Needs, & More Complete Needs Assessment:** It is widely recognized that the rapid growth in the size of the oldest segments of our populations, together with the preference and economic need to allow for aging in place, will have profound implications in defining our future transportation system needs. Current 2040 population projections show that over 32% of Rockingham County population will be over 65, compared to 12.5% in 2010 - a 250% increase. More importantly to transportation concerns, is that about one quarter of people over 65 do not drive. That means we can expect an additional 12,000-15,000 non-driving seniors in the RPC region alone by 2040. These residents will need other options – whether transit, ‘friends and family transport,’ or other mode if they are to be able to age in place. A more robust system of alternative transportation – transit, coordinated community transportation, volunteer driver programs, etc. will be needed to meet this demand. In addition, a number of speakers at the 2015 GACIT hearings were younger adults and spoke pointedly to their interest in a more balanced transportation system that provided other transportation options besides driving. If we are as concerned about retaining young people to contribute to our economy as we say we are, then as a state and region we should be doing more to develop these transportation options. Unfortunately, they are not well represented in this Plan. The RPC recognizes that it is difficult to focus on these future transportation needs when scrambling to address unmet needs in the present, but we believe it is important that the Department’s analysis of unmet needs addresses not just pavement and bridge conditions but also unmet safety and mobility needs across all modes.
- **A Complete Streets Approach:** Federal DOT policy calls for the incorporation of safe and convenient walking and bicycling facilities into transportation projects and charges all transportation agencies with the responsibility to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. The RPC is currently developing a “complete streets” policy to ensure that the transportation network in the region is designed and operated with all users in mind. All projects proposed by the RPC will strive to accommodate all appropriate users including motor vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders. Adoption of a similar policy for NHDOT and the routine incorporation of a complete streets approach into design and implementation of state projects is supported by the RPC.
- **Account for Increased Risk from Coastal Flooding in Project Design:** The RPC encourages NHDOT to take into account future coastal flood scenarios from storm surge and sea level rise in the design of projects in vulnerable areas, especially in light of the damage caused by storm surge and flooding from Hurricanes Harvey and Irma in Texas and Florida. This applies directly to several projects in the Ten Year Plan from this region. Our agency recently completed work on a preliminary assessment of transportation and other infrastructure that may be vulnerable to coastal flooding under certain storm surge and sea level rise scenarios. We looked at projects currently in the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan and the State Ten Year Plan and found that there are 7 projects that might be effected under the lowest sea level rise scenario in the year and 9 under the highest (1.7 feet and 6.3 feet respectively), while all 13 listed are potentially impacted when storm surge is also considered (*see attached table*). The New Hampshire Coastal Risks and Hazards Commission developed recommended approaches for developing infrastructure design standards and the RPC urges NHDOT to consider these recommendations in future project designs despite the revocation of Executive Order 13690 that established a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard, and changes to Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management.

Recommended Action:

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- ***Approve projects #1, #8, and #10 from the attached table as the MPO priorities for funding in the State 2019-2028 Ten Year Plan and request that NHDOT substitute them for priority #2 as listed in the draft Ten Year Plan document.***
 - ***Recommend the above set of project specific, policy, and transportation planning comments to be submitted to NHDOT and GACIT along with the project priority additions to the Ten Year Plan.***

Projects Being Considered for the Ten Year Plan

Rank	Project #	CityTown	Roads	Scope of Work		Estimated Total Cost	Inflated 2028 Cost
1	6001023	New Castle-Rye	NH 1A/1B	Shoulders on NH 1A in Rye from Seavey Creek Bridge to the south end of Odiorne Point State Park & NH 1B from NH1A to the Bridge. Sidewalks on NH1B From Wild Rose Lane to Beach Hill Road, & shoulders Wild Rose Lane to USCG Station. Assumes working within existing ROW. NHDOT Highway Design indicates cost assumptions are reasonable.	PE	\$ 508,500	
					ROW	\$ 57,500	
					CON	\$ 1,412,500	
					Total	\$ 1,978,500	\$ 2,799,532
2	6197005	Hampton	NH 101/ US 1	NH 101/ US 1 interchange reconfiguration as per the outcome of the feasibility study. Costs based on McFarland-Johnson estimates from 2013 feasibility study. NHDOT Highway Design indicates cost assumptons are reasonable.	PE	\$ 500,000	
					ROW	\$ 1,000,000	
					CON	\$ 3,900,000	
					Total	\$ 5,400,000	\$ 7,640,875
3	6345011	North Hampton	US 1	Capacity improvements at Intersection of US 1 and Atlantic Avenue (NH 111) including safety improvements for bicycle and pedestrian access. Assumes addition of SB through lane, shoulders, and sidewalks. New signal required. Costs shown provided by NHDOT Highway Design Bureau and are based on recent bids for projects with similar scopes.	PE	\$ 400,000	
					ROW	\$ 500,000	
					CON	\$ 1,500,000	
					Total	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 3,395,944
5	6409004	Seabrook	US 1	Capacity improvements on US 1 between New Zealand Road and the Hampton Falls Town Line. Cost of a 5-lane cross section (recommended by NHDOT) is shown. Cost is based on bids for project Seabrook 16444 (Widening from NH 107 to Railroad Ave). Seabrook has an estimated \$1,000,000 in matching funds for project from developer exactions.	PE	\$ 750,000	
					ROW	\$ 500,000	
					CON	\$ 5,000,000	
					Total	\$ 6,250,000	\$ 8,843,605
8	6431003	Stratham	NH 108	NH 108 / Bunker Hill Avenue: Signalization And Turn Lanes And Intersection Realignment. Assumes added lane on Bunker Hill Avenue and right-turn lane on NH 108. . Potential historic property adjacent to intersection may limit expansion of roadway. NHDOT Highway Design Bureau provided updated cost estimates based on similar projects.	PE	\$ 200,000	
					ROW	\$ 100,000	
					CON	\$ 600,000	
					Total	\$ 900,000	\$ 1,273,479
10	6195001	Hampstead	NH 121	Improve The Intersection Of NH 121/ Derry Rd/ Depot Rd In Hampstead. Possible signal or roundabout at this location. NHDOT provided updated cost estimates based on similar projects.	PE	\$ 300,000	
					ROW	\$ 200,000	
					CON	\$ 1,200,000	
					Total	\$ 1,700,000	\$ 2,405,461
Total Costs						\$ 18,628,500	\$ 26,358,896

ATTACHMENT 3

MEMORANDUM

To: MPO Technical Advisory Committee
From: Scott Bogle, Senior Transportation Planner
Date: September 28, 2017
RE: 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan Status

Staff have completed a full public draft of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, and initiated a 30-day public comment period for the document. The comment period began on Friday, September 8th, 2017 and will conclude with a public hearing on Wednesday, October 11th, 2017 at Portsmouth Public Library. This coincides with the October meeting of the MPO Policy Committee Library. The Policy Committee will meet after the public hearing to consider comment received and adoption of the Plan.

Thank you to TAC members who reviewed chapter drafts following the August meeting. Edits and new material added subsequent to the August meeting included:

- Fleshing out the discussion of Performance Based Planning in Chapter 2
- Fleshing out discussion of energy and the transportation system in Chapter 4
- Additional discussion of distracted driving in Chapter 4
- Refining recommended actions in Chapter 6
- Inclusion of additional maps
- General formatting

The Public Comment draft is available for download on the MPO website as either the complete document or individual chapters at: <http://www.rpc-nh.org/transportation/transportation-plan>.

As of September 22 we have not received any public comment. Further recommendations from TAC members are still welcome during the public comment period and can be incorporated into the document prior to adoption. Staff have identified several areas for further refinement, including adjustment to maps, discussions of several high crash locations eligible for HSIP funding in the out years of the plan, and additional information on next steps in implementing Performance Based Planning.

Recommended Action

Staff ask TAC members to review the Public Comment Draft and contact staff with edits or recommendations for changes. Following discussion of needed edits at the September 28th TAC meeting staff will ask the TAC to vote to recommend adoption of the Plan to the MPO Policy Committee.

ATTACHMENT 4



Attachment 4

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MEMORANDUM

TO: RPC MPO Policy Committee
FROM: Scott Bogle, Senior Transportation Planner
DATE: September 22, 2017
RE: Draft Title VI Civil Rights Plan

As a recipient of Federal funding, the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has a responsibility under the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent legislation to ensure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or income status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity carried out by the MPO.

The MPO signs Certifications and Assurances to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) confirming its policy of non-discrimination biennially as part of our Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) contract with the NH Department of Transportation. Staff follow the provisions of these Assurances in hiring, contracting, public participation, analysis for the Long Range Transportation Plan, and other aspects of MPO operations.

The MPO adopted a Title VI Civil Rights/Non-Discrimination Plan for the first time in 2013. This needs to be updated periodically. This spring and summer staff have prepared an update as part of the MPO's role in managing FTA Section 5310 elderly and disabled transit funding for the ACT transit coordination initiative. The Draft Plan is posted for review on the MPO website at: <http://www.rpc-nh.org/application/files/5815/0515/1903/RPC-MPO-TitleVI-Plan-2017-9-7-17.pdf>

The Objectives of the Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan are as follows:

- A. To ensure that the level and quality of transportation service is provided without regard to race, color, or national origin;
- B. To identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects of programs and activities on minority populations and low-income populations;
- C. To promote the full and fair participation of all affected populations in transportation decision-making;
- D. To prevent the denial, reduction or delay in benefits related to programs and activities that benefit minority populations or low-income populations; and
- E. To ensure meaningful access to programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency.

The Title VI Plan is structured around the Civil Rights requirements for Federal funding recipients – identifying each requirement in turn and documenting how the MPO responds to it. The key documents related to Title VI requirements, beyond the Title VI Plan itself, are: 1) Certifications and Assurances the MPO signs as part of its UPWP contract; 2) the Title VI Notice to the Public regarding non-discrimination; and 3) Title VI Complaint Procedures & Complaint Form, for individuals who believe they have been discriminated against by MPO decisions or programs.

Beyond these elements, which are included as appendices, the other major components of the Title VI Plan include documenting public outreach efforts to identify the transportation needs of minority and low income residents of the MPO planning region; and a demographic analysis of minority, low income, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations in the region. This analysis made use of data from the 2010 Census as well as the American Community Survey (ACS) 2010-2014 five-year data compilation.

Perhaps the most significant finding from the analysis is the continued growth of the Hispanic population in the region since the 2000 Census and since the analysis for the original Title VI plan. The Hispanic population in the MPO region has increased from 1,993 in 2000 to 3,914 in 2010 to 4,794 in 2014. This growth has been particularly concentrated in Salem, and to a slightly lesser degree Portsmouth. This growth is also reflected in the number of individuals identified as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP), which is operationalized as respondents to the ACS survey who respond that they “speak English ‘less than well’”. For the MPO region as it is currently configured, the LEP population includes to an estimated 2,926 individuals, or 1.6% of the total population.

Where this is significant is in the number of Spanish speakers with Limited English Proficiency. The Census Bureau estimates this population currently at 848 individuals, or 0.5% of the total population. The number is significant as FHWA and FTA regard a population of 1,000 LEP individuals within one language group as a threshold below which agencies are not required to provide key documents in translation. Below this threshold Federal funding recipients do still have responsibilities to provide language interpretation assistance for meetings and other accommodations if requested.

This number is down from the 2007-2011 ACS data used for the 2013 Title VI Plan, which found 1,078 LEP Spanish speakers in the region. The decline is due in part to the departure of Windham, and in part likely due to the small sample size of the American Community Survey.

Improvements to language access since the 2013 Plan have included providing our Title VI Notice to the Public, in Title VI Complaint Procedures in Spanish translation; and incorporated Google Translate as part of the redesign of the MPO website. MPO meeting agendas also notify would-be attendees of the availability of language assistance with advanced notice. Staff have identified several in-person and phone-based interpretation services that the MPO can call on should we at some point receive a request for meeting interpretation by an LEP individual

Requested Action

Staff request that the MPO Technical Advisory Committee review the attached Draft Title VI Non-Discrimination Plan, recommend changes if needed, and vote to recommend adoption of the Plan to the MPO Policy Committee.