

RPC Transportation Advisory Committee
December 2, 2021
9:00-11:00 AM

RPC Offices

156 Water Street, Exeter

Location: <https://goo.gl/maps/XLdB19LvXEB97cyg6>

TAC members can also participate virtually via Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87132816551?pwd=ZHN5dGx3Z09RalhWYXFndU5yZGF3Zz09>

The full zoom invitation is on page 3

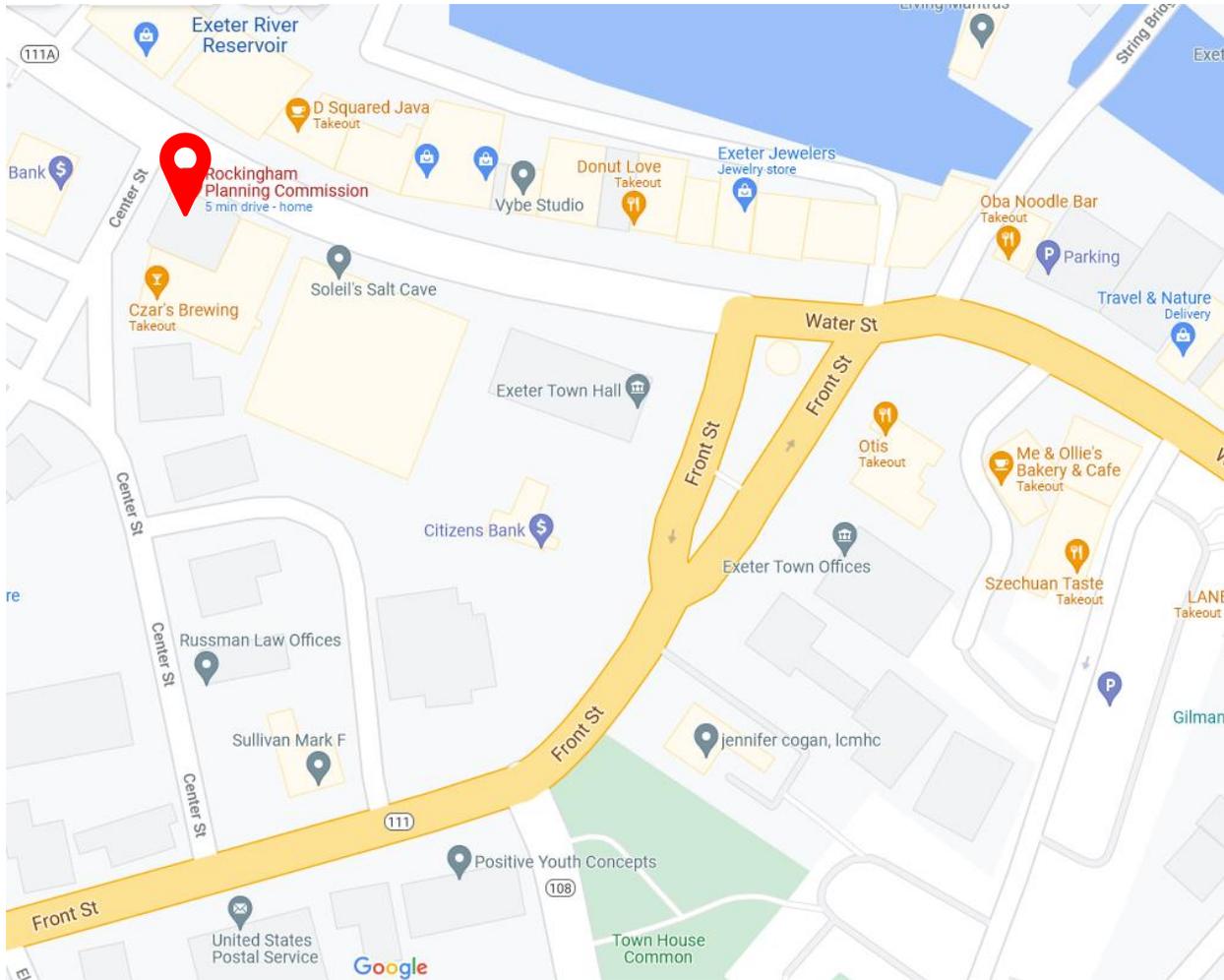
1. Introductions
2. Minutes of 10/28/21 TAC meeting (**Attachment #1**) — **[Motion Required]** (5 minutes)
3. NH Clean Diesel Program – Ricky DiCillo, NHDES Air Resources (15 Minutes)
4. Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Opportunities from the Volkswagen Settlement – Ricky DiCillo/Tim White, NHDES Air Resources (30 minutes)
5. 2023-2032 Ten Year Plan GACIT Hearings Update – Dave Walker (5 Minutes)
6. Discussion of topics for future TAC Meetings – Dave/Scott (10 minutes)
7. Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act – Scott/Dave (15 minutes)
8. Other Project Updates – Dave/Scott (5 Minutes)
9. Open discussion/Comments

TAC MEETING SCHEDULE For 2022 (Next meeting highlighted)

January 27	April 28	July 28	October 27
February 24	May 26	August 25	December 8***
March 24	June 23	September 22	

***Off Schedule

Rockingham Planning Commission
156 Water Street, Exeter, NH
<https://goo.gl/maps/XLdB19LvXEB97cyg6>



Accommodations for individuals with disabilities or limited English proficiency

Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities or limited English proficiency are available upon request. Please include a description of the accommodation you will need, including as much detail as you can. Make your request as early as possible; please allow at least 5 days advance notice. Last minute requests will be accepted but may be impossible to fill. Please call 603-778-0885 or email apettengill@therpc.org.

Rockingham Planning is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: RPC Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

Time: Dec 2, 2021 09:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Dec 2, 2021 09:00 AM
Jan 27, 2022 09:00 AM
Feb 24, 2022 09:00 AM
Mar 24, 2022 09:00 AM
Apr 28, 2022 09:00 AM
May 26, 2022 09:00 AM
Jun 23, 2022 09:00 AM
Jul 28, 2022 09:00 AM
Aug 25, 2022 09:00 AM
Sep 22, 2022 09:00 AM
Oct 27, 2022 09:00 AM
Dec 8, 2022 09:00 AM

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Monthly: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZMsdOugrz0vH9VvWNQsRaYGK-Qy5wPMF_h/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGvrzgoEtWTtRyGRpwEBYjCa_zzmCFYgvpriijLMhNAUALPEckPA6sqB-j9

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87132816551?pwd=ZHN5dGx3Z09RalhWYXFndU5yZGF3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 871 3281 6551

Passcode: 201102

One tap mobile

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Dial by your location

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+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 871 3281 6551

Passcode: 201102

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kpm67IGdD>

MINUTES

Rockingham Planning Commission MPO Technical Advisory Committee October 28, 2021

RPC Offices 156 Water Street, Exeter Virtual Participation via Zoom meeting

Members Present: R. McDermott (Hampton Falls); J. Hale (Hampton); P. Coffin (Kingston); D. Sharples (Exeter); S. Casella (Portsmouth); R. Nichols (COAST); M. Scruton (Greenland); T. White (NHDES); P. Maloney (FHWA); L. Levine (FHWA); Leah Sirmin (FTA);

RPC Commissioners Present: R. Srinivasan (Seabrook); B. Kravitz (Hampton); J. Johnson (Stratham); A. Brubaker (Hampton Falls); P. Britz (Portsmouth)

Staff: D. Walker (Transp Mgr/Assistant Director); S. Bogle (Sr. Transp Plnr); C. Matthews (GIS/Transp. Analyst); T. Roache (Executive Director)

1. Meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. and introductions were made.
2. Minutes of September 23, 2021

*Coffin moved to approve the Minutes of September 23, 2021 as presented; Sharples seconded.
SO VOTED.*

3. FHWA/FTA Transportation Planning Process Review – Paul Maloney (FHWA)/Leah Sirmin (FTA)

Paul Maloney and Leah Sirmin asked TAC and Policy Committee members a series of questions related to MPO processes and performance as part of the MPO's Planning Review. Questions and responses are summarized below.

How do you see the TAC process affecting or benefiting your community?

- Ravi Srinivasan – New to the process and the committee. Mostly listening and reporting back. After some time will be in better position to comment.
- Barbara Kravitz – Kudos to Dave and Scott in structuring the work, giving TAC members opportunity to speak to preferences. Thinks process works well.
- Richard McDermott – They keep us on task.
- Rad Nichols – Have worked with the MPO for 25 years. Lucky with RPC and longevity of staff and the job they do. Project programming for transit is different than for highway and

- bridge projects. Transit operates on the fringe of the MPO process particularly in NH as funds come directly from FTA to agency rather than through NHDOT. Aside from transit, most challenging is that lots of work by communities goes into bringing projects to the table and then perhaps only one or two get funded. Can be disheartening.
- Peter Coffin – Different between the rural communities and the urban communities. Rye had a good project this year. It's hard to say that a given good project is not going to get done because there just isn't enough funding. Example of Kingston project that keeps not making the cut. We need to be investing more to allow needed projects to get done. We seem to be planning for a downgrade of road conditions.
 - Dave Sharples – Has been around for many years including with SRPC and now RPC. Planning process at RPC is good, staff does a great job. Well organized. Detailed memos explain requirements. That said Dave still has projects he was pushing ten years ago that are languishing because there isn't enough money.
 - Paul Maloney – There are a lot of factors in getting projects funded that are beyond the control of the RPC. It's really beyond the scope of the MPO to ensure that projects get funded. Can present at GACIT process.
 - Joseph Johnson – New commissioner from Stratham. Relatively new to the process. Mostly listening.
 - Paul Maloney – Do you (Joseph) feel well informed by the staff?
 - Joseph Johnson – Thinks the information is there if people seek it out. He's interested in transportation in general and getting further engaged.
 - Andrew Brubaker – Feels Dave, Scott, Tim at RPC provide a lot of great information on the process. Charts, graphs, whole planning process is well explained. Committees are well informed.
 - Rad Nichols – From my perspective they've done a good job of getting people to the table even though they have a limited chance of getting their project funded.
 - Leigh Levine – Here to listen to the comments.
 - Peter Britz – Staff keeps Commissioners well informed.
 - Stephanie Casella – New to process in RPC region and new to Portsmouth.
 - Jennifer Hale – Echo others comments on effectiveness of staff. From town perspective there's a challenge in meshing how town specific projects like sewer upgrade integrate with projects that come forward through the MPO process. Example of Hampton Seabrook Bridge project that is much needed and proceeding well but current design will require moving sewer line that was only recently upgraded. Question of who pays for relocation.

Are there any comments about the partners? Could any be doing something different or something more helpful?

- Barbara Kravitz – Echo what Richard and Jen Hale have said. Appreciate that staff are willing to actually come into the towns to a PB or Select Board meeting when there is something critical and a briefing is needed. One difficulty in Hampton and Hampton Beach in particular is that many current needs are big ticket items. More than can be accommodated in the regional allocation for the TYP in any given cycle. It would be helpful if there can be attention to how mid/large projects can be funded when they don't fit into the suballocation. How can they be spread out to accommodate them? Intersection of US1/NH101 intersection realignment.
-

- Paul Maloney – Need to work through state DOT on projects like that. Have seen projects that exceed regional target move forward. Can be different funding sources like HSIP. Consultation with NHDOT on large projects
- Dave Walker – The NH101/US1 project has actually been added to the Ten Year Plan, but there is an ongoing challenge with funding medium and large projects given the regional allocation budgets.
- Rad Nichols – Challenge to compare highway projects and transit projects apples to apples. The evaluation criteria are different and the current criteria don't fit transit.
- Leah Sirmin – Does Tim White from NHDES have any thoughts as a stakeholder partner?
- Tim White – Regarding the challenge of getting projects put forward and funded, at the end of the day all the TAC members have a better understanding of just why the process is as difficult as it is. RPC communities are fortunate to have staff with as much experience and seniority as they do. Opinion based on six years at DES and twelve years prior at one of the other MPOs.

One of the things with the review is asking staff about outreach to disadvantaged communities. How is the process doing in that regard? Underprivileged, minority, low income.

- Richard McDermott – Hampton Falls is trying to address the needs of older folks in town. Building 55+ condos.
- Scott Bogle – Noted outreach to NAACP Seacoast Chapter and Racial Unity Team to ask for assistance with engagement for Age Friendly Communities project as well as upcoming LRTP update. Lots of prior work with older adults and individuals with disabilities.
- Rad Nichols – Over time one thing that's become more challenging is the accuracy of the data identifying those subsets of our communities. Data are becoming less and less reliable as the Census changes its methodology. The American Community Survey is a much smaller sample size than the old Census Long Form, and margins of error can be very high when looking at small communities and small subsets of the population within those communities. Makes it more challenging to set goals, measure performance. Wish that that ACS data were stronger to support these Civil Rights work.

4. Regional Transportation System Issues and Needs – S. Bogle

Scott Bogle provided an overview of the process for the current update to the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan, including discussion at the last TAC meeting. Both the TAC and Policy Committee will be asked on multiple occasions for input in the process, both as part of up front data gathering and later in reviewing draft chapters. Today staff want to engage the TAC in a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of the regional transportation system. Discussion of the four SWOT analysis questions took about 40 minutes and results are attached at the end of these minutes.

5. 2023-2032 Ten Year Plan GACIT Hearings Update - D. Walker

Walker provided an assessment of how the GACIT hearings had been attended and the types of comments that were being provided by the public. A reminder of the change in dates for the Hampton and Salem hearings was also given.

6. Discussion of Topics for future TAC meetings – D. Walker

Tabled to the December 2, 2021 meeting due to lack of time

7. Project Updates

Not discussed due to lack of time.

8. Open Discussion/comments:

None.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Walker, Recording Secretary

SWOT Analysis for LRTP Update 2021-2022
RPC MPO Technical Advisory Committee
October 28, 2021

1) What do you see as strengths of the transportation system in the MPO region?

- State has a primary and secondary highway system that is in pretty good shape.
- State has made strides to organize and publish information available on proposed and past projects.
- Public transportation and community transportation options available that some other regions in the state don't have.
- Having MS2 data readily available online is helpful for projects
- Decent network of park and ride locations.
- Commuter rail/passenger rail line as well as C&J, Boston Express and other intercity bus services allow efficient connection to Boston.
- High speed tolling on I95 has been a benefit.
- Signal coordination efforts are working and are ongoing.
- Communications among communities and the MPO are strong. Good overall understanding of the process.
- Very well established interagency consultation process between the regions and state and federal agencies.
- Off road route work on NH Seacoast Greenway and Rockingham Recreation Trail – Good off road trails for transportation purposes.

2) What do you see as weaknesses of the transportation system in the MPO region?

- Public transportation is very limited in non-city areas.
- Actually transit is very limited in city areas as well, in terms of frequency of service.
- At regional level we have Downeaster, C&J and Boston Express in specific corridors, but limited elsewhere.
- Lack of a regional approach to regional evacuation
- How maintenance is prioritized – responsibilities between state and municipalities. Why does one section of NH101 get done very frequently when another primary road gets very little?
- Dangerous off ramp on NH101 doesn't have funding to fix.
- Where should the needle fall on balance between maintenance and improvements and upgrades?
- How will we weigh, for example, safety vs. coastal resilience given funding constraints?
- Not adequate funding streams, nor is there really willingness look at that seriously and address it (not NHDOT but at legislature).
- If major infrastructure bill comes through, will there be enough state dollars to leverage? Toll credits are available but they are not actual funding.

- Need attention to state funding development.
- Ten Year Plan is largely composed of state projects. Can there be another way to support town/local projects? Thinking about accessibility for example. NHDOT has been improving accessibility for sidewalks on state roads, but can there be support for towns to address accessibility improvements?
- Not prepared to deal with aging population that we have. Ability to allow older adults to age in place with transportation needs met.
- COAST's FTA funding is fully programmed so any further expansions need to be covered by municipalities.
- Southern US1 corridor has grown and needs improvements.
- Resiliency – What will we need 25-30 years from now, and incorporate that thinking into MPO priorities.
- We're not prepared to deal with needs related to resilience to sea level rise and storms that were identified through the Tides to Storms project.
- Need engagement plan to help make investment in these needs more palatable to the public and decisionmakers.
- State Pavement Strategy and State Bridge Strategy – Keep the Good Roads good vs. for bridges Fix the Worst First. Is this policy working?
- Roads in general in this region are in relatively good shape. NHDOT goal is to get to every state road on at least a 10 year cycle. Currently able to keep Tier 1 and Tier 2 roads eligible for federal funding in good shape. Tiers not eligible for federal funding are in worse shape. Impending loss of SB367 funding that has been used for paving maintenance but will need to shift to cover I93 debt service.
- NHDOT now needs to plan for a reduction in road quality based on loss of those funds.
- What is the right number in terms of what percentage of roads are in good to fair condition vs. poor condition? Shouldn't all roads be kept in good to fair condition?

3) What if any opportunities do you see now or in the coming years that could support efforts to address the system shortcomings noted above?

- Funding from American Rescue Plan will hopefully be useful in addressing shortcomings.
- Focus on resiliency at the federal level is bringing new opportunities for funding to at least study needs. Hopefully eventually there will be funding to also support project construction.
- East Coast Greenway creates opportunity from economic development and community connectivity standpoint.
- Recognition of the needs of a growing older adult population creates an opportunity for getting better investment in community transportation.
- Opportunity to explore regional improvements through cooperation among communities. Look to leverage the strengths of different towns vis a vis state and federal government.
- Public transportation is not starting from zero in most communities. We have services that are scalable and on which we can build.
- Work to develop other funding mechanisms as the system undergoes electrification.

4) What if any challenges or threats do you see now or in the coming years that could adversely impact the transportation system?

- Two concerns for Seabrook: Evacuation in case of flooding or in case of nuclear emergency. Is there capacity in place for evacuation?
- There are evacuation plans for each community for Seabrook Station. There is also regional and state coordination on evacuation. Regional evacuation drills coordinated with local and state entities. Some head butting on who pays for the evacuation route signage (state or local cost).
- Are routes published in hazard mitigation plans? Not typically.
- There are 100 year flood evacuation plans.
- STCV study results will need to be incorporated into planning process.
- Consideration of simultaneous occurrence – nuclear emergency during a coastal flooding emergency. Fukushima example.
- Regional coordination may be lacking when multiple communities look at the same corridors for simultaneous evacuation.
- Fact that we're seeing more electric vehicles on road creates a threat to our transportation funding system through the gas tax. Need a different approach not dependent on sale of gasoline.
- Funding cliff in about fiscal year 2025 for public transit in the region.
- Increasing prevalence of the mindset that transportation needs to be just in time and on demand. Services like microtransit are not cost effective for public agencies to provide, especially in a limited funding environment.
- Current land development pattern is a challenge to planning anything other than highways – low density makes transit challenging.
- High cost of housing (or combined housing and transportation) is creating a workforce challenge in the region. High cost means that people either have to commute farther or they look for jobs closer to home which creates labor shortage in this region.
- There has been an impact of COVID on transit – COAST, C&J, Downeaster.
- What effect does remote work have on gas tax and toll income?
- COVID may have long term shifts on how people move around. The fact that most people in this meeting are participating virtually is an indication.
- How long will COVID impacts drag out?
- Lots of stories about leases on commercial buildings down in larger cities. How will that manifest in this region? We've also seen an influx of people moving to the region and buying houses as they're able to connect remotely to urban centers for work.
- Supply chain issues COAST faces – lack of commercially licensed operators. How will that impact the transportation network? This also impacts freight, not just transit.
- The state freight plan noted that the state is short by thousands of truck drivers. 80K+ nationally. There's similarly a shortages of bus drivers – school and public transit.
- Problem with overcrowding at ports – shipping backups. Where do the empty containers go back at the port? Bottleneck currently.
- What are the expectations during an evacuation? Plans assume buses and drivers can be mobilized for evacuation, but those may not be available given simultaneous need elsewhere.
- School buses – They are available during the day. Who looks at how those could be better utilized?

- The region has done substantial work on regional coordination of public transit and human services transportation. Does not typically include school transportation. Challenges including federal restrictions on public transit agencies operating school transportation. Typically when assets are idle it's a matter of lack of funding for additional operating hours.