

**Central NH Regional Planning Commission**

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**Transportation Advisory Committee**

**February 24, 2023**

**Meeting Summary**

9:00 A.M.

Attendees	
Richard Moore, Town of Chichester	Emilio Cancio-Bello, Town of Sutton
Karen Hill, City of Concord	Russel Tatro, Town of Webster
Donna White, Town of Dunbarton	Tim Blagden, Town of Warner
Betsy Bosiak, Town of Epsom	Bill Watson, NHDOT
Robyn Payson, Town of Hillsboro	Lucy St. John, NHDOT
David White, Town of Hopkinton	Cam Prolman, SNHPC
Stan Brehm, Guest (Pembroke)	Ricky DiCillo, NHDES
Carolyn Cronin, Town of Pembroke	James Penfold, Revision Energy
Cindy Yanski, CAPBMCI	

**Commission Staff:** Craig Tufts, Matt Baronas, Mike Tardiff, Steve Henninger,  
Matt Taylor, Vincent Pagano

**Introductions**

The meeting began at 9:00 AM, called to order by Chair, Betsy Bosiak. All TAC members and guests present, both in person and virtually, introduced themselves.

**Review and Approve Minutes of the September 9th, 2023, TAC Meeting**

The number of in-person attendees required for a quorum was not met, so the review and approval of the minutes was postponed until the next meeting.

**NHDOT Update: CMAQ and 2025-2034 Ten Year Plan**

Lucy St. John, NHDOT, provided an update sharing that there was \$30 million in Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding awarded to NH. NHDOT received 46 applications requesting around \$44 million in funds. Of the applications, 22 were electric vehicle (EV) specific requests. NHDOT is going to push forward all 24 other (non-EV) applications, pending meeting eligibility requirements. All EV applications, per federal requirements, are going to be reassessed at a later date. Lucy noted that because all non-EV applications are being pushed forward, the regional planning commission TACs do not have to rank the projects. Once NHDOT

can review these application's scopes, budgets, and eligibility, these projects will be added to the Ten Year Plan. The methodology for measuring air quality improvement is still being decided on.

Craig Tufts expressed that this is a positive development, and it is still expected that all EV project applications will also be pushed forward later once there is more federal guidance established. Craig went on to share that in past TAC meetings the group had established project rankings for submittal to the Ten Year Plan. The project rankings were first Concord, then Hopkinton, and Hillsborough. There is potentially enough TYP funding to cover the top two projects. However, the project in Concord, a roundabout at McKee Square, was also a CMAQ application that is being pushed forward, potentially making way for the Hillsborough project to receive Ten Year Plan funding in addition to the Hopkinton project. Lucy shared that NHDOT had received the Ten Year Project submission plans and begun review and will be following up with the RPCs soon.

Bill Watson shared that in NHDOT's opinion the TYP project proposals will cost more than the budgets included in their applications, and the significant increases should be taken into consideration for the planning process. A detailed rationale and comments will soon be shared with CNHRPC.

Tim Blagden asked Bill for an update on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Bill shared that the state is still on schedule with the plan, the four MPO regions have hosted their required public comment period and hearings and submitted their regional plans for approval. NHDOT expects to send the STIP to the Federal Highway Administration before the end of next week (3/3) and hope for approval by the end of March or sooner.

### **Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) – Overview of 5 Applications in Region**

Craig presented information giving an overview of the CMAQ program and the region's five applications. The \$30 million in federal CMAQ dollars will be rolled into the 2025-2034 TYP targeted for 2025-2029. The money is to be awarded to projects that demonstrate a transportation identity and emission reduction.

There were five applications in the CNHRPC Region: Concord McKee Square Roundabout, CNHRPC Transportation Demand Management Software, Hillsborough Electric Vehicles and Electric Charging Stations, Revision Energy DC Fast Chargers in Concord, and Warner Concord to Lake Sunapee Rail Trail. Craig detailed each project.

Concord's project to replace the McKee Square intersection with a roundabout was also the top ranked CNHRPC TYP application. The City's application for CMAQ funding advanced the project's schedule to better fit their CIP and goals. The total project cost is projected to be slightly over \$3 million.

CNHRPC applied for \$150,000 in CMAQ funding to support transportation demand management software associated with the CommuteSmart NH (CSNH) program. The AgileMile software provides the interface for CSNH including its rewards program, ride matching, and trip planner that shows transit offerings. Part of the application was also to provide funds for General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) support and GTFS-Flex training. GTFS is the data specification for feeds that allows transit providers to be discoverable in the Trip Planner and all online maps such as Google or Apple maps. GTFS-Flex is the data specification for demand response transit providers which are more complicated to depict. With the funding CSNH can continue to be

powered by demand management software such as AgileMile and CNHRPC can lead a statewide GTFS and GTFS-Flex data production and management effort. Mike Tardiff noted that CNHRPC has applied for funding for the CSNH program in a variety of places including Federal Transit funds and has received funding from CAPBMCI and Transport NH.

Hillsborough applied for \$500,000 to purchase EVs for its municipal fleet and multiple charging stations, at least one being for the municipal vehicles, the others would be open to the public. There were multiple parking locations identified as potential sites for the EV charging equipment.

Revision Energy applied for slightly over \$1.9 million to fund four DC Fast chargers in Concord at Hannaford south of the I-93 and I-393 interchange. The project location was targeted due to its proximity to the interstates and other major state routes and its ability to supply charging for residents, especially of multi-family housing, that do not have access to personal charging. James Penfold highlighted that the application funds were a high estimate for the project to provide flexibility. It was noted that the project was difficult to price because of how far in the future the funding will be awarded and factors such as inflation of construction costs can have a large impact. Mike asked what impact Tesla chargers potentially becoming open to all users has on Revision Energy's project plans. James shared that it is difficult to gauge what the impact will be, but he suspects Tesla will experiment with its level of openness to other users making it not a straightforward change that can be accounted for in plans. James also noted that with the mass adoption of EVs the number of Tesla chargers will not be nearly enough to account for demand. James concluded by sharing that there are a number of level 2 chargers in Concord owned and operated by Revision Energy as a pilot. These chargers are located on Green Street in the General Court Parking lot.

Warner applied for slightly under \$3 million to connect a portion of the Concord to Lake Sunapee Rail Trail from I-89 Exit 8 into the existing trail at the village in Warner. The majority of the 1.1 mile trail connection will be constructed in the interstate median. This particular location is a technical challenge but is a key connection in progress of achieving the vision of connecting Concord to Lake Sunapee. Tim shared that the plan for this section was put together with help from a team of engineers at Dartmouth and wetland scientists resulting in a solution that will not only connect the trail but also improve the shallow water wetlands along the trail.

Craig concluded the presentation by noting there is no need for ranking these regional projects and the next steps will involve air quality analyses and NHDOT will perform its internal review for eligibility.

#### **Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan**

Craig provided an overview of the SS4A program noting that is a federal program with discretionary funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (BIL) for safety projects. The program has two components, the first is an action plan, the second is implementation. For a project to receive funding for implementation it must first be part of a safety action plan. A handful of towns in the CNHRPC region are interested in applying for SS4A funding for implementation projects, so instead of each town performing their own safety action plan, CNHRPC plans to establish a region wide plan which will make all towns eligible. Mike included that CNHRPC will be able to use NHDOT UPWP funding to complete the regionwide plan, ensuring that individual town implementation project applications will be able to receive funding in earlier rounds of the SS4A program. The

regionwide Safety Action Plan is expected to be completed around the end of spring or in the summer, allowing communities to apply for the September SS4A deadline.

Craig highlighted some of the key components of a SS4A safety action plan including leadership and goal setting which could be statements from the TAC about safety and planning structure which includes the creation of a task force, which likely will involve members of the TAC. The plan will also require safety analysis, engagement from the public and stakeholders, equity considerations, policy and process changes, strategy and project selections, and the progress must be transparent.

Craig also explained a “Safe Systems Approach” required for this program. The approach goes beyond identifying a dangerous intersection. It must consider how to promote safe road users, safe vehicles, safe speeds, safe roads, and post-crash care. Many elements go into each of these considerations including understanding the importance of redundancy and the randomness and vulnerability of humans.

The SS4A program encourages identifying an emphasis unique to your region, Craig highlighted school zones as a potential key in the CNHRPC region. Craig cited the new school in Allenstown, safety concerns near Salisbury Elementary school that were brought up in the TYP discussion, and Safe Routes to School programs in Concord, all as considerations for this program.

Craig concluded by detailing the next steps which include honing in on the work plan that is based on components of SS4A, assembling the task force to discuss the program, and engaging CNHRPC’s on-call engineer to begin technical analysis work. Tim Blagden asked how SS4A interacts with Complete Streets initiatives, to which Craig shared that it is viewed as a component of the Safe Systems Approach and Mike noted that SS4A is a more narrowly focused program closer to the ground. The TAC discussed locations with safety issues that could potentially be included in the impending plan. Tim also asked about the logistical requirements and offerings of the program such as funding breakdowns and allowed project application sizes, which CNHRPC will provide more information on at the next TAC meeting.

#### **CommuteSmart NH Update and other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Activities**

Matt Baronas shared that CSNH will be hosting its annual statewide Spring Statewide Challenge for the month of May. Commuters will get to participate in teams based on their employers and compete with other businesses across the state to track the most sustainable trips. There will be weekly rewards and incentives for participants. Mike also added that a CSNH android app was recently launched by AgileMile, allowing users to participate, log trips, and use the trip planner on either a computer web browser, on an IOS app, or the android app.

Tim announced that a portable covered bike parking structure is going to be staged at the park and ride at I-93 exit 5 and off the Londonderry Rail trail, noting that additional advertisement for using the structure will work well during the challenge. Cam Prolman shared that SNHPC would be willing to collaborate with Tim on promoting use of the structure.

#### **Next Meeting Date**

The next TAC meeting was set for Friday March 24 at 9:00 AM.

### **Any Other Business**

Ricky DiCillo provided an overview of the New Hampshire State Clean Diesel Program. The program includes over \$900,000 in funding for reimbursement projects that reduce diesel emissions, mainly through replacing or upgrading diesel units, or installing reduction technology. The program is open to towns, cities, and private entities that own diesel units and has an application deadline of March 31<sup>st</sup> at 4:00pm.

Ricky shared background about the funding source noting that it is funded partly through EPA and partly through the New Hampshire Volkswagen Beneficiary Trust, with the leftover funds from fiscal year 2021 being added to this year's funding. Then Ricky detailed some example projects including replacing school buses, plow trucks, refuse trucks, and more. There are some additional eligibility restrictions including the on-road diesel vehicles needing to be above class 5, the vehicle must be in regular usage, a swap from an older diesel unit to a newer one requires the unit be from 2009 or older, and if a diesel unit is replaced, the old unit must be scrapped.

There are a variety of funding percentages depending on the project ranging from grants covering 25% of the cost up to 50%, but there are no restrictions on the dollar amount of funding requested. Ricky also presented the criteria used for scoring this competitive grant and highlighted the most important category as Cost Effectiveness of Emissions Reductions, and bonus points are awarded for alternative fuel replacement projects and those from government agencies. Ricky concluded by sharing information about resources available to help with applying for this grant program including his own contact information.

Lucy noted that March 31<sup>st</sup> is the deadline for RPC's to have an approved list of TYP projects then the process will restart in the summer.

Tim shared that The National Bike Summit is occurring from March 26<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> and can be attended virtually or in-person. Tim is serving as the New Hampshire state coordinator for this event. Additionally, Tim is working with the Central New Hampshire Bicycle Coalition to get bikes into elementary school districts for kindergartners and first graders to learn how to ride bikes in physical education classes.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31 AM.