



**North Country
Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting
At the
Granite State Room
North Country Resource Center
629A Main Street, Lancaster, NH 03584
And via Zoom
Wednesday, August 23rd, 2023
10:00AM-11:30AM**

MINUTES

1. Call to Meeting and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 10:07AM

Paul Robitaille, Gorham
Carl Martland, Sugar Hill
Emily Benson, Jackson
Robin Irving, Lancaster
Michele Cormier, Randolph
Ray Gorman, Colebrook (Arrived at 10:17AM)
Rosalind Page, Lisbon (via Zoom)

Nancy Spaulding, NHDOT District 3
Stephanie Weiner, Congresswoman Kuster's Office
Chuck Henderson, Senator Shaheen's Office
Nick Altonaga, NCC

Mark Gravallesse, HSH (via Zoom)
Andrew Fabiszewski, HSH (via Zoom)
William Rose, NHDOT (via Zoom)
Vanessa Partington, NHDES (via Zoom)

2. Approve Meeting Minutes: June 13, 2023 **

Due to lack of an in-person quorum, no official business was voted on.

3. NHDOT Presentation: Statewide Corridor Study

William Rose presented on the NHDOT Statewide Corridor Study Program with HSP.

- 2019-2028 TYP
- \$700k/year
- Created via 50% transfer from CMAQ

Steering Committee was organized and includes NHDOT Asset MGMT & Performance, Bureau of Environment Administrator, State Highway Safety Admin, Chief of Project MGMT, Public Transit Administrator, Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance

Goals:

- Get more strategic in project development process – Identifying challenges and opportunities earlier in the process and within the corridor context.
- Improve information available to project managers
- Understanding Traffic volumes and type
- Feedback from local stakeholders
- Better integration of multimodal opportunities into network. Be strategic vs reactive.
- Improved public input opportunities
- Improve TYP project selection process.

Raymond Gorman arrived at 10:17AM.

Andy from HSH presented on Purpose and Objectives

- Data collection
 - Road data
 - Demographic data
 - Crash Data
 - Driveway permit Data
 - Multimodal data
- Data Analysis
 - Official Routes
 - Prioritized Routes through dataset
- Prioritization
 - 85 Corridors
 - 170 Subcorridors
 - Prioritization Tool development
 - Scoring metric breakdown
 - System Preservation (20%)
 - Mobility(20%)
 - Phys road Attributes (20%)
 - Safety (25%)
 - Socioeconomic (15%)

Carl: It looks like the corridors are all individual State or US highways?

- William: 85 of the non-tier-1 roadways. Tier-2 and below. 170 sub-corridors will be the main level of analysis. Will be combining many of the smaller corridors into a single corridor study.

Carl: Can see now why the RTP has been organized around Corridors. Have had back and forth conversations about what the definition of a corridor is. Importance of Tourism and scenic byways. Need to discuss the multi-modal nature of these roads.

Emily: Appreciate the data-focused presentation. When will the online tool be available online?

- William: No date specifically in mind right now to release to the public.

Emily: Interested to see the change in data over the last few years. Would be interested if that was involved in the program?

- William: We are looking at the data changes over time. Especially for AADT trends statewide.

Robin: Lancaster has been behind data-wise. We recently received funding for data mapping. Will this data be available for us to have an overlay in our system?

- Andy: We can release our GIS layers to you. Many of these datapoints are also available on the NHDOT online system.
- William: All the data we are using is pre-existing within our system. We can work with you or have you work with our Mapping and data team.

Michele: Comment on how the corridors are prioritized. Tend to be bottom-heavy for the state with Manchester and southern areas. Is the data weighted so that corridors across the state are given a fair assessment and balancing?

- William: Traffic volume and population density account for only 10% of the weights, so there is a lot more that comes into the analysis.

Paul: What is the weighting for socioeconomics?

Nick: Does this make the corridors in the RTP obsolete?

- William: No, we have used the initial RTP work done by the regions to help frame this. Think that you should continue with your updates in the way you have already been framing them.

Paul: Are traffic patterns in neighboring states along Corridors taken into account?

- William: Yes, that will be included. We had a few greyed out corridors that have to do with the Freight network. In terms of overall impact, we are looking at all vehicle types.

4. On-Call Engineering Update

Nick reported on where NCC is with the process. Hope to have master agreement approved soon, and can then begin working on Task Orders for current on-call requests.

5. Rural Transportation Challenges

Paul: There are more and more people who are having difficulties with work and life due to vehicle price of repairs and operation. Small taxi services have popped up. Finding a way to get to medical appointments

Stephanie: What is the proper forum for these types of conversations? Have seen some misses and have difficulties with local or regional providers. People are being turned down due to the pre-qualified transportation distances.

Robin: People are sacrificing their private vehicles to fit into their housing options.

Vanessa: Came from background of transitional housing that helped with hospital patients. Even in Concord, there were many misses and gaps in services when arranging Medicaid trips. Even more of a conversation for rural region.

Topics for inclusion in next discussion re: transportation challenges:

- Transportation needs
- Human services
- Housing
- Medical services
- Jails

Emily: Gibson Center has an AARP Age Friendly Communities grant that encompasses 8 communities in the region.

6. Discussion:

a. Funding Opportunities

Nick presented the summary of funding opportunities and that are available. He is willing to assist towns with any possible projects that may want to apply for.

Paul: Could you find any information about the updated EV Charging plans? Heard that a lot of funding is going to Effingham.

NHDES Funding opportunities:

- Granite State Clean Fleets (open until 10/13)
 - \$10,000,000 available
 - Local government eligible
 - Competitive selection
 - Different levels of reimbursement/cost coverage
- NH Clean Diesel Grant (Due 9/15)
 - \$800,000 available
 - Businesses and local government eligible
 - Different levels of funding reimbursement/cost coverage

Vanessa provided her email and some links via the Zoom chat for active NHDES grant programs:

- Vanessa.k.partington@des.nh.gov
- Granite State Clean Fleets (VW Trust funding) <https://www.des.nh.gov/business-and-community/loans-and-grants/volkswagen-mitigation-trust>
- NH Clean Diesel Grant Program - <https://www.des.nh.gov/business-and-community/loans-and-grants/dera>

Emily: Would a non-state road bridge be eligible for funding?

Nancy: Merrimack County Extension services is assisting in the replacement of a bridge. May be good to reach out to Extension services for possible opportunities.

Michele: Could look into NHDES or FEMA if it impacts the natural environment and river systems etc.

Nancy: NHDES ARM funds are also a possible option.

b. NCC Projects

Nick provided general updates about NCC activities:

- Traffic Counts are ongoing.
- NCC can help with RSMS and SADES programs
- Excited about upcoming Bethlehem traffic calming pop-up. Trying to get it done right!

c. Scenic Byways

Carl: Updating the Corridor management Plans. Byway Enhancement Awards are open, feel free to apply on behalf of a local group that has done byways work. Dick Mallion passed away earlier this year. Byways Chair Mike Bruno has asked Carl to replace Dick.

d. Updates from Communities

Rosalind (Lisbon): Nothing to report today.

Ray (Colebrook): Business as usual. Main Street project with NHDOT. Water and sewer projects ongoing (NHDES). Moving forward.

Carl (Sugar Hill): Just received the reports on engineering costs for replacing sidewalks in the village and costs for updating the area around the historic marker at Lover's Lane. Sidewalk through the center of town costs \$2mil. Cost for Lover's Lane also sizeable.

Chuck: Have been working closely with Whitefield on Union Street Rehabilitation project. NHDOT engineer Kevin Russell has been a huge help. Congressionally designated funding to fix a nasty drainage and road issue.

Emily (Jackson): Lucky with rest of summer rains. Fire station renovation project continues, will be having open houses every Tuesday morning for month of September and October. MWV Bike Path is now open. PB is working on the capital improvement plan.

Robin (Lancaster):

- Rebranding of the town(new signage, etc.). New website with branding. Intern working with CEDC helped with these signs for broader signage AND for wayfinding signs. Want to have any signs along NHDOT right of way reviewed by NHDOT officials.
- Bike racks for town, first discussed during the Ride & Rack program.

- US3 off of Page Hill Rd: Seeking funding to have intersection reengineered to remove traffic island.

Michele (Randolph)

- Durand Rd is being rebuilt. Still mostly on schedule. Current phase should be completed by end of October. Have included a significant amount of ditching with the project. Will be applying for FEMA mitigation funds to support it.
- Restarting the conversation about the Appalachia trailhead and toilets. Want to get partners involved. Hope to have Chuck assist with finding capital costs.
- Question for NHDOT: We have a subdivision that the access will be off of US2. Is it appropriate for the town to ask if the new lots have a combined access point versus multiple? Is this something that NHDOT should step into early?

Nancy: Important to get in touch with District 1 Engineer. James McMahon is Assistant District Engineer. Good for the town to be proactive. There are access points that can be granted, but this will mostly be based off of the lot dimensions and sight distance. Note on shared access: Can have many issues. Need to have very SPECIFIC and CLEAR language for any shared access.

Robin: I copy all site plans and designs along state routes to NHDOT. Good to get their input at that stage.

William: Department does also have an official tool (MOU) to help procedurally work with the town on those driveway permit applications.

Nancy (District 3): July 16th, great damage along 140 with storms. Thankful for local contractors to step up and work with all different bureaus and officials to get things fixed. The neighbor-helping-neighbor aspect of the needs really helped get the work accomplished.

Stephanie (Kuster's Office): Touch on a slightly different point. A meeting in Berlin over the summer regarding overdoses. Highlighted the importance of collaboration. Really need to have a multi-department/organizational response to major issues.

- See a multi-group/organization approach to transportation. Need to widen the circle of engagement to assist with Transit and transportation challenges.
- Want to reiterate that we want to hear from local representatives and stakeholders on their issues.

Paul (Gorham): Very successful tourist season for Gorham. I cannot imagine that traffic counts are down. Number of wash-outs along 16 from the recent storms. NHDOT have been great with fixing these problems. With new economic growth in Gorham, anticipate growing pains.

Members discussed the major recreation and tourism traffic at specific sites (Franconia Notch State park, Cog Railway, etc.)

Robin: Has there been more planning done for the Eclipse?

Ray: We have not had much movement on planning since last meeting.

Stephanie: I heard that the Bureau of Safety has taken a main role in planning for the Eclipse.

Members discussed the different groups involved and the different work being done to plan and prepare for the 2024 Eclipse. North Country Health Consortium and a number of the other public health networks are lacking an emergency management coordinator.

7. Other Business

Today is the Kickoff meeting for the 2025-2034 TYP Process. GACIT is meeting today in Hampton. The NHDOT will be presenting the draft TYP to the committee. Schedule anticipated to be 24 meetings throughout September and October.

8. Adjourn

Robin Motioned
Carl Seconded
Motion Carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:56AM

Next Meeting: October (tentative)

****Indicates vote of the TAC is required**

An in-person quorum (7) is needed in order to conduct any votes, so please plan to attend if you are willing and able. If this is not possible, please use the information on the following page to attend virtually. While attending in-person, please wear a face covering for the duration of the meeting and keep a safe distance between yourself and others. Thank you.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87454473883>

Meeting ID: 874 5447 3883