

**Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Committee Meeting
150 Wakefield Street, Suite 12, Conference Rm. 1A
Rochester, NH 03867**

Final Minutes

**Friday, February 16, 2018
9:00 AM-11:00 AM**

1. Introductions

Meeting called to order at 9:07 am

Members Present:

Marcia Gasses (Dover), Liz Strachan (NHDES), Don Hammann (Rochester), Michael Williams (COAST), Steve Diamond (Barrington), Dianne Smith (Brookfield), Brian Tapscott (Somersworth), Tom Crosby (Madbury), Judy Nelson (Rollinsford), Sandy Keans (Rochester), Victoria Parmele (Northwood)

Staff present: Rachel Dewey (Data Analyst), Colin Lentz (Regional Transportation Planner), Rachael Mack (GIS Analyst), Stefanie Casella (Data Collection and Analysis Assistant)

2. Staff Communications

C. Lentz notified committee members that Cynthia Copeland had announced her retirement. He said she intended to retire at the end of March, 2018.

3. Action Item

3.1 Minutes from January 19th, 2018 [VOTE]

M. Gasses made motion to approve minutes as written

Seconded by S. Keans

Vote: Unanimous All in favor

4. Discussion Items

4.1 Recap of Transportation Emergency Recovery Workshop

C. Lentz noted that two days before the Transportation Emergency Recovery Workshop, the Coastal Adaptation Workgroup (CAW) met with NHDOT for an initial meeting between the two groups to discuss transportation planning in response to climate change. Attendance included representatives from DES and experts in the field of climate change and weather. The group looked at maps where sea level rise plus storm surge could impact NH's coastal infrastructure (example RT 101A). He noted that one question that was discussed by the group was: how do we really objectively plan for the lifecycle of a piece of infrastructure (e.g. the Hampton Seabrook bridge) when climate change could have a huge impact in the near future?

C. Lentz explained that the meeting between CAW and NHDOT provided an excellent preview of the Transportation Emergency Recovery Workshop that he organized and hosted with Tom Reinauer (Transportation Director at the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission). Workshop attendance included representatives from the Rockingham Planning Commission, both Maine and New Hampshire's DOT's, NH Department of Safety, NH Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), NH Department of Environmental Services, the Coastal Adaptation Workgroup, COAST, C & J Buslines, and the University of New Hampshire.

The workshop consisted of facilitator presentations, regional context (Southeast NH and York County) presentations, large and small group discussions, and small group exercises. C. Lentz said participants used several maps including vulnerable transportation infrastructure in flood plains, infrastructure, evacuations routes, traffic volumes, transit routes, and population trends. Topics of discussion focused on transportation infrastructure recovery, establishing the difference between emergency response and recovery, and how to incorporate the strong preparedness work that has done by municipalities in NH.

C. Lentz answered the question of "How up to date is the data?" by presenting recent results of an update to the SLOSH (Sea Lake and Overland Storm Surge from Hurricane) Model used by Maine Department of Environmental Protection. The newest SLOSH Model uses highly accurate elevation data to project how hurricanes will affect coastal infrastructure. Comparisons between the 2005 model (with lower quality elevation data) and 2015 model (which uses LiDAR elevation data) show that coastal communities and infrastructure are much more vulnerable to hurricanes (regardless of their strength). C. Lentz noted that data related to flooding, floodplains, and climate impacts is very up-to-date.

C. Lentz then explained that he would be working with Tom Reinauer and staff from Rockingham Planning Commission to develop a workshop summary and a Regional Transportation Emergency Recovery Plan. He noted that in New Hampshire, emergency response and recovery start with municipalities, and involve the state when local resources are expended or exceeded – while Maine utilizes local, County, and State resources. He said MPOs do not play an active role in emergency response and immediate recovery, but they can play a strong role in local and regional preparedness and providing technical assistance that can aid in recovery efforts. For this reason, the recovery plan would likely focus on defining the role of the MPO's role in hazard preparedness, response, and recovery. Research must also be done to identify the roles and responsibilities of key agencies and stakeholders. The issue of stakeholder responsibility generated discussion amongst the committee about public utility providers and what role they would play in this effort – particularly when it comes to emergency recovery and the removal of downed powerlines. Committee members agreed that coordination with public utility providers is imperative to the success of this planning effort.

P. Nelson asked how the workshop and emergency planning efforts could lead to better tools for tools for emergency response and recovery beyond the typical reactionary approach. C. Lentz said he would be speaking to that directly in the next item on the agenda. He noted some examples of future

opportunities to incorporate more emergency planning into existing resources and structures: specific considerations for emergency planning could be included in the upcoming update to the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) plan; the upcoming corridor planning effort programmed in the draft Ten Year Plan should include considerations for infrastructure vulnerability; and COAST's TripLink system (which coordinates demand response trips for seniors and people with disabilities) could be used to coordinate evacuation of vulnerable populations.

V. Parmele asked whether these issues were priorities for state agencies. C. Lentz said they are a priority for many agencies, especially NHDOT who is responsible for critical transportation infrastructure. He noted that the governor is responsible for declaring states of emergency and requesting federal support to get resources for municipalities during response and recovery efforts. C. Lentz said that some related issues had been discussed at a recent Partnering for Performance NH (PFPNH) Meeting. He said NHDOT was working internally to provide MPOs and RPCs better access to data and software.

P. Nelson said he hoped SRPC could develop tools and capabilities that could be incorporated into a package of services that could be marketed to communities in the region. C. Lentz agreed and noted that P. Nelson's comment provided a nice segue to the next agenda item.

4.2 Transportation Infrastructure Resilience Toolkit Development

C. Lentz introduced the Transportation Infrastructure Resilience Toolkit that he had been working on with Rachel Dewy (Data Analyst) and Stefanie Casella (Data Collection and Analysis Assistant). The goal is to compile the many sources of regional transportation infrastructure data into a usable tool that helps communities identify infrastructure that is vulnerable to extreme weather events. Specifically, the toolkit could help communities prioritize limited funding to maintain critical infrastructure. C. Lentz explained that he, Rachel, and Stef were currently working on integrating all the various data sources to pilot the toolkit. Data that could be included in the tool include: condition data for pavement and bridges; culvert data; local pavement assessments that have been completed; flood hazard and sea level rise zones; and designated evacuation routes. He asked the committee to share their comments.

M. Gasses suggested that more outreach needs to be done at the local level to incorporate municipal knowledge. She provided the example of culverts on private land; if a culvert on private land could compromise an important highway such as US4, that needs to be addressed in the toolkit. C. Lentz agreed and said more outreach would be done.

4.3 NHDOT Asset Management Plan

C. Lentz presented the committee with a review of the Draft NHDOT Transportation Asset Management Plan (TAMP). The TAMP is required by NHDOT by federal regulations and it presents a plan for managing the state's highways and bridges on the National Highway System (NHS). C. Lentz explained that the plan will be populated with performance targets for pavement and bridge conditions. The goal of the document is to use the data available to prioritize strategies, minimize costs, maintain and extend the service lives of transportation assets, reduce risk to assets and programs, and improve the overall performance of the NHS. He presented several graphs and tables from the draft plan, including charts

comparing available funding and maintenance needs for both highways and bridges. C. Lentz highlighted the fact that NHDOT has far more maintenance needs than they have funding to cover. For instance available funding covers 80% of the highway paving and maintenance needs. He gave a brief presentation on the draft plan and asked for questions and input from the committee members so that he could communicate them to NHDOT.

S. Diamond asked about the pavement condition graph (below): if NHDOT only has funds to cover 80% of maintenance costs, how can conditions stay level as VMT goes up and purchasing power goes down? [Don't unmet highway maintenance needs compound each year?]



V. Parmele asked if NHDOT was able to use the TAMP plan as a tool for engaging decision-makers about the need for more funding for critical infrastructure and services. C. Lentz said NHDOT takes every opportunity to objectively present the needs of the transportation system and that the TAMP would provide another great communication tool.

S. Diamond commented that he was surprised that gas taxes are not indexed for inflation. He noted that indexing the gas tax with inflation would provide a much more sustainable funding source for the transportation system. C. Lentz agreed and recalled that a turnpike toll rate increase was proposed as part of the draft Ten Year Plan and later vetoed.

C. Lentz recommended members read the draft plan and respond with comments. He noted NHDOT is asking for comments from MPO's and RPC's by March, 15.

5. Other Business

5.1 Local Police Outreach

C. Lentz explained that he and N. O'Connor had recently met with a Lieutenant from the Somersworth Police Department to discuss crash reporting. The goal of the meeting was to understand the crash reporting process in order to ensure data is accurate and consistent as it goes from the local level, to the state database, and back to the MPOs and other agencies. He said it was a very productive conversation but the issues around crash reporting are very complex and vary from municipality to municipality. C. Lentz explained that accurate crash reporting played a critical role in performance-based planning for

states and MPOs. States and MPOs will be setting targets for fatal and serious injuries. He said while fatal crashes are reported directly to a federal database, serious injuries may be reported inconsistently and affect accuracy of analysis and performance tracking. C. Lentz said SRPC would continue reaching out to police departments and agencies responsible for reporting crashes and managing crash data.

M. Gasses shared that the City of Dover finished their Climate Adaptation Master Plan. She thanked Principle Planner Kyle Pimental (SRPC), UNH Cooperative Extension, and NH Seas Grant for their exceptional work. The plan will be presented at the Dover Planning Board where the plan will be up for adoption

6. Citizens Forum

No citizens brought forward any issues or topics of discussion.

7. Adjournment

B. Tapscott made a motion to adjourn

Seconded by D. Hamman

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 am

Minutes prepared by Stefanie Casella and Colin Lentz

Approved by

Name Printed:

Signed:

Date:

Victoria D. Parnelle

Victoria M. Parnelle

3/16/18

