

## Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee

### Meeting Minutes

**Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> 2020      9:00 – 11:00 AM**

Strafford Regional Planning Commission  
150 Wakefield Street, Suite 12, Conference Room 1A  
Rochester, NH

The meeting was called to order at 9:05am

#### 1. **Attendance:**

##### Committee Members

Jon Hotchkiss (Middletton), Shanna Saunders (Somersworth), Chris Parker (Dover), Marcia Gasses (Barrington), Michael Williams (COAST), Leigh Levine (FHWA) Linda Dusenberry (NHDOT), Scott Kinmond (New Durham), Bruce Woodruff (Milton),

##### Staff

Jennifer Czysz, Colin Lentz

#### 2. **Staff Communications**

C. Lentz explained that Elizabeth Strachan had resigned from her position at NHDES and accepted a position in private consulting on brownfields site assessments. Tim White would be attending TAC and Policy meetings for the near future.

J. Czysz noted that there was a listening session hosted by the Regional Economic Development Center (REDC) to gather input for an update to their comprehensive economic development plan. The session will in in Newmarket at the Stone Church at on Monday March 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm.

#### 3. **Action Item(s)**

##### 3.1 **Minutes from December 6<sup>th</sup> 2019**

C. Parker made a motion to approve the minutes as written.

Seconded by M. Williams

Vote: unanimous in favor

#### 4. **Discussion Items**

##### 4.1 **2020 Highway Safety Performance Targets – regional and statewide trends and how they can inform planning**

C. Lentz provided a memo detailing the 2020 safety performance targets that had been approved by the Policy Committee at their February meeting. He noted that there are five safety targets that have to be updated each year 180 days after NHDOT sets statewide targets: fatalities, rate of fatalities, serious injuries, rate of serious injuries, and fatal and serious injuries involving non-motorized users.

C. Lentz noted that the Policy Committee voted to support the state targets as in previous years, but he pointed to data in the memo showing the regional proportion of crashes for each of the five measures. He said the MPO would be working to identify specific locations where infrastructure improvements would decrease fatalities and serious injuries. He noted that it appears as though the region has a higher rate of fatalities and serious injuries because the region has fewer highway miles, but more vehicle-miles-traveled relative to other regions. C. Lentz explained that the State departments of safety, transportation, and motor vehicles were continuing to improve crash data collection, sharing, and management. He noted that there appeared to be a drop in serious injuries, but this was likely attributable to increased attention to detail by police departments and Department of Safety in what qualified as serious injury (based on a specific set of standards adopted at a national level). S. Kinmond noted that New Durham had recently gotten a grant to switch from paper crash reports to electronic records. He asked if SRPC had funding for a potential road safety audit in New Durham. C. Lentz explained that the road safety audits were funded through NHDOT's Highway Safety Improvement Program. He would just need to work with the town to identify locations where one or more fatalities or serious injuries, get details from police crash records to develop a crash diagram, and help the town submit an application to NHDOT. B. Woodruff asked about how to address intersections that were extremely dangerous but hadn't resulted in a fatality or serious injury. If the road safety audit program focuses on fatalities and serious injuries, it can't address spots where safety is a concern but hasn't resulted in a dramatic crash. Members discussed several such locations around the region. C. Lentz noted that NHDOT is focused on addressing intersections with unsafe geometry (such as "Y" intersections) and SRPC can do some detailed analysis to identify safety issues proactively.

#### **4.2 Metro Plan Projects & Scoring – Preparing for the next Ten Year Plan: preliminary discussion of methods, process, and projects**

C. Lentz explained that he had already been reaching out to municipalities to discuss and develop transportation improvement projects that could be candidates for the upcoming Ten Year Plan round. Some projects could also be prepared for other upcoming funding opportunities. He noted that the final round of Transportation Alternatives Program funding (under the FAST Act) would likely be in the fall, with a solicitation starting in the summer. C. Lentz explained that NHDOT and the RPCs had already met to discuss how to improve the project selection criteria and process over the past round. There would be future meetings to further refine the process, and he wanted to get initial input from the TAC so it could be represented at the next meeting with NHDOT and the RPCs. He said he didn't expect the criteria to change drastically and the RPCs would be able to adjust the weighting of the criteria as in previous rounds. C. Lentz noted that the RPCs and NHDOT had discussed refining the "resilience" criterion and adding an "equity" criterion. These would need to be quantified.

Members discussed options for weighting the scoring criteria, such as removing all weight from "state of repair" (under the expectation that any project would improve the infrastructure) to focus on other criteria such as safety. B. Woodruff suggested several adjustments to criteria. C. Parker suggested that the "support" criterion should be reduced or eliminated because any project should be required to have support from the municipality proposing it. M. Williams said the "facility importance" criterion needed more input beyond just traffic volume data since a bridge may have lower traffic volumes but be critically important as the only access for 10 miles between two points. C. Lentz said SRPC could use new tools like the travel demand model to conduct more detailed

analysis for questions like that. Members discussed how to better incorporate projects focused on alternative modes (e.g. bicycles and pedestrians) and ensure projects with a more localized impact would be accurately represented by the criteria. Members discussed potential “regional” projects that would be focused on regional impact and be developed and supported by the TAC and Policy committees (including public transit support and EV charging stations). S. Kinmond suggested developing a criterion for “regional impact” to increase the focus on projects that have multiple benefits beyond the border of a single municipality. C. Lentz said he would suggest that to the group of NHDOT and RPCs working on the process. C. Lentz said the goal at this point was to establish the criteria weightings in early spring, identify a top 5-10 candidate projects by September, submit a final list of proposed projects to NHDOT by December 4<sup>th</sup> so they can conduct an engineering review to refine projects, and final submission for the Ten Year Plan in early 2021.

## 5. Project Updates

### 5.1 Legislative outreach

C. Lentz explained that he had presented testimony at several recent hearings and other meetings of House and Senate committees. He had presented several of the regional planning priorities developed by the TAC and Policy committees to the House Public Works and Highways committee in their public hearing for the draft Ten Year Plan (H.B. 2020). He also gave testimony at public hearings held by the same committee on two bills (H.B. 1649 and H.B. 1650) related to new proposed approaches for additional revenue generation for highway maintenance. He did not explicitly support or oppose either bill but generally advocated in support of the legislature’s effort to find new revenues to support transportation costs. C. Lentz said he and other MPO staff met with Congressman Chris Pappas to discuss transportation policy issues and priorities as he is working with colleagues to develop a draft authorization bill to replace the FAST Act which is expiring soon.

## 6. Other Business

No other business was brought before the committee

7. **Citizen’s Forum** – Citizens of the Strafford region are invited to speak on the subject matter of the meeting. Statements should be limited to three minutes.

## 8. Adjournment

C. Parker made a motion to adjourn

Seconded by M. Williams

Vote: unanimous in favor

Meeting adjourned at 9:45am

Minutes Approved by [Print Name] \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_