

**Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission
Meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

August 14, 2012 Meeting Minutes
UVLSRPC Offices- Lebanon, NH

Attendees:

Van Chesnut, Chair, Advance Transit
Dick Jones, Lyme
Mike Lavalla, Lebanon
Dave Edkins, Charlestown
Richard Lee, New London
Ray Burton, NH Executive Council
Dean Eastman, NHDOT
Nate Miller, UVLSRPC

Introduction/Call to Order:

TAC Chairman Van Chesnut called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Election of TAC Officers:

Dave Edkins nominated Van Chesnut to serve as TAC Chairman and Dick Jones to serve as Vice-Chairman. Richard Lee seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Overview of MAP-21 Transportation Reauthorization:

Nate Miller reported that the new federal surface transportation legislation, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), will go into effect on October 1, 2012. The law replaces SAFETEA-LU, which expired on September 30, 2009 and was extended ten times by Congress.

MAP-21 is a two-year bill, which will fund transportation programs through September 30, 2014. The bill consolidates existing transportation programs in both the highway and transit titles. The projected highway-related federal apportionment to New Hampshire will be approximately \$160 Million per year. The projected transit-related federal apportionment to New Hampshire will be approximately \$14 Million per year.

Nate Miller presented a summary of how existing transportation programs affecting rural New Hampshire will change under MAP-21.

Highway-related Program Highlights:

- The new National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) combines the existing National Highway System (NHS), Interstate Maintenance, and Bridge programs. The law will set standards for National Highway System bridge condition (no more than 10% of the deck may be structurally deficient) and will establish minimum interstate pavement conditions.
- The Surface Transportation Program (STP) remains. The program provides flexible funding for federal-aid highways. Safety and bridge projects are eligible on any public road. Projects that were formerly eligible under the Transportation Enhancement, Recreational Trails, and Safe Routes to School programs will also be eligible under the Surface Transportation Program.

- The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) doubles in size under MAP-21. The existing structure of the program is retained; however, states will not be required to set aside funds for High Risk Rural Roads (HRRR) unless crash data thresholds are met.
- The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) remains. The program now provides additional authority to use funds for transit operations. New Hampshire has requested non-attainment area re-designation from the U.S. EPA, which may eventually make rural areas of the state eligible for CMAQ funding.
- The Transportation Alternatives Program (TA) consolidates the Transportation Enhancement, Recreational Trails, and Safe Routes to School programs. Funding for the TA program totals approximately 2% of MAP-21 funding. There are new provisions for sub-allocation of program funds to certain Metropolitan Planning Organizations. States may also transfer 50% of their TA allocation to other formula programs at their discretion.

Transit-related Program Highlights:

- Six existing Federal Transit Administration programs have been repealed or consolidated, including: 5308 Clean Fuels Grants, 5316 Job Access and Reverse Commute, 5317 New Freedoms, 5320 Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in the Parks, 5339 Alternatives Analysis, and 3038 Over-the-Road Bus.
- Discretionary capital programs like the Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities program are now formula programs.
- The New Freedoms program has been repealed, but the funding formerly associated with the program has been consolidated with the Section 5310 Elderly and Disabled Transportation program.
- The Job Access and Reverse Commute program has been repealed, but the funding formerly associated with the program has been consolidated with the Section 5311 Rural Area Transit formula funding.

Nate Miller noted that MAP-21 also establishes a formal definition and scope of work for (rural) Regional Transportation Planning Organizations. This essentially formalizes the UVLSRPC TAC's status in the federal transportation planning process.

Councilor Ray Burton noted that he chairs the state's Transportation Enhancement Advisory Committee, which evaluates Transportation Enhancement projects. With the creation of the Transportation Alternatives program, what will happen with the Transportation Enhancement Alternatives Committee? Nate Miller advised that NHDOT will provide guidance on this question in the coming months, but it is likely that the Transportation Enhancement Advisory Committee will evolve into the "Transportation Alternatives Advisory Committee."

Draft NHDOT Public Involvement Procedures:

Van Chesnut advised that TAC members have already received an electronic copy of NHDOT's draft Public Involvement Procedures with their meeting notice, and asked if Committee members had any comments to pass along to NHDOT before the procedures are adopted.

Dick Jones advised that the NHDOT needs to strengthen communications with local Selectboards.

Dave Edkins commended NHDOT staff for their coordination with the Town of Charlestown on a recent bridge painting project. NHDOT staff proactively worked with the Town to ensure access to a water line while bridge painting work was ongoing.

Dave Edkins advised that the Public Involvement Procedures should place additional emphasis on the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) process for large projects, noting that the CSS process facilitated consensus on the Reconstruction of NH Route 12 in Charlestown and Walpole.

Van Chesnut noted that some of the language throughout the text, including references to specific programs, may need to be revised in the context of MAP-21.

NH State Rail Plan:

This discussion was tabled to the next TAC meeting.

Project/Program Updates:

- Nate Miller distributed copies of the New Hampshire Safe Routes to School August Newsletter, noting that NHDOT will be moving forward with a 6th round of the program. Applications will be due in fall 2012.
- Nate Miller reported that the Town of Hanover has been awarded \$183,200 through the FTA Bus Livability Program to construct a curbside transit shelter, enclosed/heated passenger waiting area, covered bicycle rack, and electronic schedule kiosk on Wheelock Street at the Hanover Inn/Hopkins Center.
- Nate Miller reported that the proposed Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) project to extend medians and develop shared a shared access point at the intersection of Washington/Bowen Street in Claremont has been authorized by the State HSIP Committee.

Councilor Ray Burton advised the TAC of changes to Executive Council District One resulting from the state's recent redistricting process.

Dick Jones moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 PM. Richard Lee seconded and the motion passed unanimously.