

EDD/MPO Commission and Policy Committee Meeting

Friday, April 18, 2025 9:00-10:30 AM

Rochester Childcare Center, Charles Street, Rochester

1. Introductions:

Chair Katrin Kasper called the meeting to order and asked for introductions.

Members Present: Kate Buzard, Middleton; Mike Lehrman, Durham; Matt Towne, Barrington; Mike Bobinsky, Somersworth; Mark Richardson, Somersworth; Katrin Kasper, Lee; Paul Rasmussen, Durham; Lee Howlett, Milton; Sarah Wrightsman, Newmarket; Chris Horton, Brookfield; Joe Boudreau, Rochester; Tom Falk, Madbury; Don Manter, Northwood; Matthew Towne, Barrington; Steve Brown, Dover; Kevin Sullivan, Rochester; Jon Nute, Milton; Peter Nelson, Newmarket.

Zoom: SRPC Staff Natalie Gemma, SRPC; Michael Polizzotti, SRPC

Staff members present: Jen Czysz, Kyle Pimental, Rachel Dewey, Colin Lentz, Mark Davie, Lisa Murphy, Blair Haney, Colin Lentz

Katrin Kasper opened the meeting and introduced Coralyn Hoppe, Executive Director Rochester Childcare Center. Coralyn spoke about the challenges of providing quality, affordable childcare in New Hampshire.

2. NYU-SRPC Regional Childcare Presentation

Presented by Natalie Gemma, SRPC Senior Planner, Danya Rubenstein-Markiewicz, Hannah Leverenz, Hanyan Su, and Kevin Sullivan, NYU Wagner School Graduate Students.

N. Gemma introduced the four graduate students and gave a brief summary of the project. Since October 2024, SRPC has been collaborating with students from the NYU Wagner Graduate School of Public Service on a project aimed at addressing the childcare challenges that have impacted economic growth in the Strafford region. As part of their Capstone, and with the guidance of staff and a wide range of stakeholders, students have worked to conduct extensive research and outreach, data collection, form best practices and recommendations, and create a resource guide for municipal leaders, businesses, and families that can help support the childcare industry in our region and beyond.

The students took turns presenting on the findings of their childcare project. The two-semester long project was intended to analyze the impacts of the current childcare situation on the region's economy and present case studies and recommendations that can help support this critical issue.



The guests provided feedback and engaged in conversation about the issues of affordability for childcare and availability, funding challenges for both parents and childcare operators

3. Business and Announcements

- **Data Snapshot**

R. Dewey announced the release of the 2025 Regional Data Snapshot. This is the fifth annual Data Snapshot and covers over 160 data metrics for the region. The accompanying Community Profile series and the interactive web map will be available over the summer.

- **State Funding for Target Block Grant**

Jen Czysz stated that the State budget is not looking good for many organizations. Last week the House voted on a state budget that is now moving to the Senate for consideration. Of critical note, the House removed the nine NH regional planning commissions' Target Block Grant, administered by the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs. TBG is a modest but critical source of funding that provides a total of \$100,000 per year—or \$11,111 for each of the 9 RPCs—enabling RPCs to plan for the unique, evolving needs of NH municipalities before they arise. SRPC uses these funds to assist with local planning efforts, review developments of regional impacts, and to meet our match requirements on our federal \$70,000 grant from the Economic Development Administration. Jen will continue to update commissioners on the status of this funding including providing template letters you may use to contact your Senators and the Senate's finance committee.

- **2-year Transportation Uniform Planning Work Program**

C. Lentz presented: SRPC staff have received a draft of the Regional Safety Action Plan from our consultant VHB. This is a strategic document that will enable all municipalities to apply for funds to implement safety improvement projects through the Safe Streets and Roads for All program (SS4A). The plan includes comprehensive analysis of crash data and presents strategies for reducing and eventually eliminating crashes that kill and injure people. It has a special focus on vulnerable users such as bicyclists, pedestrians, and people with disabilities, and includes demographic analysis to identify possible transportation equity gaps.

The action plan needs to be approved before June 26th. SRPC staff are requesting feedback on the draft from committee members by April 25th in time to finalize edits with VHB prior to adoption at the Commission meeting on May 16th.

- **The federal SS4A program**

The federal SS4A program is currently soliciting new applications and includes funding for full construction projects and additional planning efforts such as "demonstration" or



“quick-build” projects that use inexpensive, temporary materials to test new configurations for streets and intersections. If interested, municipalities are encouraged to reach out to Colin to discuss possible projects.

4. Other Business

There was no other business.

5. Citizens Forum

There were no citizen comments.

6. Adjourn

Following a motion and a second, all members voted in favor to adjourn.

