

Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

Friday February 7, 2025 from 9:00am - 10:30am

Location: Conference Rm 1A, SRPC Office (Remote access via Zoom)

In accordance with RSA 91:A, the Commission requires a minimum of an in-person quorum. To organize this, the Commission staff will confirm the necessary in-person attendance. It is the preference of the Commission that others participate via Zoom, however, guests may attend the meeting at the SRPC Office. All participants, both in-person and virtual, can communicate contemporaneously. View the remote access information below.

MEETING LINK:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83483049101?pwd=RW9oK2xQRzJDbkdoYTVzVzZGNDNhZz09>

MEETING ID: 834 8304 9101

TELEPHONE-ONLY ACCESS: +1 646 558 8656

These instructions have also been provided at www.straftford.org. If anybody is unable to access the meeting, please email mtaylorfetter@straftford.org or call 603-994-3500 (x115).

Agenda Item	Time	Pre-Meeting Task/Notes
1. Introductions	5 mins	
2. Community Updates	5 mins	Round table discussion
3. Action Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Minutes from January 3, 2025 b. Assigning weights to criteria for ranking Transportation Alternatives projects. 	20 mins	Please take the criteria weighting survey HERE
4. Project Presentations: Candidate Transportation Alternatives projects	45 mins	
5. Discussion Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Preview: Full update to the Transportation Improvement Program coming in March 	5 mins	See meeting packet.
6. Other Business	5 mins	
7. Adjourn		

Reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities is available upon request. Include a detailed description of the accommodation you will need along with your contact info. Please make your request as early as possible; allowing at least 5 days' advance notice. Last-minute requests will be accepted but may be impossible to fill. Please call (603) 994-3500 or email srpc@straftford.org.



RULES OF PROCEDURE

Strafford Regional Planning Commission Meeting Etiquette

Be present at the scheduled start of the meeting.

Be respectful of and open to the views of others.

Ensure that only one person talks at a time. Raising your hand to be recognized by the chair or facilitator is good practice.

Do not interrupt others or start talking before someone finishes.

Do not engage in cross talk.

Avoid individual discussions in small groups during the meeting. When one person speaks, others should listen.

Active participation is encouraged from all members.

When speaking, participants should adhere to topics of discussion directly related to agenda items.

When speaking, individuals should be brief and concise when speaking.

The Strafford Regional Planning Commission & Metropolitan Planning Organization holds both public meetings and public hearings.

For public meetings, guests are welcome to observe, but should follow proper meeting etiquette allowing the meeting to proceed uninterrupted. Members of the public who wish to be involved and heard should use venues such as Citizen Forum, Public Hearings, Public Comment Periods, outreach events, seminars, workshops, listening sessions, etc.



Memo

SRPC Technical Advisory Committee
Re: Meeting Agenda Item Preview
February 2025

From: Colin Lentz, Transportation Planner

Weighting & scoring Transportation Alternatives Projects

Three communities have applied for funding through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP): Newmarket, Farmington, and Durham. TAP is for improvements to non-motorized transportation facilities. SRPC will play a role in scoring those projects. While New Hampshire DOT ultimately determines the final score that a potential project receives, "regional priority" as determined by the RPCs is considered for 20% of the final score, which is an increase from past scoring criteria. Regional priority can be based on criteria that are determined directly by the RPCs. Earlier this week, you were sent a questionnaire to provide your input on how these criteria can be weighted. If you have not completed the quick questionnaire, **please do so before the end of the day on Wednesday, February 5th**: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SRPC-TAP25>

We will be discussing the criteria and how the TAC and full Commission suggested weighting them. You will also be presented the proposed projects, although you are not voting on them just yet. Thank you!

Full Update to the Transportation Improvement Program

SRPC will soon be releasing a draft update to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that will cover years 2025-2028. The TIP comprises all transportation projects in the region that will be using federal and turnpike funding. Approval of the TIP is vital for the continued funding of current and upcoming projects, so careful review by SRPC committee members is important. SRPC anticipates posting a draft of the TIP for a 30-day public comment period on February 20th.

Regional Comprehensive Plan Update

Forward Thinking has been launched! Forward Thinking is SRPC's updated comprehensive or master plan, which will include the new Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The first half of 2025 is our outreach phase, and you can expect to be sent home with some postcards and flyers with information about the new survey, along with some hard copies of the survey. We would greatly appreciate having these distributed to your town and city halls, libraries, senior or recreation centers, or anywhere else that makes sense. Mark will provide a quick overview at the meeting.

Meeting called to order 9:02

Present: Chair Michelle Mears, Somersworth; Vanessa Price, Barrington; Gretchen Young, Rochester; Katrin Kasper, Lee; Wayne Lehman, Lee; Michael Williams, COAST; John Mullen, Middleton; Seth Creighton, Rochester; Colin Lentz, SRPC; Jen Czysz, SRPC

Present online: Leigh Levine, FHWA; Lindsay Butler, Newmarket; Donna Benton, Dover; Bruce Woodruff, Milton, Jack Wade, DES; Mac Bevier, DES; Mark Davie, SPRC; Rachel Dewey, SRPC

Community Updates

No community updates to report.

Action Item: Minutes from November 1, 2024

Mr. Williams made a motion to accept the minutes; seconded by Ms. Kasper.
Vote: Unanimous in Favor

Action Item: Highway Safety Target Setting

Mr. Lentz explains target setting and reasons to support state target or set a regional target separate from the state. No government body can “promise” zero fatalities or serious injuries; this is an aspirational goal.

Mr. Mullen asks if fatalities have been trending down.

Mr. Lentz responds yes, as driving has improved, and alcohol laws have become stricter. Mr. Lentz refers to a steady decline in fatality and serious injuries.

Ms. Young states there is somewhat of a baseline risk from driving anyhow. Mr. Williams concurs, adding that laws are meant to help drive the number down as best as possible.

Mr. Mullen inquires about the presented dip in fatalities in 2019. Mr. Lentz suggests it is random. Discussion ensued about pandemic driving habits.

Mr. Lentz displays a chart with absolute “maximum” fatalities to occur for the average fatalities over time to not be on a downward trend. Mr. Mullen inquires about the calculations behind the figures presented. Ms. Dewey says 2024 would need a very low amount of crashes to replace the other very low year as it will soon not be included in this rolling average.

Ms. Young inquires about the implications of the goals set, such as grants or funding.

Mr. Lentz supplies motorcycle fatalities and serious injuries as a supplemental measure that is not federally required for SRPC.

Ms. Mears asks if target setting incorporates population. Mr. Lentz responds no. Mr. Lentz reiterates that targets are required for the TIP update.

Ms. Mears asks for a motion to adopt these targets as presented. Ms. Czysz references the memo in the meeting packet. Mr. Williams states he does not have an issue with the calculations or statistics and perceives the target setting to be a formality because some of these are out of the MPO’s or transit agencies’ control.

There may be some marginal control like sidewalks or lighting. Ms. Young concurs, stating that a desire for zero deaths is obvious. But to what end? It's not realistic to make everything 100% safe. Placing sidewalks everywhere in a city is obviously safer, but financially it is difficult. It is difficult to set a target of zero because someone could challenge the lack of a sidewalk in a given location. Mr. Lentz says it [the target-setting] is a requirement. He concurs, stating it is akin to ADA requirements. Everywhere should be accessible but that alone is not driving a city to address accessibility gaps everywhere. Ms. Czysz states the vote is meant to affirm that the numbers are on a downward trend. She states TAC is meant to vote on the summary table, gesturing to the displayed chart. Mr. Lentz elaborates on the analysis. Ms. Mears states these are not attainable goals, stating it is hard to predict and voting on a not-zero figure seems random. Ms. Czysz suggests these goals as presented may be aspirational goals. Ms. Young states that to implement these goals would contradict safety and economic development. Mr. Williams states it is difficult to have this conversation alone because it is competing for resources that have other values. Ms. Kasper says there are other forces not being seen in these statistics, naming the changing police workforce. Mr. Lentz agrees, adding that SRPC is planning for more conversations with police departments in the region in addition to the ones had this past fall. Mr. Lentz relays from these conversations that people are not disincentivized from driving poorly if that information will not get reported back to their insurance. Discussion about camera enforcement ensues. Mr. Lentz reminds the group that the safety action plan is coming and more discussion about police support can be had with that process. At this time, VHB is digging deeper into crash statistics as part of that process.

Mr. Lentz points to additional statistics and trends in the memo in the meeting packet. Discussion ensues about vulnerable road users and the place for e-bikes and other alternative wheeled modes like scooters and golf carts.

Mr. Lentz relays that there are projects municipalities are already interested in that will become eligible when the Safety Action Plan is finished.

Mr. Williams motions to recommend the targets as presented. Mr. Mullen seconds. Unanimous vote, with Mr. Wade and Ms. Bevier abstaining.

Mr. Lentz says this is the core of the targets. Additional outreach is being completed as part of the regional safety action plan process. Mr. Lentz notes that police departments need support for IT and GIS infrastructure. Municipalities may ask for an Road Safety Audit for any public road where crashes resulting in fatalities or serious injuries have occurred. SRPC will be added to the state traffic records committee soon. Ms. Mears asks if VHB can discuss further at the next TAC meeting. Ms. Czysz responds that the whole Commission should be invited to such a presentation.

Other Business

Ms. Mears apologizes for missing the Amtrak "field trip" on December 10.

Mr. Wade reports that there is new clean diesel funding from EPA to replace vehicles in municipal fleets. Applications are due January 24. Ms. Kasper offers to assist any community with this process.

<https://www.des.nh.gov/business-and-community/loans-and-grants/dera>

Adjourn

Mr. Mullen motions to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Lehman
Meeting adjourned at 10:25