

SRPC ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR
2024

Adopted October 18, 2024

STRAFFORD
Regional Planning Commission

The Role of the Commission

Strafford Regional Planning Commission works with municipalities, statewide organizations, and other partners to provide technical assistance, planning support, outreach, project implementation, and regulation development. We create a space for our stakeholders to connect and share information and provide opportunities for engagement with important planning initiatives.

We serve our communities in two additional designated roles: as a Metropolitan Planning Organization, and as an Economic Development District. We work closely with the NH Department of Transportation to collect traffic data, assist and advocate for local transit agencies and municipal projects, and create long-range plans which address safety and quality of life. With guidance from our partners, we maintain a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that includes economic trends and local priority projects. We also assist local communities with economic development initiatives and facilitate regional discussion.

Municipalities

Barrington
Brookfield
Dover
Durham
Farmington
Lee

Madbury
Middleton
Milton
New Durham
Newmarket
Northwood

Nottingham
Rochester
Rollinsford
Somersworth
Strafford
Wakefield

Staff

Angela Cleveland
Jen Czysz
Mark Davie
Rachel Dewey
Kerrie Diers
Kathy Foster

Stephen Geis
Natalie Gemma
Courtney Grugnale
Blair Haney
Colin Lentz
Lisa Murphy

Brian Notinger
Kyle Pimental
Jackson Rand
Autumn Scott
Megan Taylor-Fetter

Contact Us

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LinkedIn: @strafford-regional-planning-commission



Letter from the Executive Director

Thank you to the staff, commissioners, and community partners that have made Fiscal Year 2024 so exciting and successful.

If we could sum up the year in one word it would be "Housing!" With the Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) Grants that came online at the end of Fiscal Year 2023, many communities in the region embraced the opportunity to access much needed funding support to help address the housing crisis and formulate policies to help meet demand while shaping the community to their vision.

The unprecedented funding made available by the state made it possible for SRPC to not only help our communities meet the housing challenge but also implement our own strategic goals. Through the HOP grants, SRPC staff dove into scenario modelling of projected development, advancing our technology offerings. SRPC was able to test recommended changes to zoning to better understand what the potential development change might be under a new policy framework.

Additionally, this past year SRPC made further strides to advance our data analysis best practices and efficiencies through technological advancements. The fan favorite Data Snapshot is largely produced through scripts written by SRPC staff that have reduced the time to process more than half the published data – down from a month's work to a day.

While the staff team has been busier than ever, this year also marks a more robust return to in-person meetings and engagement. SRPC has resumed holding commissioner meetings "out and about" in the region. Staff have seen levels of in-person engagement at planning forums not seen for several years.

As the Commission grows and evolves, we've said goodbye to some favorite faces on the staff team and among our volunteers. At the same time, we've welcomed many new folks into our planning family. I look forward to the year ahead and the many collaborations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Czysz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jennifer Czysz, AICP
SRPC Executive Director

Dedication to Tom Crosby

Tom Crosby, who was an SRPC commissioner since at least 1983, passed away on May 20th, 2024, with his family by his side.

Tom received his associate's degree from UNH in agriculture, served in the Navy throughout the world, then returned to UNH for his bachelor's degree and worked in agriculture science for many years before becoming a real estate agent. Tom had many hobbies and disciplines and loved working with his hands. He collected model trains and tin toys. He was a prolific painter and framed his own work. He loved his garden and travel. Most of all he loved his extensive family. He got to meet his third great granddaughter before he passed.

Tom was on numerous boards in Madbury and Durham and volunteered much of his time in support of education. Tom's many years with SRPC were an invaluable resource for new commissioners. He helped hire at least two executive directors. I suspect it is impossible to calculate the value of the institutional knowledge he held. Tom was SRPC's treasurer for many years and regularly came to the office to process checks and review the office's financials.

Tom's insight and mentorship have provided direction for SRPC as a commission and helped shape the staff as a team. He always made time to chat with staff and catch up on what was happening outside of work when he stopped by the office. There are many people in the region who will miss Tom, but his contribution will remain.



Volunteer and Staff Directory



Volunteers nominated by a municipal planning board and appointed by a municipal council or select board represent their community on the Commission. Per RSA 36:45-58 each member municipality may appoint between two and four representatives to the Commission dependent on population. Commissioners are considered voting members if their community is dues-paying. Commissioners are appointed for four-year terms and inform planning policies for the region. They are tasked with establishing policies and the work program, providing input to staff, adopting reports, planning documents, amending bylaws, setting the Annual Budget and Dues, and electing Officers and Executive Committee members.



FY 2024 Commissioners

Commissioners' names and term expiration dates are listed by town below. Executive Committee members are indicated by (EC) after the term expiration.

Barrington

Matthew Towne (7/9/2027) (EC)
Steve Diamond (7/1/2025)

Brookfield

Chirs Kinville (3/2/2026)
Marshall Goldberg (3/2/2028)

Dover

David Landry (11/4/2027) (EC)
Lindsey Williams (11/4/2025)
Sophie Robison (11/4/2026)
Steve Brown (11/4/2028)

Durham

Wayne Burton (4/30/2028)
Michael Lehrman (4/30/2026) (EC)
Vacant (4/30/2025)

Farmington

Vacant (1/1/2027)
Vacant (3/31/2025)

Lee

Katrin Kasper (11/21/2024) (EC)
Mary Woodward (3/1/2025)

Madbury

Mark Avery (3/1/2025)
Vacant (9/1/2026)

Middleton

Kate Buzard (5/28/2025)
John Mullen (5/28/2027)

Milton

Karen Golab (3/13/2027)
John Nute (12/9/2026)

New Durham

Vacant (6/28/2027)
Vacant (10/28/2025)

Newmarket

Peter Nelson (3/1/2025) (EC)
Vacant (12/7/2024)

Northwood

Scott Martin (4/30/2025)
Vacant (1/30/2027)

Nottingham

Teresa Bascom (5/13/2026)
Vacant (12/1/2028)

Rochester

Barbara Holstein (6/6/2026) (EC)
Kevin Sullivan (6/30/2028)
Rick Healey (6/6/2025)
Joe Boudreau (6/30/2026) (EC)

Rollinsford

Vacant (4/21/2027)
Vacant (4/21/2025)

Somersworth

Michael Bobinsky (5/2/2028) (EC)
Chris Horton (5/02/2026)
Mark Richardson (5/31/2025)

Strafford

Donald Coker (8/15/2025)
Vacant (8/1/2026)

Wakefield

Vacant (8/1/2026)
Vacant (8/1/2028)

Staff Directory



Jennifer Czysz, AICP, Executive Director

May 2018– Present
Email: jczysz@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 100

Responsibilities:

- Organizational and work program development
- Financial management
- Project and grant management
- Administrative oversight
- Advise local land use boards and staff
- Partner with NH's RPCs, state agencies, municipalities, and other organizations to further the SRPC mission



Kyle Pimental, Assistant Director

June 2008 – Present
Email: kpimental@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 101

Responsibilities:

- Land use and environmental programs manager
- Administrative oversight
- Climate adaptation and resilience planning
- Hazard mitigation planning
- Natural resource management and protection
- Land use and master planning
- Contract planner for the Town of Farmington



Kathy Foster, Financial Manager

September 2013 – Present
Email: kfoster@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 111

Responsibilities:

- Full charge bookkeeping, payroll processing, and reporting
- Budget development and analysis
- Grant and contract financial administration
- Financial and grant reporting
- Indirect rate calculation
- Assistance with financial auditing



Colin Lentz, Principal Transportation Planner

March 2014 – Present
Email: clentz@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 102

Responsibilities:

- Transportation programs manager
- Long range transportation planning
- Transportation project development
- Transportation safety improvements
- Transit planning
- Local transportation planning assistance
- Coordination with NH's three other MPOs



Blair Haney, Principal Regional Planner

September 2021 – Present
Email: bhaney@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 107

Responsibilities:

- Contract planner for the Towns of Nottingham and Strafford
- Hazard mitigation planning
- Master planning
- Municipal land use technical assistance
- Community Development Block Grant administration
- Housing plans, needs assessments, audits, and regulations



Kerrie Diers, Principal Planner

March 2024 – Present
Email: kdiers@strafford.org

Responsibilities:

- Master planning
- Housing plans, needs assessments, audits, and regulations
- Special projects



Rachel Dewey, Senior Data Analyst

November 2015 – Present
Email: rdewey@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 106

Responsibilities

- Data analysis for all SRPC programs
- Website development
- Information technology
- Technology and data tools innovations
- Database management
- Data Snapshot development
- Local data technical assistance



Natalie Gemma, Senior Regional Planner

November 2020 – Present
Email: nmoles@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 113

Responsibilities:

- Strafford Economic Development District processes
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Seacoast Economy Calls; Local business support
- Technical assistance to member municipalities and businesses
- Housing plans, needs assessments, audits, and regulations



Lisa Murphy, Senior Regional Planner

May 2023-Present
Email: lmurphy@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 103

Responsibilities:

- Brownfields program manager
- Hazard mitigation and emergency management planning
- Land use and natural resource planning
- Master planning
- Watershed planning
- Developments of regional impact
- Contract planner for the Town of Northwood



Jackson Rand, Senior GIS Planner

September 2019 – Present
Email: jrand@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 110

Responsibilities:

- GIS program manager
- Spatial analysis and cartography for all SRPC programs
- Tax mapping
- Scenario modelling
- Technical assistance to municipalities
- Trail mapping
- Parking studies



Mark Davie, Senior Planner

May 2021 – Present
Email: mdavie@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 105

Responsibilities:

- Transportation planning
- Housing plans, needs assessments, audits, and regulations
- Data collection, analysis and GIS
- Transportation modelling
- Active transportation planning
- Bicycle and pedestrian counting
- Outreach and engagement



Stephen Geis, Senior Planning Technician

June 2019 – Present
Email: sgeis@strafford.org
Phone EXT: 112

Responsibilities:

- Traffic count program coordinator
- Transportation planning
- Analysis of congestion data
- Road surface management systems forecasting
- Sidewalk assessments
- Assist with information technology
- Hazard mitigation planning
- Assist with tax map updates
- GIS and data analysis



Courtney Grugnale, Housing Navigator

January 2023-September 6, 2024

Email: cgrugnale@strafford.org

Phone: (603) 866-0830

Responsibilities:

- Staff to the Towns of Farmington and New Durham
- Community engagement
- Master Plan update
- Grant and request for proposal writing
- Land use and housing regulatory updates
- Communications



Megan Taylor-Fetter, Office Coordinator

June 2021 – Present

Email: mtaylorfetter@strafford.org

Phone EXT: 115

Responsibilities:

- Human resources
- Coordinate SRPC commissioner and committee meetings
- Maintain commissioner and committee membership
- Office administration and organizational processes
- Administration for the NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions



Brian Notinger, GIS/Data Collection Intern

January 2024 – Present

Email: intern@strafford.org

Responsibilities:

- Updated land use GIS data digitization
- Updated community anchor institutions digitization
- Assist with traffic and bike-ped data collection
- Assist with other GIS and data efforts

Staff News

New Staff

- Brain Notinger began his GIS internship in January 2024 and joined the data collection field team for the summer.
- Kerrie Diers joined SRPC as a Principal Planner in March 2024.

Promotions

- Colin Lenz was promoted to Principal Planner in July 2024.
- Stephen Geis was promoted to Senior Planner in July 2024.
- Mark Davie was promoted to Senior Planner in July 2024.

Goodbyes

- Environmental Planner Autumn Scott left her position in May 2024.
- Nadege Masumbuko, who joined as Environmental Planning Intern in March 2024, completed her internship in May 2024.
- Angela Cleaveland left her position as Senior Regional Planner in March 2024.



Staff Fun

Staff Picnic

In August 2023, despite the rain, staff and family members enjoyed the annual 'Beach Day' lunch in the office which was decorated with beach balls, umbrellas, and sand toys. The fun continued at Dover Bowl for a few rounds of bowling and trivia games. Beach Day is hosted by the health coordinators Jackson Rand and Megan Taylor-Fetter and is paid for with funds from the health insurance wellness program.



CPR Class

In November, Staff participated in a CPR Certification Class at the Farmington Fire Station taught by Farmington Fire Department personnel.



Holiday Dinner

In December, the SRPC team celebrated the holidays in the lounge at the Revolution in Rochester. Staff enjoyed playing pool, darts, a Secret Santa gift exchange, and a delicious meal.



Monthly Staff Lunch

Throughout the year, Staff took turns hosting lunch for monthly staff meetings. The hosts served a homemade meal and also engaged fellow staffers in a fun team building exercise.



FY 2024 Project Highlights



Project Name	Type				Geography	Funder	Project Dates	Area			Staff Team															
	Engage	Measure	Plan	Service				SRPC	SMPO	SEDD	Angie C.	Autumn S.	Blair H.	Colin L.	Courtney G.	Interns	Jackson R.	Jen C.	Kathy F.	Kerrie D.	Kyle P.	Lisa M.	Mark D.	Megan T.F.	Natalie G.	Rachel D.
Housing Opportunity Planning Grants																										
Housing Master Plan Chapter	●		●	●	Barrington	NHHFA	Apr '23-Jun '24	●		●								●			●	●		●	●	
Housing Audit and Policy Development	●		●	●	Dover	NHHFA	Jan '24-Dec '24	●		●			●					●			●		●	●		
Route 11 Corridor Study	●		●	●	Farmington	NHHFA	Jul '23-Jul '24	●		●	●				●						●					
Housing and Land Use Master Plan	●		●	●	New Durham	NHHFA	Feb '24-Jul '24	●		●			●		●	●						●				
Housing Master Plan Chapter	●		●	●	Newmarket	NHHFA	Oct '23-Jul '24	●		●	●							●		●		●			●	
Form Based Code	●		●	●	Newmarket	NHHFA	Oct '23-Jul '24	●		●	●							●		●						
Housing Master Plan Chapter & Regulatory Audit	●		●	●	Somersworth	NHHFA	May '23-Jul '24	●		●	●		●					●	●			●		●	●	
Town Planning Services																										
Farmington			●	●	Farmington	Farmington	Ongoing	●																	●	

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	Engage	Measure	Plan	Service				SRPC	SMPO	SEDD	Angie C.	Autumn S.	Blair H.	Colin L.	Courtney G.	Interns	Jackson R.	Jen C.	Kathy F.	Kerrie D.	Kyle P.	Lisa M.	Mark D.	Megan T.F.	Natalie G.	Rachel D.
Northwood			●	●	Northwood	Northwood	Ongoing	●											●	●						
Nottingham			●	●	Nottingham	Nottingham	Ongoing	●						●												
Strafford			●	●	Strafford	Strafford	Ongoing	●						●												
Wakefield			●	●	Wakefield	Wakefield	Ongoing	●										●			●					
Tax Mapping																										
Farmington		●		●	Farmington	Farmington	Jul-Dec '23	●											●						●	
Somersworth		●		●	Somersworth	Somersworth	Sep-Dec '23	●											●						●	
Strafford		●		●	Strafford	Strafford	Apr-Sep '23	●											●						●	
Custom Mapping																										
Scenario Modeling		●		●	Madbury	EFD Planning/ NHHFA	Mar '24-Jun '24	●		●									●							
Watershed Maps		●		●	Lamprey Rover Watershed	Lamprey River Advisory Committee	Mar '24-Sep '24	●											●							
Regional and Non-Profit Projects																										
NH Association of RPCs Administration				●	Statewide	NHARPC	Jul '22-Jun '23	●											●				●			
Communities for Healthy Aging Transitions	●		●		Regional Farmington Newmarket Rochester Strafford	Tufts/Point32 Health Foundation	Jul '20-Sep '23	●		●	●	●			●			●						●		
Northern Borders Regional Commission Grant Administration																										
Water Infrastructure Improvements				●	Sanbornville Water Precinct	NBRC	Mar '21-Sep '23			●				●					●							

Project Name	Type				Geography	Funder	Project Dates	Area			Staff Team																	
	Engage	Measure	Plan	Service				SRPC	SMPO	SEDD	Angie C.	Autumn S.	Blair H.	Colin L.	Courtney G.	Interns	Jackson R.	Jen C.	Kathy F.	Kerrie D.	Kyle P.	Lisa M.	Mark D.	Megan T.F.	Natalie G.	Rachel D.	Stephen G.	
Downtown Riverfront Plan	●		●	●	Newmarket	NHDES Coastal Resilience Grant/NOAA	Nov '23-Jun '25	●			●																	
Open Space Plan	●		●	●	Newmarket	NHDES Local Source Water Grant	May '23-May '24	●				●						●	●									
University of New Hampshire Piscataqua River Estuaries Program																												
Great Bay Adapts	●			●	Regional	PREP/GB2030	Oct '23-Sep '24	●				●																
Natural Resource Inventory	●	●	●	●	Dover	PREP	Jul '23-Oct '24	●				●						●				●						
Natural Resource Inventory	●	●	●	●	Lee	PREP	Jul '23-Oct '24	●										●				●						
Land Use and Natural Resources Master Plan	●		●	●	Somersworth	PREP	Jul '23-Oct '24	●				●						●	●			●						
CAW Evolve our Practice		●		●	Regional	PREP/GB2030	Jun '23-Dec '24	●										●							●			
NH Community Development Finance Authority Community Development Block Grant Administration																												
CAPSC Gafney Home Senior Housing				●	Rochester	NHCDFACDBG	March '22-Jun '24			●																		
NH Housing Finance Authority Invest NH																												
Housing Navigator	●		●	●	Farmington New Durham	NHHFA Invest NH	October '22-Sep '24	●										●				●			●	●		●

Project Name	Type				Geography	Funder	Project Dates	Area			Staff Team																
	Engage	Measure	Plan	Service				SRPC	SMPO	SEDD	Angie C.	Autumn S.	Blair H.	Colin L.	Courtney G.	Interns	Jackson R.	Jen C.	Kathy F.	Kerrie D.	Kyle P.	Lisa M.	Mark D.	Megan T.F.	Natalie G.	Rachel D.	Stephen G.
Department of Safety Homeland Security Hazard Mitigation Planning																											
Durham	•	•	•		Durham	FEMA BRIC 20	Jul '22-Dec '24	•									•										
Middleton	•	•	•		Middleton	FEMA BRIC 20	Jul '22-Dec '24	•												•							•
Milton	•	•	•		Milton	FEMA BRIC 20	Jul '22-Dec '24	•																			•
Nottingham	•	•	•		Nottingham	FEMA BRIC 20	Jul '22-Dec '24	•						•													•
Strafford	•	•	•		Strafford	FEMA BRIC 20	Jul '22-Dec '24	•																			•
Northwood	•	•	•		Northwood	FEMA BRIC 21	May '23-Aug '25	•																			•
Rochester	•	•	•		Rochester	FEMA BRIC 21	May '23-Aug '25	•																			•
Transportation Unified Planning Work Program																											
Annual Listing of Obligated Projects		•			Regional	NHDOT, FHWA, FTA	Dec '23		•																		
Traffic Counts		•			Regional	NHDOT, FHWA, FTA	Summer & Early Fall		•																	•	•
Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts		•			Regional	NHDOT, FHWA, FTA	Summer & Early Fall		•																		•
Regional Data Snapshot		•			Regional	NHDOT, FHWA, FTA	Jan-April '24		•																	•	•
Ten Year Plan Project Solicitation	•		•		Regional	NHDOT, FHWA, FTA	Jul '23-Jun '24		•																		•
Transportation Improvement Program			•		Regional	NHDOT, FHWA, FTA	Jul '23-Jun '24		•																		•

Project Name	Type				Geography	Funder	Project Dates	Area			Staff Team																
	Engage	Measure	Plan	Service				SRPC	SMPO	SEDD	Angie C.	Autumn S.	Blair H.	Colin L.	Courtney G.	Interns	Jackson R.	Jen C.	Kathy F.	Kerrie D.	Kyle P.	Lisa M.	Mark D.	Megan T.F.	Natalie G.	Rachel D.	Stephen G.
Road Surface Management Systems		●			Regional	NHDOT, FHWA, FTA	Jul '23-Jun '24		●																		●
CommuteSmart NH	●			●	Regional	NHDOT, FHWA, FTA	Jul '23-Jun '24		●		●																●
CommuteSmart Seacoast	●			●	Regional	NHDOT, FHWA, FTA, COAST, CMAQ	Jul '23-Jun '24		●		●																●

Outreach and Engagement



SRPC integrates outreach and engagement with all of its projects. Gathering feedback from residents, municipal staff, volunteers, partners, and other stakeholders is essential when planning for the Stafford region's future.

By the Numbers

19 out of **21**

grants and contracts sought were awarded totaling

\$697,555

in funds for SRPC including 7 Housing Opportunity Planning Grant projects to help implement the Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

2,700 responses to **13**

surveys conducted by SRPC using 3 platforms: SurveyMonkey, MetroQuest, and Survey123.

350+ participants attended **13**

events and community forums organized by SRPC.

Meetings in the Field

In September 2023, commissioners requested a refocus of the regularly scheduled meetings to better balance SRPC's work. The new schedule rotates monthly Commissioner meetings between the three programs: Economic Development District, (EDD) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and Regional Planning Commission (RPC). As a result, the Quarterly Commissioner meetings were replaced by Field Trips to places in our region to showcase projects that reflect progress in one of the three programs.

Additionally, as the pandemic has subsided, the Seacoast Economic Development Stakeholders (SEDS) decided to resume meeting in person. They revised their meeting schedule to still meet monthly by Zoom, but to hold quarterly in person meetings on location with economic development and business leaders in the region.

December 2023 Commissioners' Transportation Field Trip

In December 2023, Commissioners and staff were hosted by staff from UNH and Durham for a tour of sites around town and campus. Beverly Cray, UNH Transportation Services Operations Manager drove the group to several sites on one of UNH Transit's new compressed natural gas buses. Durham Director of Planning & Community Development Michael Behrendt and Town Administrator Todd Selig described the many ways the town and university collaborate to address challenges and plan for the future of the "town-gown". Ken Weston, Director of Campus Stewardship, highlighted UNH's efforts to fully update the campus Master Plan. Adam Kohler, Director of Energy & Utilities, described UNH's numerous energy innovations. Steve Pesci, UNH Director of Special Projects (and SRPC alumni), organized the tour and provided local and regional planning context.



February 2024 Commissioners' Economic Development Field Trip

Partnerships, collaboration, adaptation, listening, and asset-building: all of these were topics of discussion at the February 22nd SRPC Commission meeting, held "on the road" in Dover. The meeting was hosted at Breakaway Café (then Flight Coffee) in Dover and included a wonderful panel discussion with Flight's owner, Ben Cole; City Business Development Office Staff, Reid Bickley and James Burdin; and the Greater Dover Chamber of Commerce President, Margaret Joyce. Panelists spoke about their successes to-date, what challenges they face, and what they think is next for Dover. Reid Bickley said it best, saying that "...the next big thing for downtown Dover is about providing an experience." With nearly every storefront either filled or programmed, the Business Development Office is turning their attention towards providing activities and

events for visitors to downtown Dover. Participants were especially impressed with the community-forward mentality of Breakaway Café (formerly Flight Coffee), offering their space for community groups and providing an environment where people feel welcome and comfortable. Margaret provided insight into how events have attracted visitors downtown, such as the Cochecho Arts Festival, Christmas Tree lighting, and Apple Harvest Day.



SEDS JEMS by Pensole Tour

The Seacoast Economic Development Stakeholders took a great tour of the JEMS by Pensole shoe manufacturing facility in Somersworth in November 2023. This facility uses state of the art technology to cut and sew sneakers using materials from the US and local talent. We are so excited to see manufacturing coming back to the Seacoast.



SEDS AJ Nonwovens Tour

In March, the Seacoast Economic Development Stakeholders visited AJ Nonwovens in Hampton, NH, where they were able to learn about the company's work and commitment to the community and sustainability. AJ Nonwovens is a company that creates technical fabrics for industries like automotive, healthcare, home furnishings, and more. During this tour, stakeholders learned that AJ Nonwoven products, which are made from recycled bottles, are everywhere: car mats and seat fabric, motorhome fabrics, theater wall carpet, face masks, and the flaps in car washes. To date, 225,000,000 pounds of polyester fiber have been made from recyclable materials at their facility.



SEDS Arts and Economic Prosperity Panel

On Tuesday, May 28th, 2024 SRPC hosted a meeting for its Seacoast Economic Development Stakeholders group at the Dover Police Station. The topic was Arts and Economic Prosperity, with a panel discussion facilitated by our friend Jennifer Kimball from the Regional Economic Development Center (REDC). A panel of experts shared their knowledge of arts and culture as an economic driver.



Arts and culture are essential for a community to thrive. Whether it's a huge event such as *Dover's Apple Harvest Day*, putting local artists' work in vacant storefronts, painting murals on buildings and along trails, hosting music and theater events, or having local students decorate the concrete barriers for streetside dining areas, there are no limits to how arts can benefit a community. Besides simply creating beauty, arts and culture generate local pride and a sense of place, attract visitors, and increase property values. Arts and culture can be a direct part of a community's Master Plan. Dover's planning board regularly recommends reserving space on new commercial buildings for public art, and they've found that developers are eager to do so. Portsmouth has a 1% arts ordinance for public/private partnerships to fund art projects on commercial buildings (such as the Foundry Place parking garage).

SEDS Rochester Regional Technology Center Tour

The Seacoast Economic Development Stakeholders (SEDS) toured the Rochester Regional Technology Center where 1,000 students take classes in aviation, STEM, engineering, automotive, nursing, banking, manufacturing, restaurant management and teaching among many more. This amazing resource, available to students in Rochester, Dover, and Somersworth prepares students for employment upon graduating high school, as a bridge to higher education, or for those looking to make a career change.



Outreach Spotlight:

HOP Projects



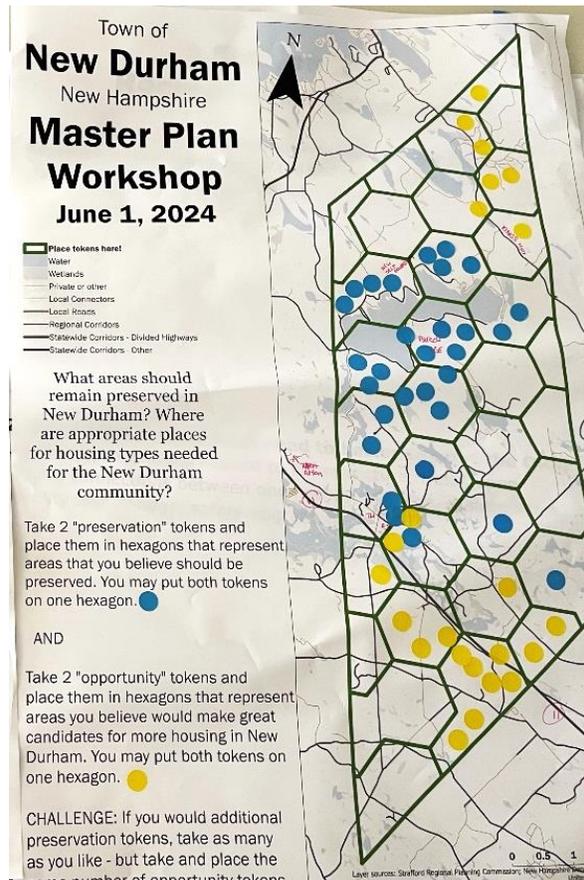
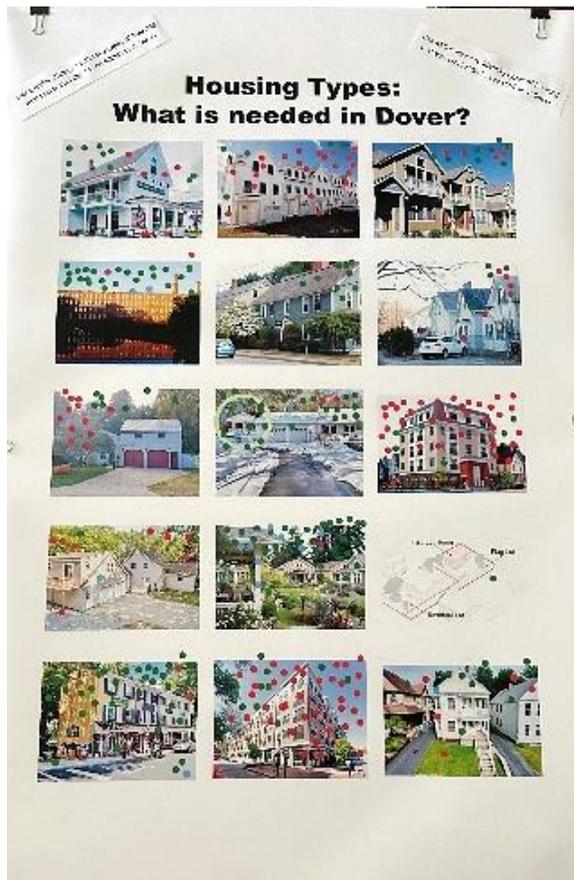
The Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) grant series is targeted funding for technical assistance to New Hampshire cities and towns in addressing the housing crisis. The program took shape through “InvestNH” American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding and is administered by the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA). 61 municipalities and one village district have utilized at least one HOP grant, 10 of which are in the Strafford Region. SRPC assisted municipalities in utilizing HOP grants for:

- The Housing Navigator program in **Farmington** and **New Durham**.
- Master Plan updates for Barrington, New Durham, Newmarket, and Somersworth.
- Land Use Regulation Audits, or “zoning audits,” for **Dover, Farmington, and Somersworth**.

As housing is a white-hot planning topic in Northern New England, carefully crafted outreach was needed in every community. This was no exception in the six communities that SRPC assisted. What did SRPC do?

- **Surveys.** Seven HOP-related surveys in FY24 received a total of **2,129** responses. There were a range of dissemination methods, such as email blasts, posters, flyers, and inclusion in workshop and meeting materials. One of the seven surveys was drafted in Indonesian with assistance from Indonesian Community Connect (ICC).
- **Poster Boards.** Online surveys can skew toward those with internet access. Interactive posters were made that could be more passively engaged with and held at the Dover city clerk’s office, city library, senior center, and recreation center. Users placed dots where they live on a map of the city, answered a small selection of questions from the survey, and indicated preference for varying housing types.
- **Special Committees and Boards.** Many New Hampshire municipalities have formed dedicated committees, boards, and task forces to plan, engage, prioritize, and open channels of communication. Strafford Region communities were no exception, and SRPC worked with all of the following: Dover’s Ad-Hoc Committee to Address Community Housing Needs, New Durham’s Development Committee, Newmarket’s Master Plan “Teams,” and Somersworth’s Mayor’s Housing Task Force.
- **Ranking & Prioritization.** SRPC presented a large list of recommendations in the Somersworth Zoning Audit. To empirically analyze the response to these findings, SRPC created a digital feasibility-impact matrix for the city’s land use boards to rank. See more in Project Spotlight: Somersworth Zoning Audit.
- **Events.** SRPC held or assisted in putting on events in all of the HOP projects, many of which overlapped with other projects or town events. These included weekend or evening workshops as well as presentations to planning or select boards. They included data presentations, mapping activities, prioritization exercises, facilitated discussion, and more.

- **Maps.** Mapping activities empower residents directly. In the HOP projects, many generally centered around “development” without getting too detailed in housing typologies.
- **Town & City Staff.** SRPC worked closely with Dover’s Housing Navigator and the city and town Planning Directors of Somersworth and Newmarket in Master Plan and Audit HOP work. These dedicated local leaders provided simply invaluable historical context for regulation and land use boards, and demonstrated a drive and passion for communities. Their efforts should not go unnoticed.
- **Project Newsletters.** For the Dover audit and New Durham master plan updates, SRPC ensured that survey respondents and others interested in the projects received updates. SRPC utilized Constant Contact to inform interested residents of the workshops held for the projects and additional opportunities to provide feedback.

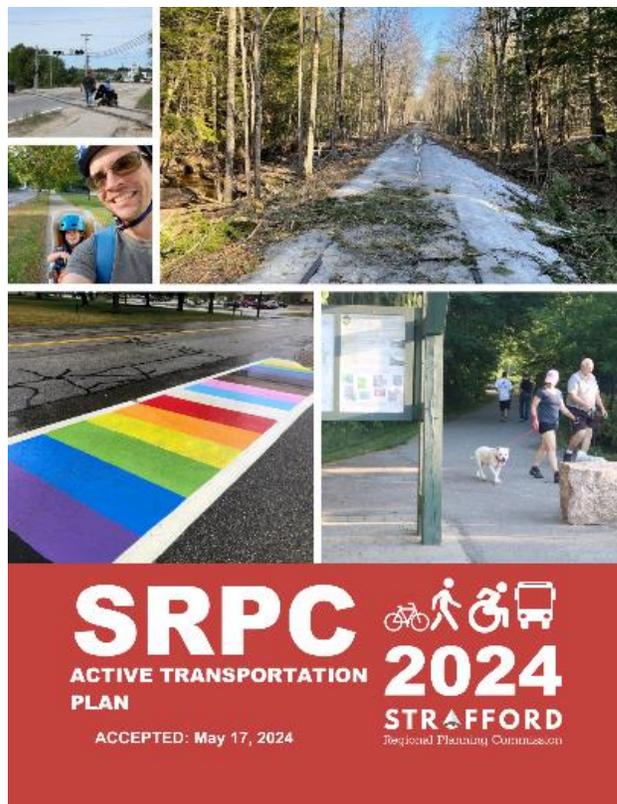


PLANS Spotlight: Active Transportation Plan



SRPC adopted its first Active Transportation Plan in May 2024. The plan considers needs, benefits, and potential strategies for improving non-motorized transportation in the Strafford Region of New Hampshire. It established a framework of goals and many prioritized implementation strategies for achieving those goals. Input from 250 individuals from a public survey, from municipal staff, and representatives on Strafford Regional Planning Commission's committees was instrumental to this plan.

While the transportation network in Southern New Hampshire is dominated by automotive travel, active transportation has emerged as a major planning and equity issue, and there is excitement about the expansion of the local and regional trail network in particular. SRPC hopes this plan supports local, regional, and state efforts to make the transportation system safer, more accessible, and more attractive for active transportation and multimodal users.



SRPC
ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
PLAN



2024
STRAFFORD
Regional Planning Commission

ACCEPTED: May 17, 2024

PLANS Spotlight: Newmarket Master Plan



In fall 2023, the Newmarket Planning Board appointed a Master Plan Subcommittee to work with the Strafford Regional Planning Commission to update the Town’s Master Plan. The current Master Plan was initially adopted in 2001, and over the years the Planning Board has worked to update individual chapters. This is the first comprehensive effort since 2001 to pull all chapters into a cohesive document with consistent themes.

The planning process will engage the community in creating a vision and actionable strategies for achieving that vision over the next 10 years. When complete, the new Master Plan will include the following chapters: Vision; Housing; Land & Water Conservation; Arts, Culture and Historic Resources; Community Facilities and Utilities; Downtown Riverfront Design Plan; Economic Development; Energy; Recreation; Existing and Future Land Use; Transportation; and Implementation. The Planning Board will adopt the full Master Plan in 2025.

The Master Plan project is supported by several different sources. The Town received NHHFA & InvestNH Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) grant funds to update the Housing Chapter and investigate the feasibility of adopting a form-based code in the downtown area. The Open Space report, which will be an appendix to the Land & Water Conservation Chapter, was funded by a Local Source Water Protection (LSWP) grant through the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). The Downtown Riverfront Design Chapter is funded by a NHDES Coastal Resilience Grant. This effort will be in collaboration with PlanNH which is conducting a planning charrette of the Downtown Riverfront in October 2024. The Town of Newmarket is funding the remaining chapters through designated Capital Improvement Program funding.

The project kicked off in December 2023 with a community-wide survey about housing and open space. The results of the survey were released at a March 2024 community workshop that focused on the community’s vision for balancing housing and open space. The team also sought input from local developers through focused interviews. A week-long series of visioning sessions with the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, River Front Committee and Master Plan Committee culminated in the development of five main themes that will carry through each chapter of the Master Plan: Vibrancy, Connectivity, Accessibility, Affordability, and Resiliency.

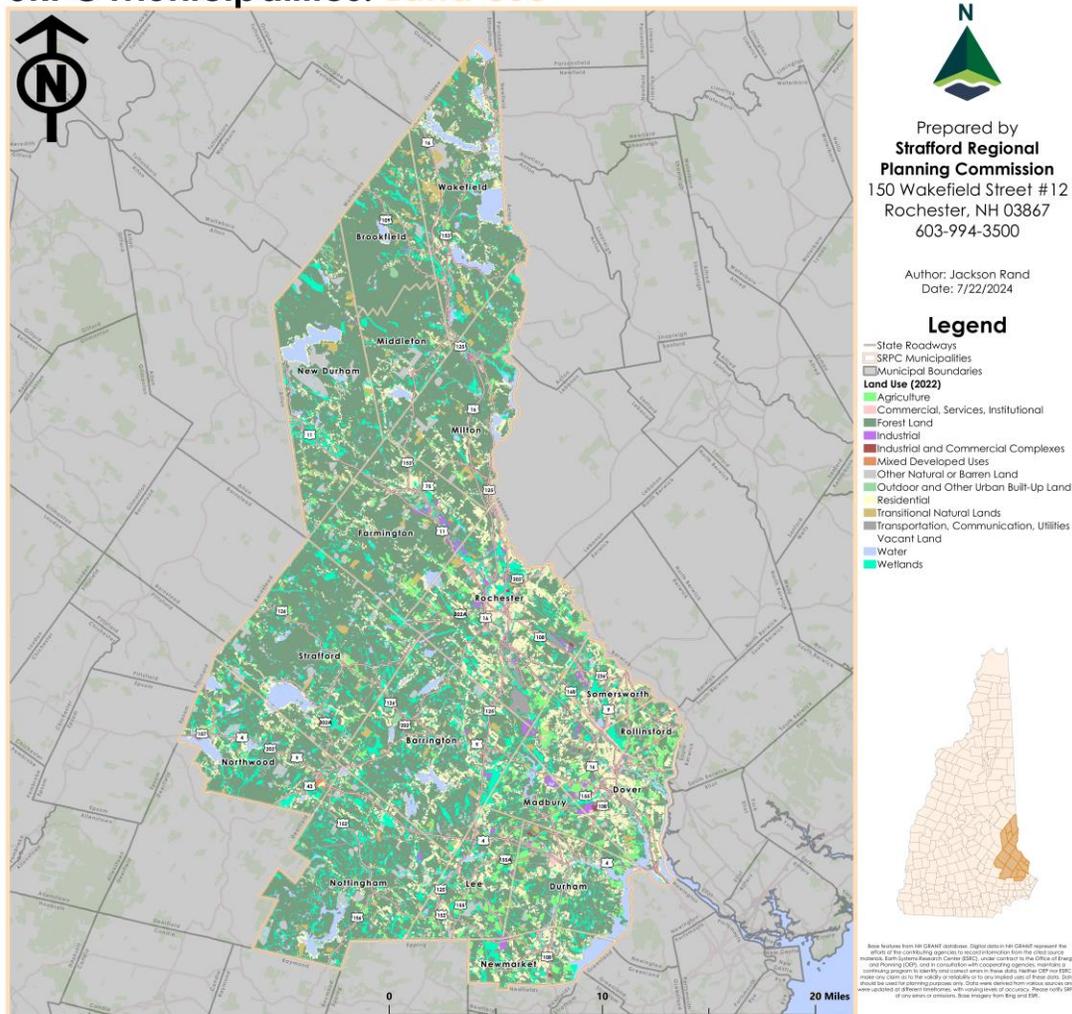


GIS Highlight: Land Use Data Update



GIS Intern Brian Notinger took on the task of updating the Land Use Data Layer for the SRPC region in January 2024. This involved taking the previous Land Use Data Layer, last updated in 2015, and updating each of the SRPC towns' Land Use data based on the most recent aerial imagery (2021 or 2022 depending on the town). As of early 2024, the Land Use update was completed. After a post-update analysis from Senior GIS Planner Jackson Rand, it was determined that the SRPC region had minimal overall land use changes. Among the changes present, some trends included the reduction of forest and agricultural land, and the widespread addition of single-family housing lots. At the completion of the Land Use update, SRPC staff also updated SRPC's Land Use Standard Maps and SRPC's ArcGIS Online Land Use Standard Map.

SRPC Municipalities: Land Use



GIS by the Numbers



At the close of the 2024 fiscal year, [SRPC's ArcGIS Online site](#) hosted:

10

interactive maps

11

Web Apps

5

Dashboards

5

StoryMaps

... and annual site traffic saw:

10,622

views on the Tax Parcel Viewer (up 20%)

707

views on All 9 Standard Maps (15% decrease)

32,225

views on the Open Data Portal (up 21%)

2533

views on All Storymaps (105% increase)

928

views on the POP Viewer (36% decrease)

486

views on All Dashboards (125% increase)

213

views on the Arts and Culture Viewer

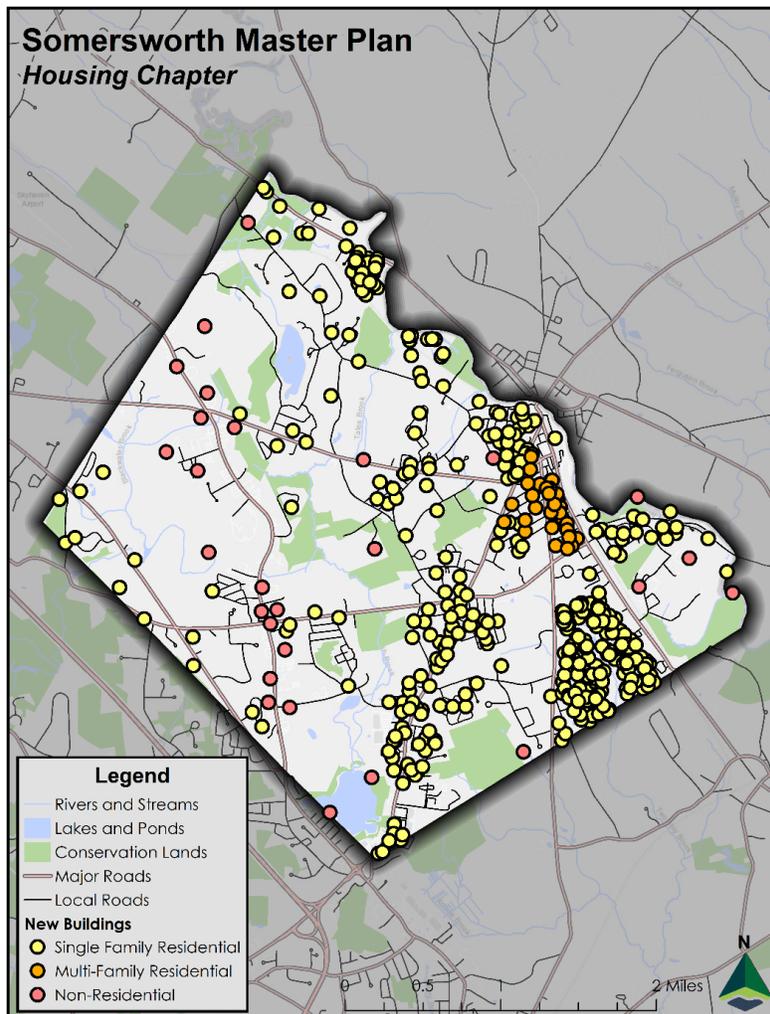
296

views on Data Snapshot Web App (14% increase)

MAP Spotlight: Build-Out Analyses



In June 2024, SRPC completed housing related plans in the Towns of Barrington and Newmarket, and the City of Somersworth. As part of these housing plans, a GIS build-out analysis was completed using CommunityViz, an ArcGIS extension tool. A build-out analysis is a planning tool that helps communities understand how development regulations and ordinances will impact land. CommunityViz allows us to visualize how current development regulations and ordinances will impact future patterns of development. We give inputs such as zoning district data, existing buildings, and constraints to development into the CommunityViz tool, and then the tool creates maps showing what future patterns of development could look like. This tool allows us to visually model future patterns of development under existing conditions, as well as create various scenarios where zoning and regulation data was changed to see how the landscape of development could look different in the future.



PROJECT Spotlight: Rochester Accessibility Audit



The final phase of the Communities for Healthy Aging Transitions (CHAT) project included two implementation projects. The Rochester Downtown Accessibility Audit was one of these two implementation projects.

In August 2023, SRPC Staff and volunteers conducted an accessibility audit of all sidewalks, curb ramps, and road crossings within the downtown area of the city, regardless of ownership. Using a “walk audit” methodology developed by the American Association of Retired People (AARP), teams of volunteers and city staff recorded data and took photos on the condition, safety, and appeal pedestrian infrastructure. In addition to the sidewalks, this audit included an assessment of two city owned buildings with a focus on the entrances and access to the services provided at each location.

Volunteers and staff took photos of any defects or barriers to help Rochester Public Works determine the appropriate action. The results were compiled in maps and a written report, and the data collected will allow Public Works to identify strategies to make improvements to increase the accessibility of the downtown area for all users.



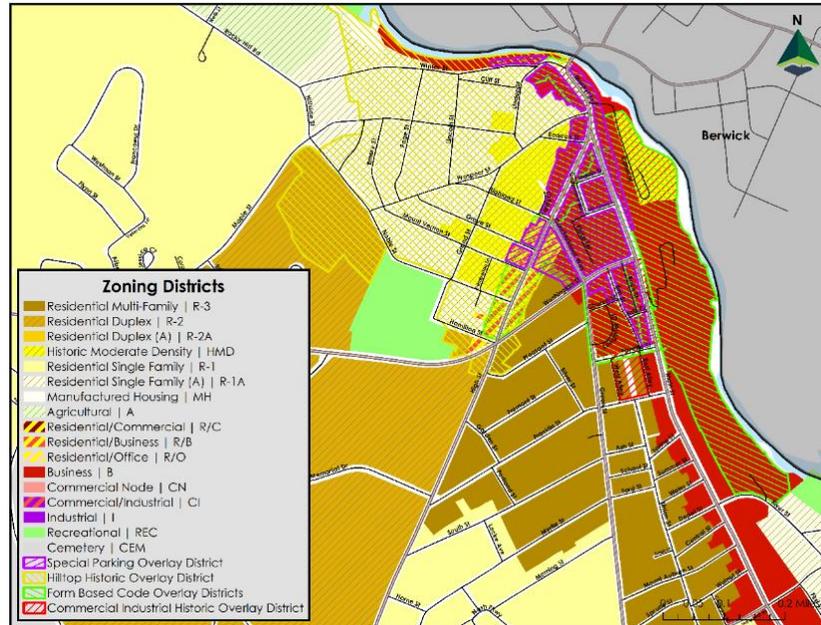
Strafford RPC and Rochester staff assessing downtown streets with people with disabilities to understand where barriers exist in the streetscape.

PROJECT Spotlight:

Somersworth Zoning Audit



The City of Somersworth applied for and received Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) funding for the purpose of updating the Housing Chapter of the Master Plan and a regulatory audit to identify areas for improvement in the city's land use regulation, primarily its zoning ordinance and map. SRPC conducted both of these efforts in FY25.



The audit began with broad goal areas from the Master Plan chapter to be aware of in detailed readings of the zoning, site plan, and subdivision regulations, supplemented by further discussion with city staff and the Planning Board. Other input opportunities through both the Master Plan and Audit processes included a survey, workshops with the community, the Planning Board, the newly formed Mayor's Housing Task Force, and regular communication and exchange of ideas with City staff.

Ultimately, four categories of "concerns" arose in the audit: ordinance organization and zoning map changes, infill development & conversion of existing structures, barriers to diversification of housing types, and site plan, subdivision, and general recommendations.

The full list of recommendations was presented to the Planning Board with the intent of completing a feasibility-impact matrix, but the sheet volume of recommendations was overwhelming and did not provide an opportunity for input from the other land use boards. SRPC staff pivoted strategies and reorganized the matrix into an electronic format via SurveyMonkey. This created a rough ranking of the recommendations.

SRPC staff then met with the Mayor's Housing Task Force to discuss logistics required of the top-rated recommended actions and gain an understanding of city attitudes toward planning topics that would be impacted by the actions, such as community character, parking, financing, and accessibility. From these, three detailed "priority actions" arose and SRPC conducted additional research and made note of the types of community engagement that would be required. These three were: reorganization of the city's zoning districts and map, recategorization of "multifamily" structures, and orienting the Route 108 corridor toward future housing.

PLAN Spotlight: Newmarket Open Space Master Plan

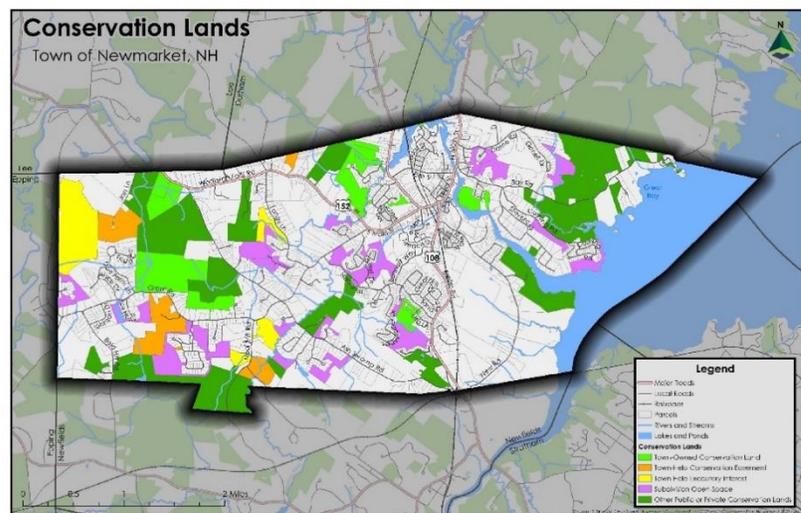


The development of the 2024 Newmarket Open Space Plan (OSP) update was led by the Newmarket Conservation Commission, in partnership with the Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) and reviewed by the Master Plan Subcommittee and Planning Board. The OSP incorporated several community engagement activities to seek public input. Specifically, through the Fall 2023, a community wide survey was conducted which focused on both housing and open space topics and received 429 responses. In March of 2024, a community workshop was held on the topics of housing and open space and garnered 48 participants. Visioning sessions were held at local board meetings in April of 2024 as a part of the larger update process for the Master Plan.

The OSP's purpose is to serve as a guide for the Town of Newmarket to advance conservation and management strategies that promote resiliency, stewardship, and stability between the needs of the environment, wildlife, and the community.

Residents' vision for the community is diverse, friendly, green, and sustainable, embracing community, connectivity, and natural spaces. It is clear community members value their open spaces – more than half of the respondents to the community survey visit parks, recreation, and conservation spaces at least weekly and 62% said it's extremely important to enhance the riverfront's natural environment.

When asked how residents prioritize open space and housing needs, foremost the consensus was to balance the two. However, more people prioritize open space protection over housing development. Ultimately, residents and community boards see Newmarket as a leader and a partner within the region to protect and enhance natural resources for the future.



The Newmarket Open Space Plan update was supported by the [Connect to Protect Technical Assistance](#) program, where partners helped to develop a Land Acquisition Criteria Evaluation tool for the Conservation Commission to use in evaluating new conservation land opportunities. This is an update to the 2007 Newmarket Open Space Conservation Plan, which will be adopted as part of the Town's Master Plan in 2025.

PROJECT Spotlight: Brownfields



SRPC received a \$500,000 Brownfields Grant from the US EPA and covers the years of 2024-2028. The project began in the fall of 2023 with two staff members attending the 2023 National Brownfields Conference in Detroit, Michigan. The conference provided information on site selection, consultant selection, reporting methods, and more. An SRPC Brownfields Advisory Committee was established, and an environmental consultant was selected to conduct the site surveys and analysis. We currently have two projects underway including: Farmington’s Old Fire Station, and the Somersworth Armory. One additional site was considered but was deemed ineligible under the current grant. Two more potential projects have recently emerged that are being considered for our list of projects.



PROJECT Spotlight: Hazard Mitigation



Maintaining an updated hazard mitigation plan is an important step that communities make in protecting residents and visitors during natural disasters. It also identifies areas of concern for large storm events with an opportunity to make the needed improvements such as upsizing a culvert, stabilizing steep slopes, trimming branches from critical infrastructure, etc. This is even more important in recent years as storm intensity and frequency increases. The process involves forming a steering committee of town staff and residents to provide the local input for inclusion into the plan. There are approximately five meetings needed by this committee to collect the information for the plan development.

The development of these plans is made possible by a FEMA grant with a 25% match that the community is required to supply, usually through attendance at the steering committee meetings.

The SRPC Hazard Mitigation planners were busy this year with updating the local hazard mitigation plans in several towns. Two plans were completed and received FEMA's approval including the Towns of Barrington and Durham. In addition, three new plan updates were completed and submitted to NH HSEM and FEMA for review and comment. This includes the plan updates for Milton, Middleton, and Strafford. Plans that we are actively working on include Nottingham, Northwood, and Rochester. We will soon begin working with Dover, Farmington, Madbury, and Newmarket.



DATA COLLECTION Highlights



By the Numbers

16

supplemental traffic counts as requested by Dover, Rochester, Durham, Milton, Barrington, and Newmarket.

96

NHDOT Traffic Counts as requested by NHDOT in Barrington, Brookfield, Dover, Durham, Madbury, Milton, Newmarket, Northwood, Nottingham, Rochester, Wakefield

12

model traffic counts to support the Travel Demand Model.

25

pedestrian counts were conducted in 8 towns, this time with at least 2-week intervals

5,235

miles were added on the SRPC van

Check out the [traffic count dashboard](#) to learn more.



Stephen Geis is now flagger certified! Now he can direct traffic to keep the team safe in the field (left).

GIS Intern and Data Collection team member Brian Notinger installs a traffic count at Wagon Hill Farm (right).



Online Engagement



As SRPC's contact list has grown over the years, staff have leveraged several communication methods, including Bits and Pieces, a weekly update, and the monthly Newsletter to disseminate information to a large audience. SRPC also sends out direct communications on specific project updates or important news on an as-needed basis.

SRPC is active on social media through Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram to ensure a broader reach.

SRPC's communications are designed to engage stakeholders and members of the public. In a world where people are often inundated with information, SRPC places a higher emphasis on focused content and graphic design.

Bits and Pieces and the Newsletter

39%

Open rate for SRPC's e-news releases

64

Communications sent out including Bits 'n Pieces, the Newsletter, and Business Resources

1,323

Subscribers

Website by the Numbers

11,225

Visitors

66,814

Total page views

5,862

Home page views

1m 43s

Average engagement time

Most popular page: the [mapping program's landing page](#) with **1,613** views

Social Media by the Numbers

451

Facebook followers

265

Instagram followers

389

LinkedIn followers

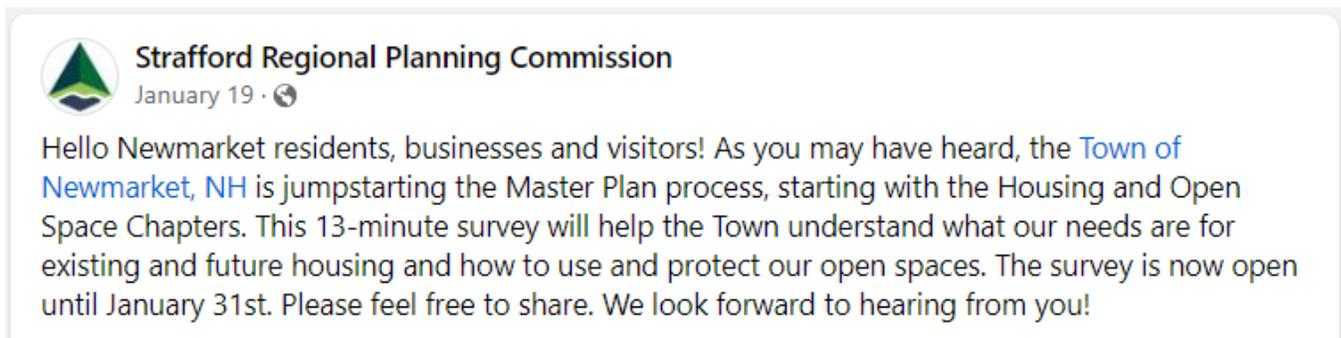
443

Posts across all platforms

Top reaching Facebook posts:



Farmington Route 11 Corridor Project Workshop announcement posted on October 30, 2023. Reach: 651 users



Newmarket Housing and Open Space Master Plan Survey, posted January 19, 2024 Reach: 581 users

SERVICE Spotlight: Grant Administration

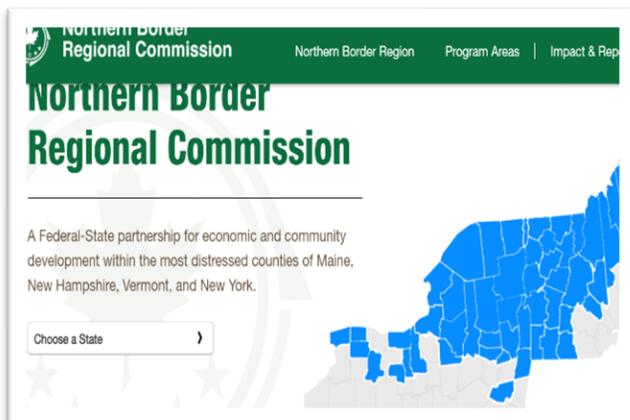


CDBG & NBRC Grant Programs

SRPC handles grant administration duties for several projects and continues to add more municipal and non-profit clients. During the pandemic, SRPC first opened its doors to grant administration work for Strafford County and Community Action Partnerships of Strafford County (CAPSC).

The CAPSC project, funded by a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) through NH CDFA, opened two temporary facilities to move un-housed citizens off the streets to minimize the spread of COVID-19. SRPC guided CAPSC through the grant writing process, grant contracts with the County and State, and grant implementation. SRPC staff prepared compliance documents, reviewed and processed reimbursement requests, and drafted twice-yearly status reports, including the final one, where CAPSC must report all the beneficiaries of the project to the federal government.

In addition to CDBG program, SRPC engages in grant administration duties for awardees of funds distributed by the Northern Border Regional Commission. NBRC programs serve rural communities of northern Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont to improve economic conditions through grants in forest management, outdoor recreation, facility upgrades, workforce development, and infrastructure building. The Town of Wakefield contracted with SRPC to administer its public facility grant for the Union Hotel. Prior to that, SRPC completed its administration of Wakefield's sewer and water line improvements nearly \$7,000 under the amount budgeted for grant administration.



SERVICE Spotlight:

Grant Writing



SRPC recognizes that communities in the region often face financial challenges to develop and implement both planning-level and shovel ready projects, despite unprecedented levels of state and federal funding opportunities. Additionally, many communities lack the capacity to conceptualize and prepare strong project plans and applications to leverage these resources. As a result, SRPC offers data collection, analysis, research, writing, and formatting for partners applying for grant assistance.

Over the years, SRPC's grant writing program has steadily grown and has become an essential service used to support our partners and communities. The growth in this program has also resulted in strengthening existing relationships and fostering new ones, including NHDES, HSEM, the Charitable Foundation, USDA, and NHH, to name a few.

Great Bay 2030: CAW Evolving Our Practice

This project includes a focused effort by the Strafford Regional Planning Commission and the Rockingham Planning Commission to identify and map communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change due to life circumstances that increase exposure to hazards or make it harder to respond in the Great Bay watershed.

Durham Wagon Hill Living Shoreline Phase II

This project proposes to install Phase II of the living shoreline at Wagon Hill Farm in Durham, NH. This phase of work will include 1,800 feet of living shoreline and increase the existing living shoreline from 300 feet to 2,100 feet and trail construction.

As part of the project's public engagement activities, SRPC will be tasked with creating an online, interactive Storymap that guides users along the trail adjoining the living shoreline project, as well as designing large-scale kiosk maps for two proposed observation platforms and up to five information signs/maps along the trail.

Inter-Regional Housing Solutions

Southern Maine Planning and Development Council is the lead applicant. Funds are to support addressing transportation problems at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard through land use change across its commute-shed. The project will fund SRPC and RPC to conduct regional trainings and provide free zoning and regulatory change services to communities.

Cocheco River Management Plan

This project will be to assist in the development and adoption of a Corridor Management Plan for the Cocheco River in accordance with RSA 483:10. The proposed management plan will establish a unified framework for which river corridor communities, the local advisory committee, and other regional and state agencies can work together to protect the river and its resources, including addressing point and nonpoint sources of pollution being discharged to the river.

Northwood Septic System Database

This project will prioritize properties within the identified study areas using an environmental sensitivity and vulnerability ranking process to help the Town of Northwood direct resources in an efficient and timely manner. There will also be an outreach component for identified landowners focusing on the adverse impacts of failing or malfunctioning septic systems and encouraging economically feasible solutions for infrastructure maintenance. The project team will conduct a survey to scope context specific educational materials and opportunities for drinking water protection.

Sunrise Lake Watershed Plan Implementation

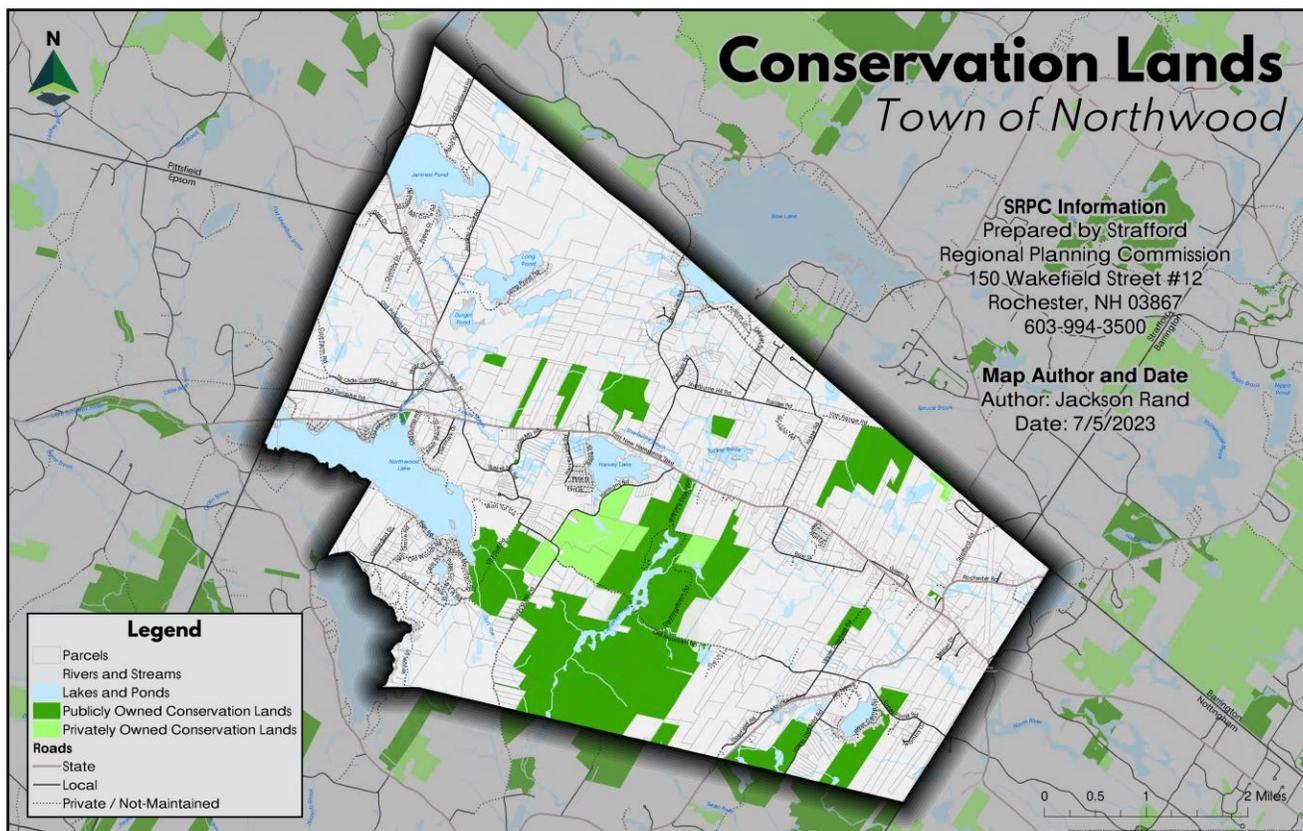
Four structural best management practices (BMPs) are being proposed, including at two of the seven association-owned beaches and a shoreline buffer project with a partner that will be identified during the project. At Hampshire Shores Beach, the proposal is to (1) install a rain garden with educational signage to treat stormwater. At Sunrise Lake Lands Association Beach, the proposal is to (2) replace a culvert underneath Lake Shore Road and (3) develop design and engineered plans to improve drainage and stormwater management. A (4) demonstration shoreline buffer project and associated outreach task will be conducted with assistance from the NHDES SOAK Team. The proposed non-structural BMP will be the development of a septic system regulation, as well as funding for additional bacteria sampling at the Lake Lands Association beach.

SERVICE Spotlight: Municipal Map Requests



In FY24, SRPC completed 15 municipal map requests that were provided free of charge or heavily discounted to dues-paying municipalities. These maps displayed data on a variety of different topics, including proposed zoning changes, snowplow routes, parcels in current use, tax rates, trails, conservation lands, recreation, developed and undeveloped lands, nonconforming lots, and more.

Municipal map requests can be created for municipal staff, boards, and committees. If you are looking for a map or mapping project, no matter how small or large, feel free to reach out to SRPC's GIS Planner with any map requests you may have for your municipality.



COLLABORATION Spotlight: BETA



SRPC's Metropolitan Transportation Plan acts as a pool of prospective transportation improvement projects ready for potential funding sources. Professional engineering support is required to develop projects to be competitive for funding opportunities. In FY 24, SRPC hired the consulting firm BETA to assess transportation projects prioritized by municipalities. They met with municipal staff and SRPC at five project sites to develop scopes and cost estimates. Those projects will also receive conceptual design drawings. The total contract with BETA was \$100,000: Half was allocated for the first round of five projects, and half retained for a second round of project reviews. Thank you, BETA, for helping SRPC develop a pool of professionally engineered projects.



COLLABORATION Spotlight: Resilience Planning & Design



Last year, the Town of Farmington, with assistance from SRPC’s Housing Navigator, applied for and received a Housing Opportunity Planning Grant. The focus of the funding was to ensure the Town’s housing goals along the Route 11 corridor are met. As part of the project, a team of consultants were retained and led by Steve Whitman and his colleagues at Resilience Planning & Design. Their task was to conduct a comprehensive audit, identify barriers, and make recommendations for any necessary regulatory changes.

Additional expertise and technical assistance from RKG Associates and Fougere Planning and Development were hired to conduct the market analysis and the land use regulatory audit, respectively. The market analysis compiled data to determine the best possible configuration and development potential for the corridor and used the Regional Housing Needs Assessment to highlight housing demand and supply characteristics. The regulatory audit included a thorough review of the Town’s Zoning Ordinance, Site Plan Regulations, and Subdivision Regulations. For the Route 11 corridor, the audit was intended to provide thought about improved housing choices and commercial, industrial, and mixed-use opportunities.

This was the first collaboration between SRPC and Resilience Planning & Design. Throughout the process, Steve and his team were instrumental in explaining the corridor’s ability to serve as a location for housing and economic development, as well as clearly defining pathways for success.

As a result of years of experience, they possessed a unique ability to simplify complex ideas, facilitate conversations between municipal boards and local stakeholders, and develop a series of proposed regulatory amendments that were user-friendly and easy to understand. It was a pleasure to be part of this incredibly talented group of professionals and we look forward to future partnerships.



COLLABORATION Spotlight:

Ivy Vann



SRPC collaborated with Ivy Vann of Ivy Vann Town Planning & Urban Design to assist the Town of Newmarket with the implementation of an InvestNH Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) Grant Project. The project, conducted in conjunction with the development of the Town's Master Plan Housing chapter, developed draft regulatory changes to the Town's zoning ordinance in and around the designated North Gateway District. The project's intent was to assist the Town to achieve its economic development and housing goals by designing and codifying a form-based code through a robust and iterative community engagement process. This regulatory framework aims to increase mixed-use and missing middle housing development opportunities in Town.



SRPC staff and Ivy Vann collaborated on community engagement by creating a visual preference survey, which was conducted along with the online housing survey planned as part of the Master Plan process. Ivy participated in the March 2024 Master Plan housing and open space workshop to solicit additional input from residents about specific building type preferences. In April, Ivy and SRPC staff also designed and facilitated a series of targeted focus group sessions with residents, business, and local officials from the designated zoning district. These facilitated conversations were intended to further define and refine local visual and design preferences that served as a basis for the form-based code. Ivy had dozens of illustrations of housing types available on individual cards that participants paired with maps of Newmarket made by SRPC.

Later, SRPC and Ivy Vann created detailed maps of the subject area, with all parcels identified with the current zoning and usage. Maps with other community features, assets, and natural resources were also produced as supplemental planning level considerations. SRPC conducted a town wide CommunityViz analysis, which assisted Ivy in analyzing subject area parcels for potential development in alignment with the Master Plan.

Ivy Vann developed a draft form-based code which includes specific building types and street design illustrations, which is currently under review by the Newmarket Planning Board. It is anticipated that the Board will conduct public hearings about the proposed changes in Fall 2024.

EVENT Spotlight: SRPC Annual Meeting



Commissioners, staff, and guests met at the historic Three Chimneys Hotel in Durham on June 27th for SRPC’s annual meeting. The focus of the meeting was a retrospective on the Regional Master Plan “Local Solutions for the Strafford Region” that was published in 2015. SRPC is preparing for a comprehensive update to the Regional Master Plan and wanted to host a discussion to help launch that effort. Transportation Planner Colin Lentz moderated a panel discussion with three people with expertise in housing, natural resources protection, and local planning and development:

- Michelle Mears – City of Somersworth Planning & Community Development Director and former SRPC staff member
- John Mullen – Town of Middleton Commissioner and champion of drinking water conservation in the Sunrise Lake area
- Ryan Pope – City of Dover Housing Navigator and Seacoast-area banking expert

They reflected on their past and present work, and what actions will be necessary to maintain quality of life in the region. The afternoon culminated in a broader discussion about regional identity and the Strafford Region’s place as a gateway between the greater Seacoast and Lakes regions.



EVENT Spotlight: New Durham Community Forum



Through FY23 and FY24, Housing Navigator Courtney Grugnale has worked with the Town of New Durham through a Housing Opportunity Planning (HOP) grant. This has enabled a wide range of outreach and engagement activities. A public forum held in July 2023 was the first of many opportunities that allowed residents to convene and discuss the future of New Durham and served as the launch of the town’s Development Committee. The Committee is chartered with facilitating planning for housing, commercial opportunities, and the recreation economy in New Durham. The town applied for and received a second HOP grant and partnered with SRPC to work on master plan updates.

SRPC staff Blair Haney, Mark Davie, and Courtney Grugnale worked with the town’s Planning Board, Development Committee, and staff to plan and implement a survey, public forum, meetings, and complete general outreach to the community. A second public forum for the master plan updates was held on June 1st, 2024, with about 50 attendees. The forum included information, group discussion, and station activities surrounding housing, short-term rentals, the recreation economy, and land use generally.

At this event, three key housing needs were defined; accessible housing needed for residents to age-in-place, housing needed for young families and recent graduates, and for staff of municipal services. Town leadership largely identified that New Durham previously has held a “bedroom community” niche in the regional housing market in addition to hosting many seasonal homes. Results of the forum showed that the town’s opinion on housing preferred types is mixed but leaned more toward single-family homes and large lot sizes, although with excitement about tiny homes and recognition that senior housing is needed. This event opens the door to further discussion on housing and land use, which the Committee is continuing to move forward with as they work toward the overall vision of the town.



EVENT Spotlight: Farmington Route 11 Charette



Sidewalk expansion and connectivity to the Farmington Recreation Trail are part of local plans for the Route 11 corridor in Farmington. Town staff are working with SRPC to develop multiple sidewalk improvement or expansion projects. One such project would extend sidewalks from downtown, all the way across Route 11 to the Farmington-Rochester Recreational Rail Trail.

This would be a big step toward a walkable and bikeable link between Farmington and Rochester. The trail crosses Route 11 midway between the communities and a safer crossing will be required before the link is complete.

The Farmington Route 11 Corridor Project was made possible by a Housing Opportunity Planning Grant administered by New Hampshire Housing, Plan NH, and the University of New Hampshire. The Town partnered with Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Resilience Planning, RKG, Fougere Planning & Development and Wright-Pierce to implement the project scope of work. This project has enabled the unique opportunity to seek out housing opportunities along the corridor that would align with the town's vision and consider any constraints.

Throughout the project, community engagement has held a significant role, as the team worked together to coordinate and implement a survey, public forum, public hearings and presentations. In addition, they have also worked to help to reconvene a TIF committee. The most significant work they've done is to propose two new mixed-use zones along the corridor which would enable more diverse forms of housing while also leaving room for commercial development.

AS part of that community engagement, in November 2023, SRPC staff organized an open house style workshop with presentations to discuss the results of the Route 11 Corridor analysis. Discussions on housing, population changes, transportation improvements, recreation, mixed use, zoning changes, and open space were all packed into the Route 11 Corridor Workshop.



EVENT Spotlight: Seacoast Changemaker Bootcamp



Great Bay 2030 is an initiative that "...promotes a healthy Great Bay estuary system distinguished by clean water, accessible lands for recreation and education, habitat for fish and wildlife, climate resilience, and engaged communities committed to supporting the watershed for generations to come." As part of this effort, five focal areas have been identified where collective attention, effective partnerships, and investment are needed to ensure positive outcomes for the future of the watershed.

One focal area is to foster a culture of stewardship, which set a goal of creating a culture focused on appreciating the values that a healthy estuary and watershed provide and protecting those values. Year one projects for the stewardship focal area included the development of the Seacoast Changemaker Bootcamp

The Seacoast Changemaker Bootcamp was a program designed to train and support environmental champions and advocates in the Great Bay watershed. It aims to educate residents about threats to the health of the Great Bay region's waterways, empower them with the skills and confidence to become advocates for their communities, and create a cohort of changemakers who feel empowered to act.

In fall 2023, the Forward Foundation piloted a four-part program in the Cocheco Watershed in which SRPC staff, including Kyle Pimental and Autumn Scott, were selected to participate. Kyle and Autumn, alongside several other panelists, shared personal stories of becoming environmental champions themselves and provided advice on ways to influence policy and local land use and development decisions.

Given the success of the pilot, the Changemaker program is excited to offer a follow up four-session Bootcamp on communities connected to the Lamprey River. Sessions are scheduled to run from September through November 2024.



Awards



On June 11, 2024 during a ceremony hosted by the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management in Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts, the Gulf of Maine Council presented SRPC **Commissioner John Mullen** with a Gulf of Maine Visionary award in recognition of his outstanding innovation, creativity, and commitment to protecting natural resources within the Gulf of Maine.



At the June 26, 2024 Commissioner Annual Luncheon, Strafford Regional Planning Commission Recognized **Barrington Town Administrator, Connor MacIver**, for his community leadership and vision.

Among his accomplishments Connor procured \$1.5 million in congressional spending to build their town hall, worked with many different groups in Barrington to create a TIF District, and encouraged the move of the Public Library, all while supporting efforts to help the community understand what all these initiatives could mean for the town.



Accepting the award for Connor is Katrin Kasper, Jen Czysz, and Vanessa Price

At the luncheon, SRPC also recognized the **Town of Durham** for regional leadership and vision in coastal resilience through the Living Shoreline Project at Wagon Hill Farm.

This project will benefit our coastal communities as they prepare for extreme weather, coastal sea rise, and other climate impacts.

Accepting the award for The Town of Durham is Wayne Burton

Jen Czysz, Rich Reine, and Todd Selig.



FY2025 Budget and Work Plan



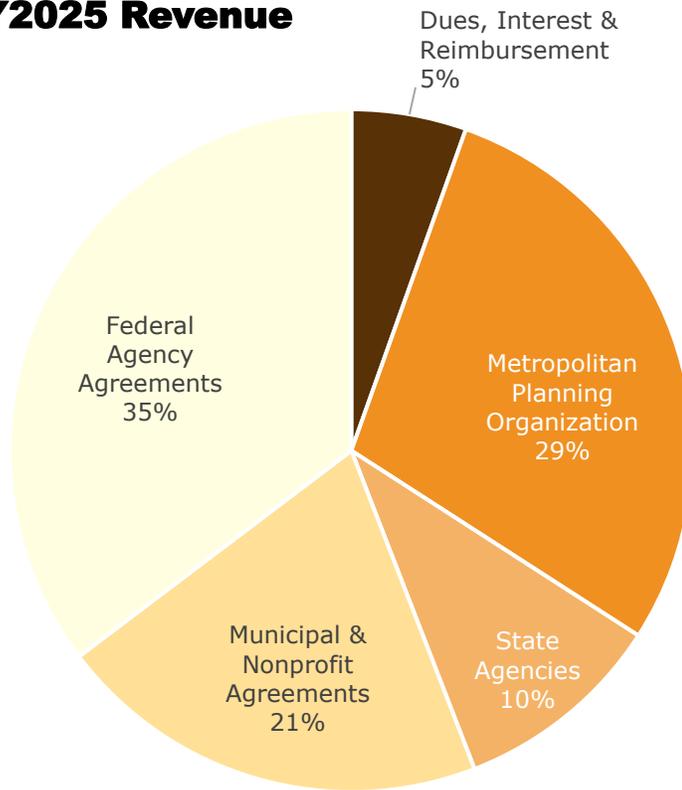
Summary Table

	FY 24 Revenue	FY 25 Revenue	Net Change
Dues, Interest & Reimbursement	139,422	138,270	(1,153)
Metropolitan Planning Organization	626,458	727,766	101,308
State Agencies	313,575	254,112	(59,463)
Municipal & Nonprofit Agreements	621,569	522,036	(99,533)
Federal Agency Agreements	407,394	896,350	488,956
Total	2,108,418	2,538,533	430,116

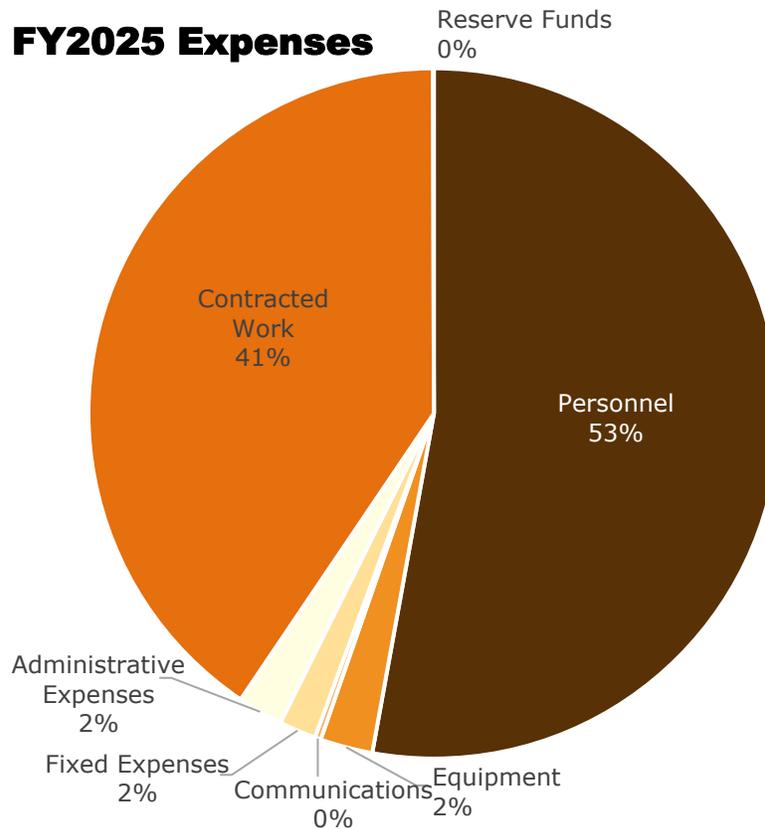
	Expenses	Expenses	Net Change
Personnel	1,313,760	1,341,557	27,796
Equipment	38,615	62,365	23,750
Communications	7,591	7,100	(491)
Fixed Expenses	47,166	43,894	(3,272)
Administrative Expenses	50,000	54,000	4,000
Contracted Work	613,075	1,028,100	415,025
Reserve Funds	13,000	1,000	(12,000)
Total	2,083,208	2,538,016	454,807

Net Deficit/Surplus	23,445	518	(24,692)
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FY2025 Revenue



FY2025 Expenses



FY 2025 Revenues by Work Program

FY2025 REVENUES	FY 24 Revenue	FY25 Revenue	Dues Match	
Dues, Interest & Reimbursements	139,422	138,270	0	5%
2000 Municipal Dues (minus BRK, NOT)	138,822	137,670	0	
0000 Interest	100	100	0	
0000 Health Trust reward/reimbursement	500	500	0	
0000 Misc Revenue	0	0	0	
Municipal & Nonprofit Agreements	599,569	522,036	900	21%
3304 Dover Regulatory Audit and Dev. Of Land Use Policies		20,000	0	
3403 Durham Wagon Hill Living Shorelines Phase 2		5,500	0	
3501 Farmington Town Planner Services	60,000	70,000	0	
350x Farmington Tax Maps	1,000	2,225	0	
3507 Farmington RT11 Audit and Regulatory Change	133,740	17,500	0	
3903 Milton Nitrogen Removal Plan (CWSRF)	40,000	60,000	0	
4004 New Durham Housing & Land Use MP Chapters	22,000	5,000	0	
<i>410X Newmarket Tax Maps</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>0</i>	
4105 Newmarket Housing & Demographics HOP Grant	24,500	2,000	0	
4106 Newmarket Comprehensive Master Plan Update	20,000	65,000	0	
4107 Newmarket Form Based Code	90,500	22,000	0	
4201 Northwood Technical Services	25,000	30,000	0	
4301 Nottingham Town Planner Services	25,000	20,000	0	
4403 Rochester Recreation Master Plan	24,200	5,000	900	
<i>460x Somersworth Tax Maps</i>	<i>1,686</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>0</i>	
4605 Somersworth Master Plan and Audit	66,000	4,000	0	
4701 Strafford Town Planner Services	36,250	36,000	0	
<i>470x Strafford Tax Maps</i>	<i>693</i>	<i>500</i>	<i>0</i>	
4801 Wakefield Contract Planner	5,400	2,500	0	
4803 Wakefield NBRC Grant Admin (Union Hotel)	1,500	1,500	0	
5002 NHARPC Administration	8,000	8,000	0	
5091 SMPDC InterRegional Housing Solutions		17,500	0	
5121 GB2030 Milton Three Ponds Watershed Plan		78,750	0	
5122 GB2030 Installation of Watershed Signage		45,770	0	

FY2025 REVENUES	FY 24 Revenue	FY25 Revenue	Dues Match	
5311 Lamprey River Watershed Mapping		2,290	0	
5501 GIS projects (small billable projects)	1	1	0	
Federal Agency Agreements (including EDD)	407,394	894,900	18,800	35%
U.S. Dept of Economic Development Administration				
7003 EDD Planning Partnership	64,644	70,000	17,500	
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency				
7111 Brownfields Community Assessment (FY24-28)	93,750	135,300	0	
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development				
7201 HUD EDI CDS - Regional Plans	237,500	596,000	0	
U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Development				
7301 USDA RD- Farmington & Milton Town Facilities	11,500	93,600	1,300	
State Agreements	313,575	254,112	5,000	10%
Dept of Business and Economic Affairs				
6004 Targeted Block Grant (FY24-25)	11,111	11,111	0	
Dept of Environmental Services				
6105 Coastal Grant 2025	15,000	15,000	5,000	
6152 Coastal Res. Grant Newmarket Riverfront Plan	18,650	32,000	0	
6153 PREPARE: Preparing for Resilient & Equitable Recovery		10,000	0	
6154 5-Yr Coastal Flood Risk Summary Update		1,700	0	
6181 Phase II of NH Coastal Flood Risk Model		3,500	0	
6306 LSWP Northwood Septic System Database		29,937	0	
University of New Hampshire				
5206 Great Bay Adapts	5,000	1,400	0	
5207 PREPA Grant-Dover NRI	18,730	4,700	0	
5208 PREPA Grant-Lee NRI	18,730	4,200	0	
5209 PREPA Grant-Somersworth Nat Res MP	15,000	7,500	0	
5210 Building a Foundation to Evolve CAWs Practice		7,000	0	
NH Community Development Finance Authority				
6602 CDBG Grant Administration (ROC Gafney Home)	7,000	1,000	0	
6603 CDBG Grant Administration (SOM YMCA Childcare)		16,364	0	
6604 Transformative Planning Grant	5,000	20,000	0	

FY2025 REVENUES	FY 24 Revenue	FY25 Revenue	Dues Match	
NH Housing Finance Authority				
6801 InvestNH Housing Navigator Grant	131,154	40,000	0	
Department of Safety Homeland Security				
6502 HazMit Plans BRIC20-DUR, MID, MIL, NOT, STR	22,937	4,050	0	
6503 HazMit Plans BRIC21-MAD, NOR, ROC	18,000	8,250	0	
6504 HazMit Plans 4516-DOV, FAR, NKT	6,600	26,400	0	
6505 HazMit Plans BRIC22-TBD		10,000	0	
Metropolitan Planning Organization Agreements	626,458	727,766	89,307	29%
Dept of Transportation				
8001 UPWP Federal Highways & Transit	621,958	722,766	80,307	
8101 COAST CommuteSmart Seacoast	4,500	5,000	1,250	
8102 Safe Streets for All MPO Partnership	0	0	7,750	
TOTAL REVENUE	2,108,418	2,537,083	114,007	100%

FY 2025 Expenses

FY2025 Expenses	FY2024 Budget		FY2025 Budget		% Change
Personnel	1,313,760	<i>69%</i>	1,341,557	<i>53%</i>	2.1%
Salaries and Hourly Wages	1,018,140		1,033,729		1.5%
Payroll Taxes	78,678		79,673		1.3%
Payroll Processing - QuickBooks	3,778		4,000		5.9%
Health Insurance	129,181		140,132		8.5%
Dental Insurance	8,321		8,867		6.6%
Life Insurance	1,524		1,457		-4.4%
Short term Disability	2,876		2,873		-0.1%
Long term Disability	837		798		-4.7%
Paid Family Medical Leave	6,102		6,485		6.3%
FSA Fees	0		0		-
Health Incentives	10,334		7,749		-25.0%
SIMPLE IRA Pension	30,069		30,645		1.9%
Worker's Compensation	1,899		1,871		-1.5%
Unemployment Insurance	2,230		2,960		32.7%
Staff Training & Workshops	15,000		16,000		6.7%
Professional Dues	4,792		4,319		-9.9%
Equipment	38,615	<i>3%</i>	62,365	<i>2%</i>	61.5%
GIS Software	6,338		6,380		0.7%
Transportation Model and Data	9,700		27,960		188.2%
Office Software: Maintenance, purchase	11,177		14,000		25.3%
Traffic Count Supplies and Repair	3,000		3,000		0.0%
Equipment Rental and Repair	500		500		0.0%
Copier Maintenance Contract	3,900		3,900		0.0%
Computers and Peripherals	3,000		5,625		87.5%
Office Furniture	1,000		1,000		0.0%
Communications	7,591	<i>2%</i>	7,100	<i>0%</i>	-6.5%
Postage and Delivery	400		400		0.0%
Office Phone System	1,164		915		-21.4%
Internet and Phone Service	3,600		3,600		0.0%
Website Design and Maintenance	1,427		1,185		-17.0%
Media Outreach Activities	1,000		1,000		0.0%
Fixed Expenses	47,166	<i>5%</i>	43,894	<i>2%</i>	-6.9%
Property & Liability Insurance	7,173		9,294		29.6%
Vehicle Lease and Maintenance	9,993		4,600		-54.0%
Rent	30,000		30,000		0.0%

FY2025 Expenses	FY2024 Budget	FY2025 Budget	% Change
Administrative Expenses	50,000 1%	54,000 2%	8.0%
Printing	1,500	1,500	0.0%
Audit and Accounting Services	16,000	18,000	12.5%
Legal	4,000	4,000	0.0%
Office and Mapping Supplies	4,000	4,000	0.0%
Office Expense	10,000	10,000	0.0%
Meeting Expenses	3,500	3,500	0.0%
Travel	8,000	10,000	25.0%
NH Planning Law Books	2,500	2,500	0.0%
Bank Fees	0	0	-
HealthTrust Employee Rewards	500	500	0.0%
Outsourced Contracts	613,075 20%	1,028,100 41%	67.7%
1000 IT Services	34,000	20,880	-38.6%
5122 and 6152 Contract Planner		30,000	
3507 Far RT11 Audit & Regs Consultant Team	113,075	15,000	-86.7%
3903 Milton Nitrogen Removal Plan Engineer	30,000	45,000	50.0%
4107 Newmarket Form Based Code Consultant	73,000	20,000	-72.6%
5121 GB2030 Milton Three Ponds Watershed Plan Engineer		60,900	
5122 GB2030 Signage - UNH & Production Costs		25,770	
5207 PREPA Grant-Dover NRI Environmental Consultant	6,000	3,000	-50.0%
5208 PREPA Grant-Lee NRI Environmental Consultant	6,000	3,000	-50.0%
6105 Coastal Technical Assistance Subaward to Durham		4,000	
6152 Coastal Resilience Grant (NKT) Engineer	4,000	20,000	400.0%
7111 EPA Brownfields QEP	78,000	127,000	62.8%
7201 HUD EDI CDS Regional Plans - RPC Pass Through	200,000	500,000	150.0%
7301 USDA RD FAR & MIL Town Facilities Consultant	5,250	75,800	1343.8%
8002 Contract Transportation Support	40,000	60,000	50.0%
8002 Contract Title VI/EJ Support	10,000	10,000	0.0%
8102 Safe Streets for All	13,750	7,750	-43.6%
RESERVE FUND	13,000 0%	1,000 0%	-92.3%
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,083,208	2,538,016	21.8%

