



NOTICE OF MEETING

WHO: NRPC Executive Committee

WHEN: Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 6:00 pm

WHERE: NRPC Offices, 30 Temple Street, Suite 310, Nashua, NH. If you are unable to attend in-person, you may participate remotely, using this link:

<https://nashuarpc.zoom.us/j/89527817370>

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. **NRPC MPO Federal Certification Public meeting – Information & Discussion with Leigh Levine, Planning and Development Manager, New Hampshire Division Office Federal Highway Administration**
This public meeting is an opportunity to speak directly with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) concerning your views on the transportation planning process in the Nashua Metropolitan Planning Area.
3. Statement of Strategy – Discussion of update status with Robin Leblanc
4. Business:
 - a. Minutes: October 18, 2023 (**Action Required**)
 - b. Oct-Nov Dashboard (**Action Required**)
5. Other Business
6. Adjourn

Next Meeting: December 20, 2023



**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
 NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
 Executive Committee
 October 18, 2023**

In-Person Public Meeting with Zoom Attendance Option

Members Attending In-Person	Members Attending on Zoom	Members Absent	Staff Attending	Others Present
Tim Tenhave, Chair Kim Queenan, Vice-Chair Janet Langdell, Treasurer Tim Berry Camille Correa Karin Elmer Jason Hennessey Kermit Williams			Jay Minkarah, Executive Director Camille Pattison, Assistant Director	Robin LeBlanc

1. Call to Order

Tenhave called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

2. Statement of Strategy - Discussion with Robin LeBlanc

Vision - Tenhave suggested adding in 'in support of' after a thriving region.

Mission - Tenhave suggested We provide leadership, facilitation, guidance, and technical assistance for member communities that support a vibrant future for the region.

Final Mission – We provide leadership, facilitation, guidance, and technical assistance to support a vibrant future for our region.

- Values and Guiding Principles
- Support unique character of each community
- Balance community growth and character
- Act as an ombudsman/liaison between our communities and the state
- Impartiality
- Service to communities
- Sustainability
- Data accuracy
- Transparency
- Responsiveness
- Share our knowledge and expertise with our communities

Going forward 2024-2029

1. Replace “knowledge basis” with “competencies.”

Add in supporting staff development

Include an educational priority and include digital training opportunities such as creating webinars. Add a goal to reflect value added fee for service programs.

Priority Areas: Includes 5 priorities as well as long- and short-term impacts of each.

2. Water: Williams suggested adding storm water.
3. Expanding Housing Choices: Hennessey noted NRPC has little ability to influence this. NRPC could facilitate and support local efforts. Langdell suggested including zoning strategies and technical assistance for communities to consider in evaluating zoning changes. The same should be included in Priority 5, Economic Development.
4. Energy: Williams suggested adding a goal about cost reduction. Consider adding in an infrastructure plan, community power.

Goal 1 – change language to alternative sources of energy/energy planning.

Need to modify the language for long and short-term impact – include multi-modal.

5. Economic Development – Tenhave likes Toolboxes.

All goals need action words.

Plan to have a complete draft in December.

6. Business

a. Minutes: September 20, 2023 (Action Required)

Seeing no further discussion, Tenhave accepted a motion from Langdell to accept the minutes of September 20, 2023, Berry seconded. The motion passed 6-0-2 by voice vote.

Tenhave – Yes	Berry – Yes	Hennessey - Abstain
Queenan - Yes	Correa – Yes	Williams - Abstain
Langdell - Yes	Elmer - Yes	

b. August-September Dashboard (Action Required)

Minkarah reviewed the Dashboard. No new financials due to staff turnover and we have not yet made the transfer to NH PDIP. Bank balances and cash balances are up to date through the end of September. United Way is attending the RCC meeting to discuss a new planning grant. NH Digital Equity efforts are underway to create a steering committee to drive the effort. 250k is potentially available for the region. Digital equity can cover libraries, broadband, and internet access.

**DRAFT NRPC Executive Committee Minutes
October 18, 2023**

Getting closer on approval of the regional plan grant. We are partnering with the Boston Regional Planning Commission on the development of a climate change plan. 24k subgrant and we will be looking for members to join a steering committee.

Web stats – No significant changes.

At the request of Tenhave, Williams moved to accept and file the September-October dashboard, with a second by Berry. The motion passed by voice vote 8-0-0:

Tenhave – Yes	Berry - Yes	Hennessey - Yes
Queenan – Yes	Correa – Yes	Williams - Yes
Langdell – Yes	Elmer - Yes	

c. Staffing Changes

Continue to face challenges filling the Finance position. During this time, we have worked with a QuickBooks consultant who we have hired on a part-time basis. She will strictly be doing payroll, AP, and AR. Benefits and hours allocation have shifted to Camille.

Two other staff members are leaving, the Regional Planner and Transportation Technician. Interviews are underway and we plan to make an offer this week.

7. **Other Business** – Need to fill the vacant Executive Committee spot. There was a census that Jeff Gowan of Pelham would be a good candidate. Tenhave will reach out to Mr. Gowan.

The TMA Certification Review is coming up on 11/13 and 11/14, requiring a public input session. We are planning to hold one public input session at the next TTAC Meeting on 11/8/23 and at the Executive Committee meeting on 11/15/23. The audit will be on 11/16 and 11/17.

The Town of Windham has expressed an interest in exploring the possibility of switching from SNHRPC to NRPC. Previously they were a member of the Rockingham RPC before switching to Southern. Jay will be presenting to their Selectboard.

Cyber Incident Response Plan – Will review at a future meeting and have Sara do a presentation.

- 5. Adjourn - Meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm on a motion by Berry, seconded by Queenan.**

The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on November 15th, 2023.

NRPC FY 2023 DASHBOARD

Oct-23		Key Statistics	
TD Checking		Staff Activities Oct-Nov	
Beginning Balance	\$403,083.75	Planner's Lunch & Learn - Camille, Kathy, et al	
Deposits & Credits		GACIT hearing - Matt, Ned	
Payments		Staff Lunch	
Ending Balance	\$274,780.24	SoLRAC meeting - Emma	
Bar Harbor Checking		Litchfield Stormwater Stakeholder mtg - Sara and Tyrel	
Beginning Balance	\$3,462.96	Brookline HOP Forum - Emma	
Deposits & Credits		UWGN Governance Board - Jay	
Payments		Nashua RCC - Donna, Matt, Ned	
Ending Balance	\$675.53	Partnering for Performance NH - Matt, Ned	
Friday, June 30, 2023		Interagency meeting - Matt, Ned	
Accounts Payable	\$15,704.74	NHDOT CSAC meeting	
Accounts Receivable	\$431,200.87	NHLMV Stormwater Coalition - Sara, Emma	
Oversight Activities		SCC Meeting - Matt, Donna	
Line of credit (\$75,000) activated?	No	VRU Safety Assessment Stakeholder Meeting 2	
Millard Bank CD	\$50,000.00	LMRLAC - Emma	
NH PDIP	\$278,862.65	TTAC - Matt, Ned, Vince, Tyrell, Kathy, Sara	
Petty Cash	\$151.77	RPC Directors Meeting - Jay	
Audit Status	Complete	HHW Event in Nashua: Emma, Tyrell, Cassie,	
Professional Development Oct-Nov		CPRG RPA/RPC Steering committee call	
Pending Grant Applications		GACIT meeting - Jay	
Budget Narrative		RPC Directors meeting - Jay	
Bank Balances/Cash on hand:	\$735,561.13	Regional Plan Grant - \$100,000	
Payables and Receivables:		CMAQ - \$960,000	
FY24 Working Budget		CDFQA Grant \$20,000	
Funding Sources		Expenses	
Local Dues	\$163,000	Audit	\$18,750
Federal Contracts	\$117,092	Dues & Subscriptions	\$21,766
Grants	\$378,482	Employee Benefits	\$179,618
Local Planning Contracts	\$205,417	GIS	\$19,700
Other Income	\$11,930	Insurance	\$9,129
State Contracts	\$1,164,878	IT	\$20,016
		Legal	\$1,200
		Marketing, Outreach, Annual Forum	\$13,000
		Office Expenditures	\$24,000
		Other Expenditures	\$117,526
		Professional Services	\$528,577
		Rent & CAM	\$98,000
		Salaries	\$939,158
		Staff Development	\$10,000
		Travel & Meeting Exp	\$15,000
		Utilities	\$11,688
Total revenues:	\$2,040,799	Total Expenses:	\$2,027,128
Pending Grant Application Totals	\$1,060,000	Delta	\$13,671



Statement of Strategy

2023 - 2028

Jay Minkarah

Nashua Regional

Planning Commission

2024

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Who is the Nashua Regional Planning Commission?	5
What are the duties and responsibilities of the Commission?	5
NRPC is also an MPO	6
Commission Governance	6
NRPC Vision & Mission	6
Values	7
Getting to The Plan	7
GOING FORWARD: 2024 – 2029	7
PRIORITY AREAS	8
Implementation	10

Introduction

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) Executive Committee initiated a comprehensive update of its 2016 *Statement of Strategy* in the spring of 2023. The process began with an online survey of over 400 NRPC stakeholders including NRPC Commissioners, Selectboard members, local land use board members, municipal staff and other stakeholders, a brainstorming session, and conversations that involved all the Commission’s stakeholders including staff. To facilitate the process, a consulting firm that specializes in strategic planning, RHL Strategies was hired. A summary of the outreach efforts that informed the strategic planning process is provided below.

Who	Activity	Timeframe
Approximately 400 on mail list	Online survey	April – May 2023
NRPC staff	Review and discuss Vision, Mission, Values, and work	19 April 2023
NRPC Management staff	Further discussion Vision, Mission, Values, and work	9 May 2023
NRPC Executive Committee	Update re Vision, Mission, survey results (97 respondents)	17 May 2023
Selected representatives of thought leaders in the region	Seven one-on-one interviews with RHL Strategies re further thoughts on work going forward	6-7 June 2023
Full NRPC Commission meeting	Updates re survey results, interviews, Vision and Mission and preliminary thoughts on work going forward	21 June 2023
Exec Committee and self-selected participants	Online forum to talk further about work going forward	13 July 2023
Executive Committee	Review of work to date and thoughts on findings	16 August 2023
Executive Committee and self-selected interested others	Review of Mission, Vision, Values, and work going forward	28 September 2023
Executive Committee	Review of Mission, Vision, Values, and work going forward	18 October 2023
Executive Committee	Review first draft of final Plan	15 November 2023
Full Commission	Review Strategic Plan	20 December 2023

The main purpose of this document is to provide a high-level strategic roadmap for the next five years. It discusses the historical and current mandates that define the Commission, its governance structure, its mission, vision, values, and potential action steps. The intent of this framework is to support the prioritization of goals and to help organize these goals within the broader strategic picture.

This document can serve several functions. Very simply, the descriptive overview may be useful to new staff, Commissioners, stakeholders, and the public who are seeking a better basic understanding of the agency. As an articulation of strategic priorities, it can help employees align their efforts where they will make the most impact and help guide the development of scopes of work to better address agency and

member community needs. Lastly, it provides a benchmark against which the Commission can measure progress over time.

Who is the Nashua Regional Planning Commission?

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) was founded in 1956 by the City of Nashua and the Town of Hudson and is the oldest of the nine planning commissions in the state. The region now also includes Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, Litchfield, Lyndeborough, Mason, Merrimack, Milford, Mont Vernon, Pelham, and Wilton. Overall, the Commission focuses on developing and implementing innovative planning strategies that preserve and improve the quality of life in Southern New Hampshire.

What are the duties and responsibilities of the Commission?

The original intent of the Commission was to address highway congestion and coordinate land use development. Today, that same spirit of regional cooperation and problem-solving characterizes the commission's activities.

As set forth in NH RSA 36:45, the Regional Planning Commissions' duty

... shall be to prepare a coordinated plan for the development of a region, taking into account present and future needs with a view toward encouraging the most appropriate use of land, such as for agriculture, forestry, industry, commerce, and housing; the facilitation of transportation and communication; the proper and economic location of public utilities and services; the development of adequate recreational areas; the promotion of good civic design; and the wise and efficient expenditure of public funds. The aforesaid plan shall be made to promote the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the region and its inhabitants.

Boiled down:

... an RPC's primary duties are to

- prepare a comprehensive master plan for the development of the region,
- provide technical assistance to local municipalities,
- compile a Regional Housing Needs Assessment every five years, and
- conduct other studies as needed to implement the provisions of the Regional Plan.

In addition to providing specialized planning services for member communities, NRPC serves as a liaison between communities and a number of state agencies, including, but not limited to:

- the NH Departments of Transportation,
- NH Environmental Services,
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management,
- NH Office of Planning and Development
- University of New Hampshire.

In addition, Regional Planning Commissions review [Projects of Regional Impact](#) under NH RSA 36:54-58, review energy facilities in accordance with [NH RSA 162-H](#), and receive [Advanced Pipeline Notification](#) under NH RSA 674:75.

NRPC is also an MPO

The NRPC serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Nashua NH Urbanized Area (UZA). The MPO is the transportation policy-making organization for the region. It is made up of representatives from local government and transportation related authorities including NH Department of Transportation, NH Department of Environmental Services, Federal Transit Administration, Federal Highway Administration, the Nashua Transit System, and the Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative.

The purpose of the MPO is to administer the federal transportation process and ensure that investments in transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (“3-C”) planning process. The MPO must successfully administer this process in order for federal dollars to be spent on transportation improvements in the region. The MPO provides our communities and residents with a voice in how federal transportation resources are prioritized and allocated in the region.

In 2012, the Nashua MPO was designated as a Transportation Management Area or TMA under federal rules because the MPO area had surpassed 200,000 people based on the 2010 Census. As a TMA the Nashua MPO must administer a Congestion Management Process and is afforded the opportunity to program Surface Transportation Program funds and Transportation Alternatives funds which are sub-allocated to the region.

Commission Governance

According to the [Commission's By-laws](#), membership in the Commission is made up of those municipalities who have chosen to join and fulfill requirements as outlined in RSA 36. The Commission is governed by a Chair, Vice-chair, and Treasurer, an Executive Committee and between two and four Commissioners for each NRPC community. The MPO is governed by an MPO Policy Committee whose membership includes all Commissioners and one representative each from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, the Nashua Transit System (NTS), the Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative (SVTC) and one non-voting representative each from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. NTS and SVTC representatives may also serve as municipal representatives.

NRPC Vision & Mission

A key component of the strategic planning process was a review and update of NRPC's Mission Statement and the development of a Vision Statement for the Commission. The following vision and mission statements are intended to serve as guiding principles for all of NRPC programs, initiatives, and services.

Vision: We are the leader in transportation, land use and environmental planning for a thriving region, in support of its communities and its people.

Mission: We provide leadership, facilitation, guidance, and technical assistance to support a vibrant future for our region.

Values

Through the planning process, stakeholders helped articulate the following core values to help guide NRPC efforts.

- Support unique character of each community
- Balance community character and growth
- Ombudsman between our communities and the State and Federal governments.
- Impartiality
- Excellence/expertise
- Service to communities
- Sustainability
- Data accuracy
- Transparency
- Responsiveness

Getting to The Plan

In the spring of 2023, a survey was sent to about 400 individuals across the region. The purpose was to ascertain views regarding the levels of awareness of some aspects of NRPC's work, as well as the importance of various programs and technical assistance currently offered. For the most part, respondents were aware or very aware of the work that NRPC offers and performs and most of NRPC's programs and services were identified as being "important" or "very important." See Appendix A for survey results.

The last survey question was about *Looking Forward*. We provided a list of suggestions for potential focus areas for the next three to five years and asked for additional comments. See Appendix B for a list of the suggested areas by weighted average of responses, and then a list of the comments that some made related to Looking Forward.

GOING FORWARD: 2024 – 2029

This Statement of Strategy Plan has been developed based on input received from NRPC stakeholders between April and November of 2023 including responses to the survey, input from one-on-one interviews, a stakeholder forum, a staff work session, a brainstorming session with self-selected Commissioners, and discussions with the NRPC Executive Committee and full Commission. Going forward, the Commission's work shall continue to evolve and grow as it helps to foster a socially, economically, and environmentally vibrant future for the region, its communities, and its people. Careful consideration shall be given to strategies that support planning for older people as well as those which are welcoming to young people and families.

Though the 2024-2028 Statement of Strategy identifies priority focus areas to guide NRPC's efforts in the coming years, the following principles will continue to underpin NRPC's programs and services:

1. As an MPO, NRPC shall continue to prioritize transportation planning including administration of the federal transportation process, support for public transportation, mobility management and local technical assistance.

2. NRPC will continue to advance a robust GIS program including data management and mapping to support all NRPC programs and as both a resource and service to our communities.
3. NRPC will continue to offer comprehensive local land use and environmental planning services through our Circuit Rider program, preparation of master plans, capital improvements programs and other planning studies, and technical assistance to member communities as needed.

PRIORITY AREAS

The priority focus areas described below have been identified through the strategic planning process. Some of these are new focus areas for NRPC while others are not new but will receive greater emphasis in the coming years.

- A. Implement a **grant funding** information and assistance program.

Long-term impact: NRPC and its communities are able to finance projects that contribute to and support their health and vitality.

Short-term impact: There is clear access to potential funding for a variety of projects that contribute to socially, environmentally, and economically strong communities.

Action 1: Grant writing assistance program is established to provide technical assistance to member communities to prepare grant applications.

Action 2: Database of grant information designed, developed, and managed, to include kinds of projects, names of grants, due dates, and other pertinent information.

Action 3: NRPC will provide regular updates to communities on potential grant opportunities through its website, newsletter, and other communication platforms.

- B. Advance efforts to **manage, protect and enhance water quality and supply** including drinking water, rivers, lakes, streams, and groundwater, from potential threats including, but not limited to contamination, over-use, and changing weather conditions, which may impact the region's water resources.

Long-term impacts:

- NRPC communities have sufficient water supply to meet current and future needs.
- The region's surface waters are fishable/swimmable and resilient to potential threats including impacts from changing weather conditions.

Short-term impacts:

- Local land use regulations are updated to reflect changing conditions, state and federal rules, and Best Management Practices (BMS) related to potential water resource threats.
- Stormwater mitigation and management practices identified and implemented within each community including MS4 compliance.
- Businesses and property owners are aware of the impact of potential water resources challenges and threats.
- Best Management Practices (BMP's) implemented.

- Action 1:** Complete three to five Water Resources Management plans including the Souhegan River Corridor Management Plan and Robinson Pond Watershed Management Plan in the next three to five years.
- Action 2:** Provide technical assistance to communities to identify and map stormwater management assets.
- Action 3:** Provide technical assistance to communities to protect water supply including source water protection planning, local land use regulation updates and mapping.
- Action 4:** Obtain funding for further watershed and river management plans.
- Action 5:** Pursue opportunities to engage and collaborate with potential regional partners to address water quality issues for inter-regional and interstate waterways.
- Action 6:** Develop and manage multi-channel (e.g., Workshops, white papers, other) education program for communities and their leaders about key topics related to water issues, such as stormwater management, pollutants, other).

- C. Facilitate and support **expanded choices in places to live for all family types and income levels** by location, design, and price point.

Long-term impacts:

- Each community has places to live that meet the current and future needs of its residents.
- Employers can hire at all wage levels and their employees can find homes in close proximity to employment centers.

Short-term impacts:

- Communities and their decision makers are aware of the current and future needs of their residents and those who may wish to live there.
- Communities and their decision makers are familiar with various kinds of places to live (by design, location, and price point) consistent with community character and available infrastructure support.

- Action 1:** Provide technical assistance to inform and develop Master Plan Housing Chapters and updating local land use regulations as needed.
- Action 2:** Maintain and disseminate updated housing-related data for municipal leaders and community members including availability of potential funding sources.
- Action 3:** Offer housing related workshops and roundtables and disseminate related information and materials to communities and their leaders about all aspects of expanding home options, from site choices to writing regulations.

- D. Advance **energy planning** to increase access to alternative energy sources, reduce energy costs for municipalities, residents and businesses and reduce energy-related carbon emissions.

Long-term impact:

- Carbon emissions are significantly reduced.

- Energy costs are reduced.
- The region's energy comes from renewable, reliable, and cost-effective sources.

Short-term impact:

- NRPC communities have increased access to viable, reliable, and cost-effective alternative sources of energy to help support households, businesses, municipalities for buildings and transportation.

Action 1: Provide technical assistance to municipalities pursuing Community Power, and other similar strategies while continuing to offer NRPC's Energy Aggregation program.

Action 2: Provide technical assistance and other support to communities in identifying viable alternative energy sources for heating, cooling, and electricity generation.

Action 3: Provide technical assistance and support to advance deployment of Electrical Vehicle infrastructure, municipal fleet conversions and other strategies.

Action 5: Provide workshops and other sources of information to communities and their leaders about data, trends and thinking related to sources of energy as well as emissions, including regulations, technical requirements and more.

E. Foster **Economic Development** in the region and its communities.

Long-term impact:

- The region and its communities are thriving economically.
- Each community has identified its unique set of economic conditions, economic goals, and opportunities.

Action 1: Develop Toolboxes for use by communities to address specific economic needs such as fostering thriving downtowns and town centers, promoting entrepreneurship, marketing, tourism, and similar strategies.

Action 2: Update and enhance NRPC's Spark webpage as the regional primary vehicle for disseminating economic development related resources, data, and marketing of the region's assets.

Implementation

To implement this Statement of Strategy over the next three to five years, each focus area will require the allocation of sufficient resources to achieve success. To advance current and future efforts, the NRPC shall:

- Continuously evaluate staff overall levels and competencies in relation to current, new and/or expanding programs or services.
- Make hiring decisions based on skill sets needed to advance strategic priorities.

- Promote professional and competency development through continued education, encouraging staff participation in appropriate conferences and workshops and supporting professional certifications.
- Continuously monitor current and future programs and services for value-added opportunities to support a fiscally healthy organization.
- Identify potential partner consultants, agencies, and other organizations to enhance programming and services.
- Identify and secure necessary funding to maintain existing programs and initiatives as well as to implement new ones.