



The Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) develops and implements innovative planning strategies that preserve and improve the quality of life in Southern New Hampshire. Serving 13 member communities, the NRPC is a **resource** to support and enhance local planning, provides a **forum** for communities to share information, and coordinate transportation, land use, economic development, and energy and environmental planning at the regional level, and offers a **voice** for the region at the State and Federal levels.

The FY22 NRPC budget is comprised of 61% federal transportation funding sub-allocated by the State of NH, 10% local dues, 14% Household Hazardous Waste program support, 5% local contracts, 3% State of NH grants, 7% Federal grants, and <1% from special services and miscellaneous revenue.

Highlights of 2021 regional initiatives of benefit to all NRPC communities include:

- **Inter-Regional Transit Expansion Study:** 2021 marked the completion of an inter-regional study to determine the feasibility of operating shuttle services from Nashua to the University of Massachusetts Lowell and the MBTA Lowell terminal connecting with rail and fixed-route bus service. The project included extensive data compilation, ridership estimates are underway, and the full transit expansion feasibility analysis.
- **Nashua Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Active Transportation Plan:** In September, NRPC Commissioners voted to approve the Regional Bicycle, Pedestrian, & Active Transportation Plan for the Greater Nashua Region, which guides the planning, development, and implementation of safe, usable facilities for active transportation in the Nashua region. A priority of the Nashua Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is to encourage a shift from motorized to human-powered travel. This plan builds off goals from the previous regional Bicycle and Pedestrian plans and the 2021-2045 Nashua Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).
- **Nashua MPO Transportation Project Planning Process:** As the transportation policy-making organization for the region, the MPO administers the federal transportation process to acquire and spend Federal money on transportation improvements. In 2021, the MPO prepared the FY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program and three subsequent amendments, as well as a minor update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan's (MTP) future recommended project lists and fiscal constraint. NRPC continued participation in the Ten-Year Plan (TYP) development process as it proceeded through the GACIT hearing phase. A major update of the Congestion Management Process is underway. In 2021, the Nashua MPO also developed and adopted performance targets for highway safety.
- **Nashua Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) for Community Transportation:** The Nashua RCC's member organizations coordinate strategies to improve transportation services for all residents in need of assistance. Committee activities in 2021 included collaboration with the Statewide Coordination Council (SCC) to create a blueprint for a Statewide Mobility Management Network, continued support of the Souhegan Valley Rides demand response bus service, and initial efforts to develop a regional Volunteer Driver Program feasibility study.



- **CommuteSmart:** As part of the CommuteSmart New Hampshire workgroup, NRPC participated in the statewide, October 2021, “Buses, Bikes & Brooms Challenge” which utilized new trip-planning software. NRPC is now surveying employers in the region about their employees’ current commuting needs.
- **Nashua Complete Streets Advisory Committee:** NRPC collaborates with communities throughout the region who are working to develop local bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, complete streets, and multi-use trail projects. Activities in 2021 include finalization of the Nashua Region Pedestrian & Bicycle plan, the NHDOT Statewide Pedestrian & Bicycle plan update, Souhegan Valley rail-with-trail advocacy and planning, Amherst Village – Milford Oval side path along Amherst St, and the regional bike/ped counting initiative.
- **Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection:** On behalf of the Nashua Regional Solid Waste Management District (NRSWMD), NRPC held six HHW Collection events in 2021 for residents to properly dispose of hazardous household products such as oil-based paints, solvents, auto products, antifreeze, pesticides, and cleaners. In 2021, the District collected 133,960 pounds of waste from participants.
- **Brownfields Assessment Program:** NRPC’s Brownfields Assessment program provides funding to conduct environmental assessments on sites with known or suspected contamination to safeguard public health and encourage the redevelopment of sites into economically viable uses. Since 2019, assessments have been conducted on five sites including a former junkyard, a vacant gas station, a hazardous materials disposal site, and two vacant industrial buildings.
- **COVID-19 Regional Economic Development Recovery Plan:** With support from the Economic Development Administration (EDA), NRPC has begun a comprehensive economic development recovery plan for the greater Nashua region which will address the impacts of COVID-19 on the region’s economy including job losses, business closures, workforce challenges and the disparate impacts on traditionally disadvantaged or underserved businesses.
- **Regional Housing Needs Assessment:** Under a grant from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, NRPC has begun an assessment of the regional need for housing for persons and families at all levels of income. The assessment will include characterization of existing conditions, a Fair Housing and Equity Assessment, as well as strategies and future recommendations. The assessment will be based on a consistent data and analysis methodology developed in partnership with all New Hampshire regional planning commissions.
- **NH GeoData Portal:** In 2021, NRPC continued an initiative of UNH/Granit and the nine NH regional planning commissions to establish a new regional GIS Hub which will seamlessly integrate with a new and modern statewide GIS portal housed at UNH. In 2021, NRPC lead the development of a regional portfolio of showcase GIS applications that are available on the New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions website.
- **NH Lower Merrimack Valley Stormwater Coalition:** NRPC continues to serve as the fiscal agent of the Coalition’s municipal pooled funds, as well as the physical and virtual meeting host for the Coalition’s monthly meetings.

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NRPC provides comprehensive transportation, land use, environmental, and economic development planning services and delivers extensive mapping and data assistance. As an NRPC member, the Town of Merrimack accessed a wide range of benefits in 2021, including:

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection: nashuarpc.org/hhw NRPC held four HHW Collection events in 2021 for residents to properly dispose of hazardous household products. **244 Merrimack households** participated in these events.

Discounted New Hampshire Planning and Land Use Regulation Books: In conjunction with the NH Office of Strategic Initiatives, NRPC offers the annual New Hampshire Planning and Land Use Regulation Book to communities at a sizable discount over the retail price. By purchasing books through NRPC, Merrimack saved **\$1,848** in 2021.

Traffic Counting: arcg.is/Ovm8q Under contract with the N.H. Department of Transportation or by local request, NRPC conducted **5 traffic volume counts** in Merrimack to support travel demand modeling and prediction and to assist local and regional planning decision-making.

Hazard Mitigation Planning: NRPC worked with Merrimack's Hazard Mitigation team to complete an update to the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires that municipalities update their hazard mitigation plans every 5 years to maintain eligibility for federal mitigation grants. The 2021 update identified critical facilities and areas of concern throughout Merrimack, analyzed potential natural hazards and risks to these facilities, and prioritized mitigation measures to address the hazards.

Nashua MPO Transportation Planning Process: NRPC continues to monitor traffic conditions along the F.E. Everett Turnpike (FEET) to update the Exit 12 Interchange Study conducted in 2004. This project is 100% funded under NRPC's Unified Planning Work Program. NRPC has completed the analysis of existing conditions in the study area and will complete the second phase, which will forecast traffic conditions to 2045 and evaluate the traffic relief on Daniel Webster highway and other facilities from construction of FEET north ramps.

Road Surface Management System (RSMS): In 2021, NRPC completed a road surface assessment and pavement management project for Merrimack. This project includes an inventory of all local roads, a needs assessment based on current conditions, a prioritized future maintenance schedule, and a budget justification for associated future expenditures for road improvements on both paved and unpaved local roads.

Other Local Technical Assistance: Provided land use and transportation data to DPW for grant development. NRPC continues to provide ongoing technical support and GIS tasks for Merrimack Village District in support of their inventory and asset management initiatives.

NRPC extends heartfelt thanks to citizens and staff who support regional planning, including:

Commissioners: Karin Elmer, Tim Tenhave, Lon Woods

Transportation Technical Advisory Committee: Tim Thompson, Kyle Fox, Dawn Tuomala

Nashua Regional Solid Waste Management District Reps: Kris Perreault, Patrick Davis