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Greater Nashua (Region 7) Regional Coordination Council

Thursday, May 22, 2025 – 10:00 am

This will be a hybrid meeting, with in-person and Zoom options.

In-Person Attendance

NRPC Office Large Conference room

30 Temple Street, Suite 310, Nashua, NH 03060 Virtual or Telephone Attendance Join Zoom Meeting

<https://nashuarpc.zoom.us/j/82109127266?pwd=cWRSbkljeHlGNFh1VjN3NGRqcHJNUT09>

Meeting ID: 821 0912 7266

Passcode: 687958

Phone: 1 929 205 6099

Agenda

1. Call to Order & Introductions
2. New Member – Voices of Major Drive represented by Bill Ayer
3. Approval of April 2025 meeting minutes (attached) – Action Item
4. Updates from the Chair
 - New Hampshire Fiscal Policy Institute <https://nhfpi.org/>
 - 5310 RCC FY25 Third Quarter Update
5. NHTA-SCC Annual Meeting – RCC7 poster & video presentation (Kerry, Donna)
6. NH Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (Jon E.)
7. Locally Coordinated Transportation Plan Strategy Prioritization – (Matt)
8. Regional Mobility Management Update
 - Info & Referral contacts and outcomes
 - Community Rides program and outcomes
 - Boston Transportation update
 - Youth Transportation update
 - SW Mobility Manager network updates
9. State Coordinating Council, NHDOT, etc. Updates (as needed)
10. Community & Member Concerns and News



Adjournment

(603) 417-6570 30 Temple Street Suite 310 Nashua, NH 03060
www.nashuarpc.org

BUILDING MANAGEMENT REQUESTS THAT VISITORS NOW PARK IN THE UPPER LOT
(See the attached map)



NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION



Greater Nashua Regional Coordination Council (RCC7)

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 24, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

Attendees:

In Person:

Bill Ayer, Voices of Major Drive
Carol Brooks, Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative
Sara Ceaser, United Way of Nashua
Sandra Delosa, Town of Merrimack Welfare
Alexandra Dumont, Bridges
Jon Eriquezzo, Meals on Wheels of Hillsborough County
Zafar Farooqui, CAP of Hillsborough & Rockingham Counties
Janet Langdell, Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative
Rocky Morelli, Opportunity Networks
Chantal Mowbray, Alpha Home Care
Ashley O'Donnell, Caregivers
Angelique Pandolph, Easter Seals
James Wilkie, Caregivers

Remote:

Mike Apfelberg, United Way of Greater Nashua
 Jeff Donald, COAST/Region 10 RCC
 Margaret Loret, Nashua citizen
 Kerry Miller, Nashua Transit System
 Teri Palmer, NH Statewide Mobility Manager, RLS Associates
 Deb Ritcey, Granite State Independent Living
 Yuliya Stryzhenko, Adult Learning Center

NRPC Staff:

Donna Marceau, Regional Mobility Manager - RCC7
 Mary Brundage, Regional Planner III
 Kathy Kirby, Administrative Assistant

1. Call to Order & Introductions

Langdell called the meeting to order at 10:01. The attendees made introductions.

2. Updates from the Chair– *Information Item*

Eriquezzo announced that NHVOAD (NH Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters) is having a conference in May. One of the topics will be how we transport food to people during a disaster. How do you get people to food or food to people? Jon will be looking to invite one or two people to help us out during the discussion scheduled for May 19, at 8:30 a.m. Please let me know if you feel you really could contribute to this discussion. Areas we are discussing are Nashua, Manchester, Concord, and Berlin. Jon will email the event info when available.

Delosa announced that a default town budget is being presented to Merrimack's Town Council for a vote tonight. The default budget includes a line item to fund community transportation in full.

Pandolph stated she was able to attend about half of the Able NH Lunch & Learn. There was a lot of useful information, including rider rights and expectations of providers. Marceau stated she would follow up to find out if a video is available for anyone who would like to view this Lunch & Learn.

Langdell stated that it is National Volunteer Week. The national average value placed on one hour of volunteer time is \$35. NH is about \$36. The State of NHDOT values volunteer driver time at around \$21/hour. Eriquezzo stated that their organization's auditor values their volunteer drivers' contribution hours at about \$270,000 annually.

NRPC is updating the Regional Plan for the Greater Nashua area. If you live or work in the Greater Nashua region, please use the QR code to access the website and follow [NRPCEngage](#). The regional plan has the most value when as many people as possible who live and work in the area participate and share their views and ideas about what they want the region to become over the next ten years.

On Friday, June 13, the State Coordinating Council and NH Transit Association will hold their annual conference at the Grappone Center. There is a series of awards, including a regional community transportation champion. The RCC7 Executive Committee has a couple of suggested nominees. We are soliciting nominees from RCC members. Please email Janet at Langdell508@comcast.net by Tuesday, May 5, with the name of the person, their organization, and why you think they should be honored.

3. Approval of March 27, 2025, meeting minutes

Jon Eriquezzo made a motion to approve the March 27, 2025, meeting minutes, seconded by Angelique Pandolph.

THAT the March 27, 2025, RCC7 draft meeting minutes be approved as submitted to the Council.

Motion carried.

4. Locally Coordinated Transportation Plan - update

Brundage reported that the NRPC MPO Commission adopted the LCTP at their meeting on April 16. There are some formatting edits and updates to the Public Comments section. There were no substantive changes. It should be ready by early next week, and then we will let everyone know that it has been posted on the NRPC website.

5. Regional Mobility Management Update – Information Item

Marceau connected with someone from the Community Loan Fund, who stated that they may be interested in donating to the NRPC Foundation. Marceau sent that information on to Kate Lafond, NRPC Assistant Director. Within the past month, there have been six completed community rides that are a combination of wheelchair rides and taxi rides. We are trying to get the word out to communities that do not have contracted services, i.e., Lyndeborough and Litchfield, and we have a scheduled event in Litchfield on May 15. Two round-trip taxi rides were completed: one was due to timing – NTS could not provide the ride due to short notice for the needed medical appointment ride, and the second rider was preparing for surgery. She does not have Medicaid (Donna is connecting her to someone who can help get her signed up for Medicaid).

Marceau also gave a mobility management talk at the Nashua Senior Center that went well. She mentioned that one of the attendees has been pleased with Nashua-area medical teams, particularly for cancer treatment. She recommends Nashua medical centers advertise their success in treating serious medical conditions. Transportation to Boston Medical Centers is also a need for younger people, as Marceau stated she was told about a millennial who had to go to Boston for her ten-minute treatment and had to have her mother come up from Pennsylvania to take her to Boston for the treatments. Marceau stated that she is not sure if there is a large base of support for regularly scheduled medical transportation to Boston. However, Nashua Alderman Tom Lopez knows of this initiative and is interested, as is NH State Rep. Sanjeev Manohar.

Marceau connected with a provider who can provide 7 rides for \$175 (\$25/ride). These are round-trip (2-way) non-wheelchair rides. The amount per person is in line with what survey responders said they would expect or be willing to pay. If there are fewer than 7 people, the riders would need to pay more.

Langdell shared that a member of the NRPC Foundation reported seeing Brigham & Women's Hospital vans in Nashua at one of the Rte 3 exits. Marceau and Palmer stated that they would investigate it.

Marceau received so far in April, 28 calls for assistance and has received 34 calls since the last RCC7 meeting. Most are for medical transportation. She was looking into Lyft for Healthcare to provide rides. She found Joyful Journeys to

be the most affordable ride provider to date. Marceau can provide information to callers for Medicaid-covered NEMT rides through the assigned broker.

Marceau announced that the Nashua Bike Co-op is having a bike sale on Saturday, 4/26, at 9 a.m. Marceau has vouchers for a free bike if your clients need a bike.

Marceau shared that each regional mobility manager has been asked to provide a video for the SCC Annual meeting in June. She will be taping a mobility manager video. If anyone would like to be in the video, contact Marceau.

Marceau noted that at the Adult Learning Center, the funding fell through for a program that would help young adults get a license. Apfelberg stated that the Continuum of Care has a committee looking at helping youth with housing insecurity obtain a driver's license. This committee has been active for about a year. Donna stated she would connect with them.

5. State Coordinating Council, NHDOT, etc. Updates (as needed) - Information Item

- Palmer has been working with Dartmouth-Hitchcock to see if they can obtain funding to transport people with disabilities and/or seniors to community farms this summer (related to the program, Food as Medicine).
- Attended the Recovery-Friendly Workplace meeting. There are over 400 organizations that are recovery-friendly. For those in recovery, benefits are available, such as Concord-area Transit is fare-free; there is connecting public transit from Manchester to Concord or Nashua to Manchester; NH mobility managers have been working with correctional facilities to get folks bus passes when they get released. There is a lot of work that is happening in the State that is not reaching all our community organizations.
- There is an anticipated job posting for a North Country Mobility Manager position. Year one will be covering Grafton County, and then the next fiscal year, that person will pick up Grafton and Coos counties as well.
- The Annual State Coordinating Council meeting is June 13 at the Grappone Center. It is an all-day event; registration should be open in May. There should be amazing breakout sessions in the afternoon – the finalized agenda will be sent out to all the RCCs when it is ready. Mobility Managers will be creating videos and posters highlighting their relationships with transportation providers.
- Palmer's emails have been strangely quiet regarding the state budget. She should get an update from Steve and Rad on Thursday, 5/1. Please keep reaching out to your state representatives to keep advocating for transit agencies.
- Apfelberg suggested that all members look out for NH Fiscal Policy Institute (NHFPI) updates, i.e., webinars, and blog posts – "very powerful." There will be a public budget hearing on the budget, and there will be 10,000 people who will want to attend and offer their opinions. Langdell thanked Apfelberg for mentioning this very informative and helpful organization; a link to the NHFPI website will be emailed to the RCC group.
- Ritcey reminded everyone that if Medicare & Medicaid are cut by 3%, that will undoubtedly impact transportation providers who do medical transportation.
- Palmer heard that Wellsense may be pulling out of NH. She will let everyone know if she gets confirmation.

6. Community Member Concerns & News – Information Item

- Eriquezzo stated that he met with 3 MCOs (managed care organizations) within the past/last week to discuss food insecurity. They have been pitching the idea since 2019 that for people who are discharged from the hospital with certain conditions, we send them 14 frozen meals tailored to their medical condition. We did it for another managed care organization out of Maine; it is interesting, but not a lot of high demand. So, they are pushing for this, but not having much success with this. It mimics our congregate dining developed 40 years ago. But that started waning off because of the Baby Boomers, who had different expectations. Well, this year is the first year we have been serving Gen Xers. So, we skipped over three generations without any changes in what we

do. I reminded the MCOs that if they want to do something to change the status quo, they have to do something different. So, we partner with restaurants, and Meals on Wheels America partners with DoorDash. I am going to try to fund a pilot program where we work with the restaurant, and we work with DoorDash, so we can get meals to people. I do not know if we can afford DoorDash, but it is a transportation issue trying to get meals from the restaurants to people who need them. Right now, we are dropping off 14 meals (2 meals/day), and no one has room in their freezer. We would drop off one frozen meal and one hot meal. We can do that for seven days and bill Medicaid for that or another managed care organization. Eriquezzo pitched it to Meals on Wheels America and is planning to pitch the MCOs. I need to figure out what my options are for getting the food from point A to point B.

- Apfelberg updated everyone about the Soel Sistas non-profit community networking events held on the 4th Thursday of the month at 4 pm. Also, the Greater Nashua Volunteer Fair is May 20 at 5 p.m. at Nashua Public Library, open to non-profits that are looking for volunteers. If your organization wants to be at the Fair to recruit volunteers, connect with Sara Ceaser, who can give you registration information. May 29 is our first annual Digital Barriers Summit. We have a speaker panel and a keynote speaker from UNH Cooperative Extension, and experts in connecting people via digital technology will be there; digital technology is virtual transportation.
- Wilkie stated he wanted to add to what Eriquezzo was talking about. A couple of years ago, NH Food Bank did a medically tailored meals pilot program through their kitchen, and it was free. He suggested Eriquezzo reach out to them. Also, reach out to Amazon for delivery help. Wilkie stated he delivers groceries to 360 families a month – 70 dedicated volunteer drivers deliver the food to the houses.
- Dumont stated that they have a client who has a car that needs \$5,000 in repairs, and they have another mom/client who does not have a license. They have had the challenge of trying to figure that out.
- Delosa stated she refers most callers who need transportation services to NTS, and to call back if they need further assistance. She has not received any calls back. I had a case where a Merrimack resident was trying to get a job in Bedford, but she was homeless and disappeared. Langdell suggested the rideshare board on the CommuteSmart website.
- Farooqui stated they have had the challenge of homeless people who are living in their car, and the car is broken down, so they cannot get to a job. Marceau stated that DCU offers the \$600 Axuda loan available to those with a steady source of income (0% interest at \$50 monthly payments). Approval time is about 30 days. Contact Marceau if any of your clients are interested. Pandolph stated Easter Seals would like to help with repairs for people who really need it. The program is “on the radar.”
- Ayers stated that he was at a meeting last night at Monahan Manor. Programs are starting at various sites in Nashua, i.e., computer, cooking, etc. Three people are looking for transportation to the programs on Sunday (no NTS service on Sundays).
- Mowbray stated that their biggest challenge is that their caregivers are being asked to transport their clients to/from social gatherings, grocery shopping, etc. But we do not want to agree to that unless we can ensure that everyone is insured. She noted that their caregivers do pick up food for clients. Langdell stated that most of the home care agencies SVTC works for (medical or non-medical services) can do pickups, potentially. There may be a different fee structure. Referring to Eriquezzo’s comments, Mowbray added if you work directly with case management agencies – those are the ones that refer Medicaid clients to home care agencies like mine - they will be able to tell you who is getting discharged out of the hospital, who is going in and out of the hospital often, and they can schedule a trip per week to pick up food.
- Ritcey stated that anyone under CFI (Choices for Independent Living, a Medicaid waiver program) might have direct support from PCA employees who can pick up groceries. Picking up food is considered groceries. As a CFI service provider, they receive email notifications from Collective Medical every time one of their consumers checks into a hospital at any point of entry, and they get the discharge papers. We want to make sure we are not billing when someone is in the hospital. It is effective fraud prevention.

- Brooks stated that Blue Bus is continuously increasing their number of clients. An outreach event is scheduled for May 17 in Mont Vernon at their Spring Gala. We are looking to add another board member or two, so if you know someone who has a heart for transportation, let us know.
- Morelli stated he is concerned that the 3% Medicaid cuts will devastate his organization, which is funded by Medicaid. Most of his organization's expenses are fixed expenses that are difficult to reduce.
- Pandolph concurred with Morelli's concerns about looming potential cuts to Medicaid despite ever-increasing needs for rides and other services. Langdell urged everyone to follow on Facebook GSIL, Opportunity Networks, and Easter Seals for timely updates. Ritcey recommended that everyone follow the Governor's Council on Disability (GCD) as well.
- Miller stated that the number of applications is increasing for NTS services. They will be attending Saturday's Sustainability Fair at the Nashua Public Library. There will be an electric vehicle showcase. People from Nashua Public Health and Nashua Community Development will be there too.
- Donald stated they are trying to get their common application website updated. They are applying for a grant for travel training for the fixed route bus system focused on senior riders. They hope to produce training videos for seniors, too.
- Palmer stated she connected with her counterpart in Massachusetts, who is going to investigate the Brigham & Women's Hospital vans seen in the Nashua region. For car repairs, if the person with the broken car gets TANIF assistance, they can use some of that funding for the car repairs. If they receive state assistance, have them talk to their counselor to investigate getting their repairs reimbursed. For Angelique, if you are interested in learning about the Upper Valley Car Repair program, it was funded by their Roundup Program in the Hanover Co-op stores. They are looking into additional funding programs. Concerning Uber or Lyft for Healthcare, some hospitals investigated using Uber Health but decided not to move forward for legal reasons that they did not elaborate further. Uber Health allows for one added stop, i.e., at the pharmacy. She recommends LinkedIn for social media, especially events. Also, reach out to the car dealerships and ask them if they have foundations, and talk to them about car repair programs. May is the Spring Challenge for CommuteSmartNH. Langdell asked Palmer to investigate Medicaid's age requirement for solo ridership. She said a 15-year-old cannot ride solo even though the drivers have been vetted. Palmer stated she would investigate it. The Able NH website will have the video posted from the first Lunch & Learn. We found out that the flyers did not get out to everyone, so they will distribute them to mobility managers to email out.
- Langdell stated that a new member (Major Drive) will be joining us, and we will be getting out a Q3 quarterly report for FY25 with the stats and finances.

9. Adjournment

Jon Eriquezzo motioned to adjourn. Angelique Pandolph seconded. The meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

Thursday, May 29, 2025, is the next full RCC7 meeting!