

MINUTES
Rockingham Planning Commission
March 10, 2021

Remote Meeting via ZOOM Conference Call
Per RSA 91-A:2, III(b) the RPC Chair declared the COVID-19 Outbreak
An Emergency and has waived the requirement
That a quorum be physically present at the meeting

Commissioners/MPO Reps Present: R. McDermott, Chairman (Hampton Falls); A. Davis, Vice Chairman (Hampstead); A. Carnaby (Hampton); B. Moreau, P. Britz, J. Tabor (Portsmouth); G. Coppelman, P. Coffin (Kingston); L. Cushman (Stratham); M. McAndrew (New Castle); J. Kiszka (Plaistow); A. Brubaker (H. Falls); D. Hebert (Newington); L. Plumer, G. English (Exeter); J. Doggett, M. Allen (Newton); J. Grote (Rye); G. Davison (NHDOT); P. Wilson (N. Hampton); S. Gerrato (Greenland); T. White (NHDES)

Guests: C. Cross

Staff: T. Roache (Executive Director); D. Walker (Assistant Director); S. Bogle (Sr Transportation Planner); A. Warhaft (Office Coordinator)

1. Chairman McDermott called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.; Remote Meeting via Zoom Conference Call per RSA 91-A:2, III(b)

2. RPC Business

a. Minutes of February 10, 2021

*G. Coppelman moved to approve the Minutes of February 10, 2021 as presented; L. Plumer seconded. Roll Call vote taken. **SO VOTED.** 3 abstentions.*

b. RPC Committee Reports

T. Roache provided updates on several of the RPC Committees.

- The Executive Committee is continuing to work towards establishing the 501c3, which will help to diversify our revenue stream and lessen the financial burden on our communities.
- The Regional Impact Committee reviewed and provided recommendations on the proposed development in Kingston. The committee will be meeting soon to address a proposed subdivision in Newton.
- The Legislative Policy Committee met to review legislative bills to assess if any will affect any RPC communities. S. Bogle, T. Moore and the other members of the committee have pursued the current bills and reduced the list to approximately a dozen that may affect the RPC communities. J. Grote shared

that one bill will limit municipalities' ability to raise taxes; another would restrict communities' ability to enact health measures; and, another bill looks to increase the maximum load of lumber that can be transported on NH roads.

3. MPO Business

a. **Public Hearing: 2021 – 2024 Transportation Improvement Program and Updated 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan – D. Walker**

R. McDermott opened the Public Hearing at 7:22 pm. D. Walker reviewed the purpose and function of the MPO, as well as the cyclical process of the transportation plans. Included in the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) updates are: project listing and information, fiscal restraint documentation, public involvement, MPO System Performance Report and technical updates. The 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update is focused on maintaining consistency with the TIP and Ten Year Plan and include: an updated project listing and fiscal analysis; shifted project timing to reflect prioritized project list; and, incorporation of the Performance Based Planning. The full update to the LRTP will be completed in 2023. Comments on the plan and changes include: complete updates to the System Performance Report; FHWA requested clarification on fiscal constraint; NHDES suggested small change to Air Quality Conformity analysis; update COAST funding to reflect FTW funding allocations; add Salem project to out years of LRTP; and add 4 TAP proposals.

The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) recommended approval of the 2021-2024 TIP and the 2045 LRTP at their meeting on Feb 25, 2021; the TIP and LRTP are fiscally constrained and reflect regional priorities; transportation conformity has been addressed; and the TIP and LRTP make progress towards achieving the region's performance targets.

Discussion and questions followed.

R. McDermott closed the Public Hearing at 8:17 pm.

b. **MOTION TO ADOPT: J. Doggett moved to approve the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program and the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Update as presented; G. Coppelman seconded. **SO VOTED.****

c. **RPC 2023 – 2032 Ten Year Plan Project Priorities – D. Walker**

D. Walker reviews the process of project selection and the list of candidate projects. NHDOT reviewed the projects and returned revised cost estimates. RPC staff and the TAC recommend that the East Coast Greenway (ECG) project to complete the Rail Trail over the Hampton Marsh be selected for the Ten Year Plan. Benefits include safety, regional economic development and environmental preservation. The TAC also recommended that the remaining regional funding to the project budget to account for additional environmental/design costs. Regional Priorities for NHDOT's Corridor Study

Program will be sent to NHDOT, including review of NH 33, NH 111, NH 125, and NH 101.

The TAC endorsed submitting the ECG Phase III project as our priority project for the 2023-2032 Ten Year Plan. The committee suggests using the remaining “target” funding to supplement the project to account for environmental and construction needs.

Discussion and questions followed.

*L. Plumer moved to approve the East Coast Greenway Phase III project for the RPC 2023-2032 Ten Year Plan Project Priorities. P. Britz seconded. **SO VOTED.***

d. Transportation Alternatives Program Update – S. Bogle

The Transportation Alternatives Program is the successor to the Transportation Enhancement Program. Typically, there is a two-year funding round and there is 5.2 million dollars available. Letters of interest for the program were due in February and statewide there were 41 letters received requesting approximately 30 million dollars in funding. In our region, the projects submitted were from Portsmouth (Market Street Side Path), Salem (Cluff Road Sidewalk/Path Connection), Rye (Town Center Complete Streets) and Newington (Nimble Hill Road Safety Lane). Full proposals are due the week of March 15th and will be reviewed by the TAC, then presented to the MPO.

4. Public Comment - none

5. Meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Warhaft, Recording Secretary

MEMORANDUM

To: MPO Policy Committee

From: Scott Bogle, Senior Transportation Planner

Date: April 9, 2021

RE: Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Proposal Evaluation

March 19th was the deadline for submittal of proposals for the fourth funding round of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Four RPC communities submitted Letters of Interest for the TAP program last month. Only two of these, Newington and Portsmouth, ultimately submitted full proposals. These are both excellent proposals and were reviewed by staff and the TAC at their meeting on March 25th.

- Town Center Complete Streets - Construct sidewalk, shoulder bicycle lane and new crosswalks on Washington Road from Central Road to Wallis Road in Rye town. Connects Rye Junior High to Public Library, Town Hall, Parsons Field, and church used by Rye Recreation Dept for youth and senior programs. Project developed out of PlanNH Charrette. Identified in Rye SRTS Travel Plan (2007) and Rye Shoulder Study (2020). Estimated total project cost is \$925,000 of which \$740,000 is requested in TAP funds.
- Cluff Road Sidewalk/Path Connection - Improve connections from Salem Bike/Ped Corridor (rail trail) to adjacent neighborhoods. Proposes sidewalk and/or path connecting Braemoor Woods neighborhood off of Cluff Road approx. 1300' to existing sidewalk on Cluff Road, rail trail and retail on South Broadway/NH28. Prioritized in Salem Sidewalk Plan (2016). Estimated total project cost is \$650,000, of which \$520,000 is requested in TAP funds.

Statewide 41 communities submitted TAP Letters of Interest requesting approximately \$29 in federal funding. There is typically some attrition between the LOI and full proposal stages as noted above and we don't yet know how many full proposals will be submitted. The notice of funding availability described a \$5.4 million pool available statewide for the two-year funding round. If divided equally among the nine planning regions, this would equate to approximately \$600,000 per region, though there is not an explicit criterion for geographic distribution in this funding round.

The Regional Planning Commission Directors have recommended to NHDOT that supplemental funding be added to this round in light of the fact that the Department has transferred 50% of the funding out of TAP for general road and bridge use in three of the past four years. The reasoning on this has been to avoid lapsing of funds, as projects are not moving through the steps of the LPA process in a timely fashion. Over \$6 million in TAP funding lapsed in Federal fiscal years 2016-2019 due to these delays. NHDOT has proposed measures to streamline this process and avoid future lapse of funds. With implementation of these measures the Directors have proposed restoring \$4 million to the TAP program, equivalent to the amount transferred out over the past four years. This would allow a funding pool of \$9.4 million for the funding round.

While NHDOT has not announced the weighting system for statewide project scoring, our understanding is that the criteria will remain very similar to the last round, summarized in the table below. At the state level NHDOT has proposed to drop the Equity criterion based on COVID related skewing of the school lunch enrollment data previously used to operationalize this criterion. At the regional level staff propose to keep the Equity criterion, though consider factors beyond school lunch enrollment in assigning points.

Category		Criterion	Weight
Potential for Success	37%	Project Readiness	13%
		Financial Readiness	17%
		Feasibility	7%
Safety	22%	Stress Analysis	13%
		Improve Safety Conditions	14%
Project Connectivity	18%	Project Connectivity	18%
Socioeconomic Benefits	12%	Access for Underrepresented Communities	12%
RPC/MPO Rankings	6%	RPC/MPO Rankings	6%
			100%

As with prior rounds of TAP and CMAQ funding, staff prepared individual summary/scoring sheets for each project, including staff comments, information on projects' consistency with or listing in local and regional plans, and local support. A map for each project accompanies the summary sheet. The summary sheets show staff scoring and the TAC ranking.

The TAC discussed the projects at their meeting on March 25th. Both projects are strong and have been the subject of extensive community input. Ultimately the TAC gave top ranking to the Rye project. This was based in part on the fact that Rye has not previously been awarded a TAP project while Salem has successfully completed several CMAQ and TAP projects. There was some concern about Rye's capacity as a small town to meet the requirements of the NHDOT/FHWA Local Public Agency (LPA) grant administration process. Rye has confirmed that NHDOT has offered to manage the project for the town in return for an administrative fee. This fee represents the difference between the \$800,000 cost estimated at the LOI stage and the final \$925,000 cost estimate.

Because TAP proposals are very long (30+ pages) with required attachments, we have not attached copies of full proposals for each Policy Committee member. However, the original documents are posted on the MPO website at: <http://www.therpc.org/transportation/transportation-alternatives>. If you have questions in advance of the Policy Committee meeting please contact me at 603-512-4456 or sbogle@therpc.org.

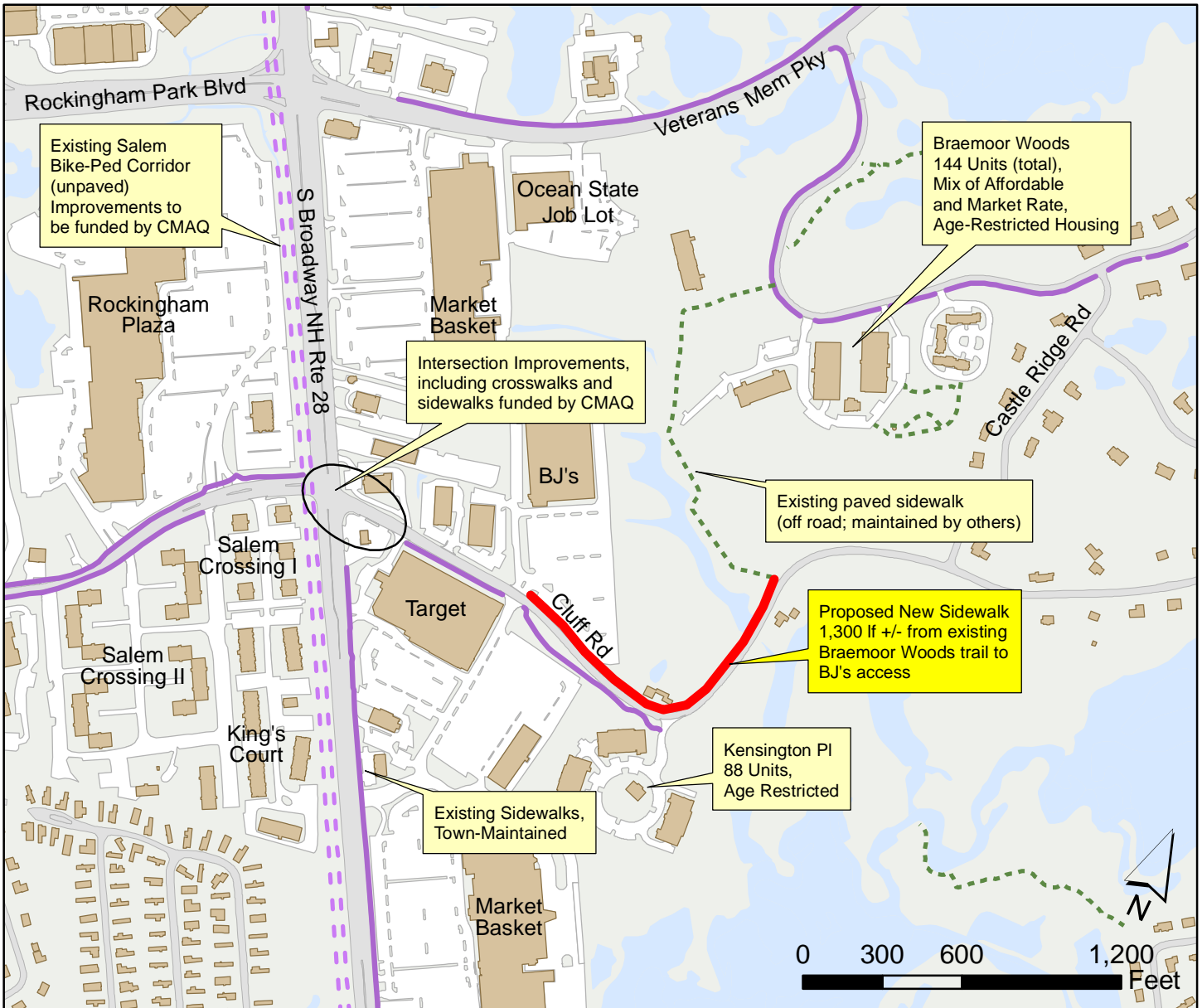
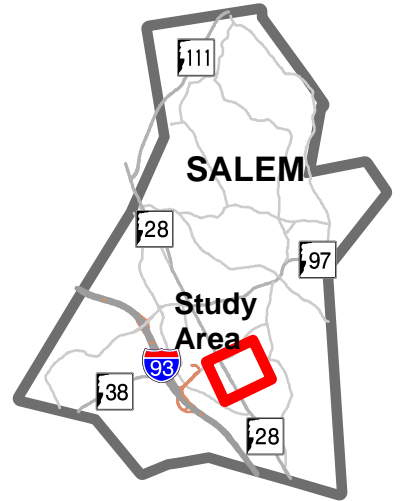
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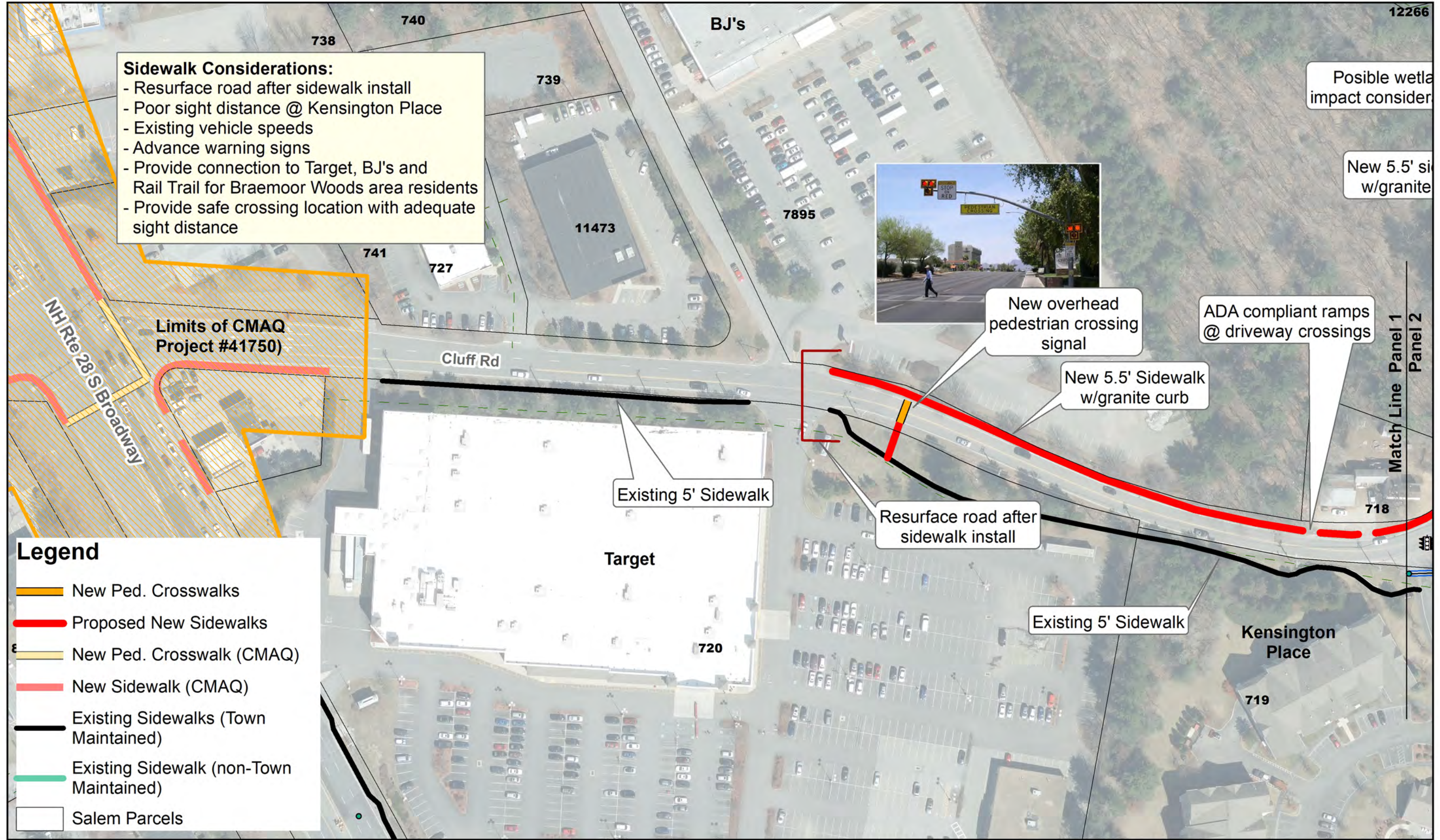
Staff ask Policy Committee members to review the project summary sheets and TAC recommendation, discuss this material at the April 14th MPO Policy Committee meeting and adopt a final regional ranking. This in turn will be sent to NHDOT to incorporate in the Statewide ranking and project selection process.

**Rockingham Planning Commission
2021 Transportation Alternatives Program Project Summary and Evaluation Sheet**

Evaluation (See Criteria Sheet)		Project Location: Salem	Project ID: RPC-TA21-1
Criterion	Staff Score	Project Title: Cluff Road/Braemoor Woods Connector Path	
1. (13pts) Project Support	11	Applicant: Town of Salem	
2. (17pts) Financial Readiness	12	<p>Brief Project Description: The goal of this project is to close a key gap in sidewalk on Cluff Road in Salem, NH, allowing for safe pedestrian access between the Braemoor Woods neighborhood and the Route 28 commercial strip, including the Salem Bike-Ped Corridor. A paved path constructed as part of the Braemoor Woods development is open to the public and provides a pleasant walking route through a wooded area. The path does not currently provide any transportation value, as it terminates at Cluff Road with no pedestrian facilities. Where the path meets Cluff Road, there is little to no road shoulder, and curves severely restrict sight distances for motorists. The Cluff Road sidewalk terminates just 700 feet away on the south side of Cluff Road, but it would be nearly impossible for a pedestrian to safely reach it from the Braemoor Woods path.</p> <p>Salem proposes constructing a 5-foot wide paved sidewalk with 6-inch granite curbing along the north side of Cluff Road from the location where the Braemoor Woods path meets Cluff Road to the BJ's driveway, a distance of about 1,300 feet. While other options are possible, we feel that the BJ's driveway would provide the safest location for the crosswalk. This crosswalk will connect pedestrians to the existing sidewalk on the south side of Cluff Road, likely with the use of a pedestrian hybrid beacon (Attachment B).</p>	
3. (7 pts) Feasibility	7		
4. (13 pts) Safety - Stress Analysis	13		
LTS Now	LTS After		
5. (14 pts) Improve Safety Conditions	12		
6. (18 pts) Project Connectivity	18	Total Project Cost: \$650,000 [\$520,000 Federal]	
7. (12 pts) Socio-Econ Benefits	12	Source of Match: \$130,000 (Selectmen commit to 2022 warrant article)	
8. (6 pts) RPC/MPO Rank	4	Federal Percentage: 80%	
Total	89	Non-Federal Percentage: 20%	
		Municipally Managed? Yes	
TAC Ranking	2	<p>Other Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is identified in 2011 Sidewalk Plan and 2016 Sidewalk Committee Report, both of which are referenced in the 2016 Master Plan. Listed in the RPC MPO LRTP (2021) Connects Braemoor Woods neighborhood, including senior and general low-income apartments, condos duplexes and single family homes, to destinations throughout town via the Salem Ped/Bike Corridor spine route and Cluff Road. No known cultural, archaeological, or hazardous materials have been identified within the project limits. Letters of support from Select Board, Sidewalk Committee, Friends of Salem Bike-Ped Corridor. Funds will be gross appropriated at the 2022 Salem Town Meeting, while impact fees will likely be used to fund the local match portion. 	
MPO Ranking			

Attachment A





Sidewalk Considerations:

- Resurface road after sidewalk install
- Poor sight distance @ Kensington Place
- Existing vehicle speeds
- Advance warning signs
- Provide connection to Target, BJ's and Rail Trail for Braemoor Woods area residents
- Provide safe crossing location with adequate sight distance

Possible wetla impact consider

New 5.5' si w/granite



New overhead pedestrian crossing signal

ADA compliant ramps @ driveway crossings

New 5.5' Sidewalk w/granite curb

Existing 5' Sidewalk

Resurface road after sidewalk install

Existing 5' Sidewalk

Legend

- New Ped. Crosswalks
- Proposed New Sidewalks
- New Ped. Crosswalk (CMAQ)
- New Sidewalk (CMAQ)
- Existing Sidewalks (Town Maintained)
- Existing Sidewalk (non-Town Maintained)
- Salem Parcels

12266

718

Kensington Place

719

Target

720

Cluff Rd

BJ's

7895

739

11473

740

738

741

727

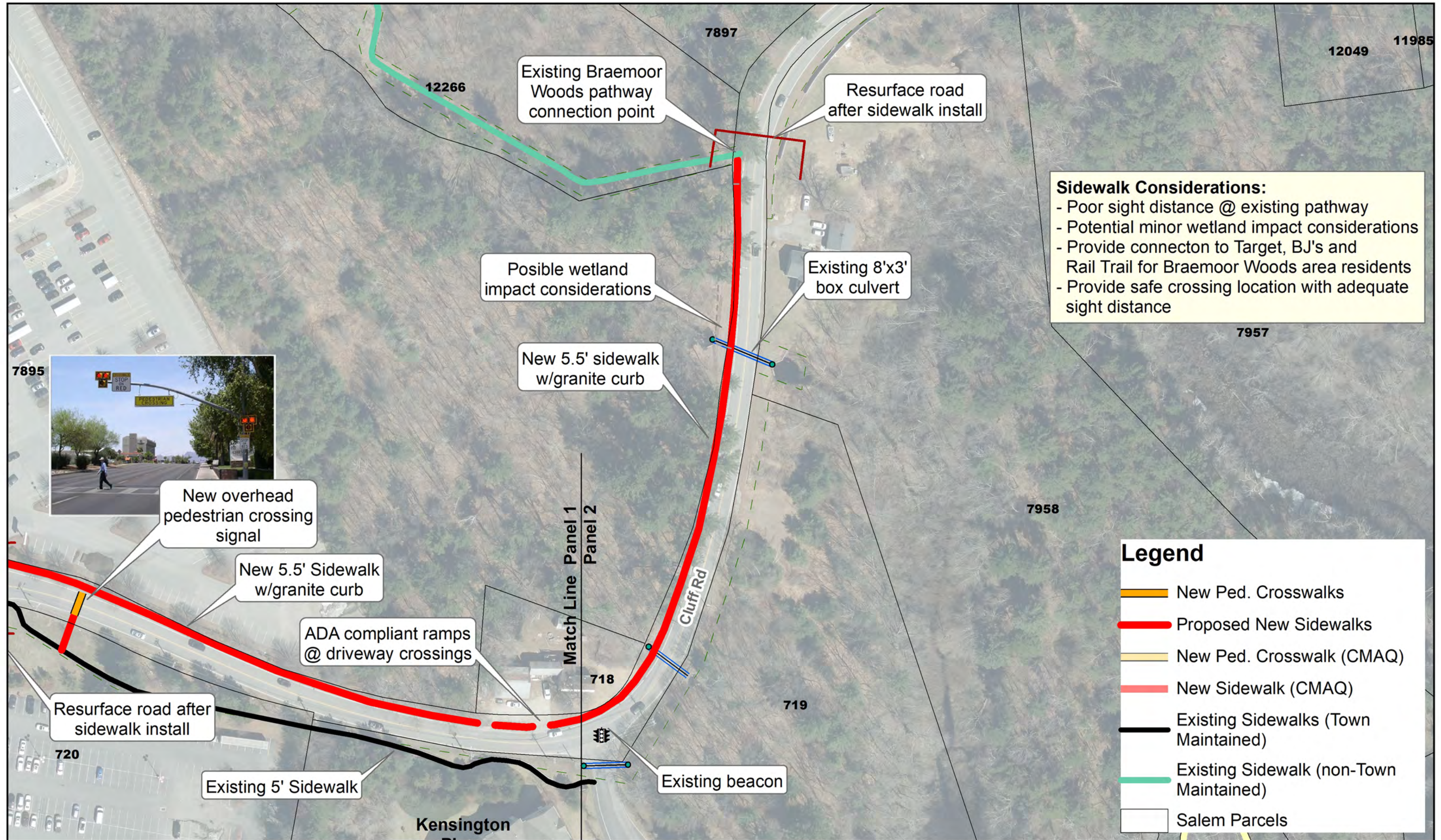
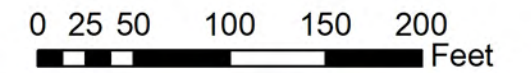
NH Rte 28 S Broadway

Limits of CMAQ Project #41750

Match Line Panel 1 Panel 2

Proposed Cluff Road Sidewalk Improvements, Salem, NH

Panel 2 of 2



Existing Braemoor Woods pathway connection point

Resurface road after sidewalk install

Possible wetland impact considerations

Existing 8'x3' box culvert

New 5.5' sidewalk w/granite curb

Sidewalk Considerations:
 - Poor sight distance @ existing pathway
 - Potential minor wetland impact considerations
 - Provide connecton to Target, BJ's and Rail Trail for Braemoor Woods area residents
 - Provide safe crossing location with adequate sight distance



New overhead pedestrian crossing signal

New 5.5' Sidewalk w/granite curb

ADA compliant ramps @ driveway crossings

Resurface road after sidewalk install

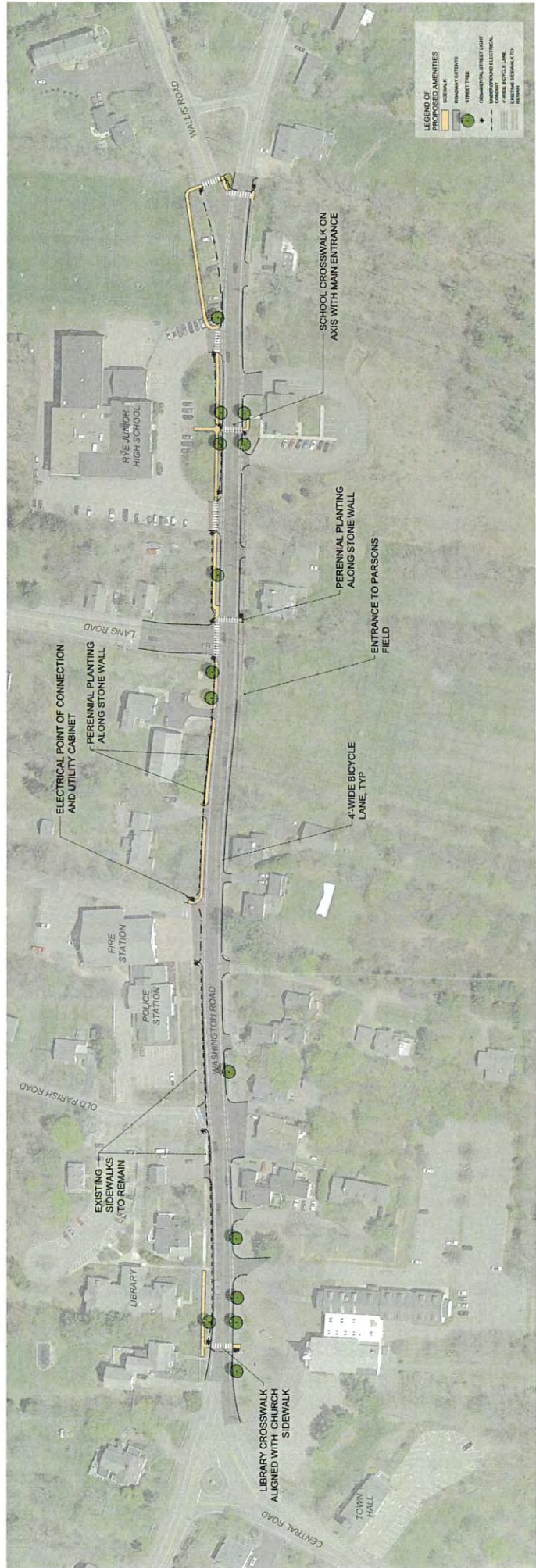
Existing 5' Sidewalk

Existing beacon

Legend

- New Ped. Crosswalks
- Proposed New Sidewalks
- New Ped. Crosswalk (CMAQ)
- New Sidewalk (CMAQ)
- Existing Sidewalks (Town Maintained)
- Existing Sidewalk (non-Town Maintained)
- Salem Parcels

Rockingham Planning Commission 2021 Transportation Alternatives Program Project Summary and Evaluation Sheet			
Evaluation (See Criteria Sheet)		Project Location: Rye	Project ID: RPC-TA21-2
Criterion	Staff Score	Project Title: Town Center Complete Streets	
1. (13pts) Project Support	13	Applicant: Town of Rye	
2. (17pts) Financial Readiness	15	Brief Project Description: The Town of Rye is proposing to redesign and reconfigure approximately 1,900 linear feet of Washington Road, the main roadway through town and a Class IV highway, to extend a sidewalk and add shoulder expansions, bike lanes and new crosswalks. The scope of work will include installing a setback sidewalk on the west side of Washington Road, connecting the Grange Monument and Rye Junior High School at one end of the project to the Rye Public Library at the other. The work will include creating bicycle lanes on Washington Road through the Town Center and reducing vehicle travel lanes to 10 feet. The design includes a landscaping buffer between the sidewalk and bike lane and the addition of necessary and historically appropriate lighting. It will expand the availability of safe routes to schools, to playing fields and the library for students in grades 5 through 8; it will allow residents and visitors alike to walk, run and cycle safely in the center of town; and it will connect multigenerational gathering places such as the library, the church used for rec department programming, and Historical Society Museum. Historic District Commission has reviewed plan and concluded it will not adversely affect historic resources in the town center.	
3. (7 pts) Feasibility	7		
4. (13 pts) Stress Analysis	10		
LTS Now LTS After			
5. (14 pts) Improve Safety Conditions	14		
6. (18 pts) Project Connectivity	18	Total Project Cost: \$925,000 [\$740,000 Federal] Source of Match: \$300,000 (Warrant article approved in 2020)	
7. (12 pts) Socio-Econ Benefits	8	Federal Percentage: 80% Non-Federal Percentage: 20% Municipally Managed? Yes	
8. (6 pts) RPC/MPO Rank	6		
Total	91		
TAC Ranking	1	Other Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified in RPC MPO LRTP (2021), Rye Master Plan (2018), Rye Safe Routes to School Travel Plan (2008), PlanNH Charrette (2018). Letters from Select Board, Planning Board, Conservation Comm, Heritage Comm, Historic District Comm, Police & Fire Depts, Rye Junior High School, SAU50, SABR. Connects Rye Junior High (grades 5-8), Rye Public Library, Town Hall, Historical Society Museum, Parsons Field recreation area and connecting trails and adjacent residential neighborhoods. 	
MPO Ranking			



LEGEND OF PROPOSED AMENITIES:

	PROPOSED SIDEWALK
	PROPOSED TREE PLANTING
	PROPOSED ELECTRICAL POINT OF CONNECTION AND UTILITY CABINET
	PROPOSED 4'-WIDE BICYCLE LANE
	PROPOSED PERENNIAL PLANTING ALONG STONE WALL
	EXISTING SIDEWALK
	EXISTING TREE PLANTING
	EXISTING PERENNIAL PLANTING ALONG STONE WALL

Rockingham Planning Commission Developing New Tools to Help Municipalities Adapt to Climate Change

Municipalities along New Hampshire’s coast are increasingly taking steps to adapt to rising seas and climate change. With grant funds from New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program, Rockingham Planning Commission is developing a user-friendly coastal land use guide to inform local decision makers about climate change and increase the resiliency of our region. The coastal land use guide will cover a wide range of resilience and adaptation priorities, challenges, and opportunities in all 17 of New Hampshire’s Coastal Zone municipalities. Additionally, RPC is developing a framework for a regional sustainability program to help facilitate actions across New Hampshire’s coastal communities. This project is being conducted in partnership with the Strafford Regional Planning Commission, with support from multiple local and state partners.

Project funder, Kirsten Howard, NHDES Coastal Resilience Program Coordinator, shared that “This project is going to create some much-needed guiding language to help all of our coastal communities formalize the ways that they plan for increasing coastal flood risks and the ways that they create community resilience in land use policy. The DES Coastal Program is thrilled to be able to support the project and looks forward to the valuable products it will produce.” The guide will help facilitate



adoption of recommended best practices by local decision makers using the best available New Hampshire based science, policy, and guidance. Implementation of model regulations and standards will be supported by ready to use products and provide multiple mechanisms for long-term adoption success and tracking of their effectiveness.

Given the challenges posed by climate change, the project will develop a framework for a regional sustainability and resiliency program, including a funding concept, as the long-term strategy to implement the coastal land use guide recommendations, and more broadly to increase the capacity of coastal municipalities to adapt and thrive. Tim Roache, Executive Director of the RPC, says that “addressing coastal hazards are important to our entire region and the guide will provide our communities with



tools to plan for those changes.” The regional sustainability and resiliency program will be modeled after similar initiatives undertaken in New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Examples of successful regional cooperation, organization and implementation will be showcased.

For more information, visit the project webpage at www.therpc.org/sustainability, or contact Senior Planner/Project Manager Julie LaBranche at jlabranche@therpc.org or (603) 658-0522.

This project was funded, in part, by NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act in conjunction with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program.

