



December 2025 - eBulletin

Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission

The UVLSRPC newsletter returns this month as the year comes to an end. The work never stops here at the RPC -- the eBulletin has everything you need to stay in the loop!

In this issue:

- **UVLSRPCorner** - Learn about an ongoing staff project!
 - Learn about safety tips for driving in the winter weather
 - Register now for NHDOT's Traffic Fatality Summit in 2026
 - And more!
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UVLSRPCorner

*Join us every month in the **UVLSRPCorner** to learn more about our projects and the staff behind them!*

This month: Thriving Communities Program

Building Resilient Communities Together

The Nature Conservancy, in partnership with University of New Hampshire – Extension and UVLSRPC, hosts and facilitates a Community Resilience Building (CRB) workshop, bringing local leaders, stakeholders, and residents together to identify extreme weather and longer term risks and strengthen preparedness. This collaborative process helps communities pinpoint strengths and vulnerabilities, prioritize actions, and develop strategies that enhance resilience to flooding, storms, heat waves, wildfires, and other hazards.

Insights from the CRB workshop can directly inform **Master Plans and Hazard Mitigation Plans**, ensuring that community-based resilience measures are integrated into long-term planning. By aligning local priorities with actionable strategies, communities with a plan are better equipped to secure funding, reduce risk, and build a safer, more sustainable futures.

This is a free process available to our towns. Enfield and Lebanon have each held very successful CRB workshops with their final reports available at www.CommunityResilienceBuilding.org.

Please reach out to AWhite@uvlsrpc.org if interested!

More UVLSRP News

UVLSRPC Data Collection

UVLSRPC offers data collection and assessments of various roadway infrastructure for

towns. Assessment criteria was created in collaboration with NH Department of Transportation (**NHDOT**), UNH T2, the Regional Planning Commissions, and other State agencies. Data collected can be utilized to create long-term maintenance plans, understand forecasted improvement costs, identify priority vulnerable infrastructure, as well as be used to support grant applications.

UVLSRPC currently offers data collection and assessment for:

- Stream Crossings/Culverts
- Drainage Culverts
- Pedestrian Facilities (e.g. crosswalks, sidewalks, bike lanes)
- Pavement Road Surface Management and Maintenance Forecasting

UVLSRPC has some funding to provide cost share opportunities for member communities on a first come first served basis. Please reach out to Ian Garland at igarland@uvlsrpc.org for more information!

School Chemical Safety Project and More!

The Commission received a \$172,000 USDA grant this year to provide solid waste management programs. The four major components of the grant will be for School Chemical Safety Trainings, Waste Management Trainings, Household Hazardous Waste Trainings, and Composting Trainings and Research.



We will be working with Becky Andersen of Hazardous Materials Consulting in Iowa again for the school chemical safety training as she is such a talented and experienced trainer with hands-on experience working with hazardous materials in schools and industry. The feedback from previous participants included comments to bring Becky back—and that's what we're doing. We will have several webinar trainings to teach school staff about the State-required Chemical Safety Hygiene Plans, how to write them, and how to enforce them. All schools are required to have these plans to address chemical safety in all classrooms, not just the laboratory. This includes many art classrooms and custodial closets. An additional webinar will address PCBs in schools as well as vapes.

To learn more about the school chemical safety webinars and more details about this project, please [click here](#). Once the webinars are scheduled, we will provide this information to all our municipalities and schools. Contact Victoria Davis at vdavis@uvlsrpc.org for more information.



Check Out the UVLSRPC YouTube Page

Find past webinars, recordings, trainings and more on our YouTube page. There are playlists from our School Chemical Safety series, our Food Scraps and Composting Series, Stormwater Management and Household Hazardous Waste. [Click here](#) to view!

Emergency Preparedness

Be #WinterReady

Being #WinterReady means understanding winter risks you face and taking steps now to prepare.

Why should you be #WinterReady?

- Sixty-three percent of temperature-related deaths are attributed to cold exposure.
- Home heating is the second leading cause of home fires, and winter is when most home fires happen.
- Travel during the winter has unique risks, especially if you travel by car.

How to Protect Yourself from Winter Weather - Know your weather terms

Winter Storm Warning: Issued when hazardous winter weather in the form of heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet is imminent or occurring. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued 12 to 24 hours before the event is expected to begin.

Winter Storm Watch: Alerts the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet. Winter Storm Watches are usually issued 12 to 48 hours before the beginning of a Winter Storm.

Winter Weather Advisory: Issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, and sleet which will cause significant inconveniences and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to life-threatening situations.

For more information, please visit ready.gov/winter-weather

If you'd like to sign up to receive alerts about hazardous weather in your area, visit [NH Alerts](#) and enter your email and/or phone number.



Housing

Share Your Thoughts on Housing in Lebanon

The [Lebanon Housing Task Force](#) invites all community members to participate in a [Community Housing Survey](#). Whether renting or owning, seeking entry-level housing or multi-million-dollar options, everyone's perspective is essential to help shape the future of housing in Lebanon.

Why This Survey Matters

Lebanon is facing a significant housing shortage and needs a range of housing types to meet the needs of current and future residents. This includes:

- Owner-occupied and rental housing
- Homes across all price points and styles
- Housing that supports the diverse lifestyles and life stages of the community

Input is needed from residents at every income level and with all types of housing experiences—from long-time homeowners to new renters, and from young professionals

to retirees.

What the Survey Covers

The survey asks for input on:

- How Lebanon's current housing options are affecting daily life
- What types of housing are needed going forward
- The challenges residents face in finding suitable housing, regardless of price point

Why Participate?

The feedback collected will help city staff and consultants:

- Recommend housing policies that reflect real community needs
- Guide the Housing Chapter of the Lebanon Master Plan
- Create a long-term Strategic Plan to respond to housing challenges and opportunities

Survey Details

- Takes 10 minutes or less to complete
- Open to all residents—owners and renters alike
- Anonymous and confidential
- Designed to reflect the full range of experiences and expectations in Lebanon's housing market

All responses are anonymous.

Click [here](#) to take the survey!

Transportation

Winter Weather Driving Tips

Officials from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) have posted reminders on how to stay safe on the road this winter!



Reduce Speed:

- Slow down for wet, snowy, or icy conditions, when visibility is poor, or when conditions are changing or unpredictable.
- Slow down when approaching intersections, off-ramps, bridges or shady spots, which are candidates for developing ice.
- Allow additional space between vehicles.
- Winter conditions often result in longer stopping distances.
- Before pulling out into traffic, remember that they may not be able to slow down.
- You may not be able to accelerate as quickly as on dry pavement either.
- Avoid using cruise control in winter driving condition.

Driving Maneuvers:

- Stopping on snow and ice requires extra time and distance. If you have anti-lock brakes, press the pedal down firmly and hold it. If you don't have anti-lock brakes, gently pump the pedal.
- Brake early, brake slowly, brake correctly, and never slam on the brakes.
- On snow and ice, go slow, no matter what type of vehicle you drive.
- Even if you have four-wheel drive, you may not be able to stop any faster, or maintain control any better, once you lose traction. Four-wheel drive may get you going faster, but it won't help you stop sooner.
- Accelerate gradually and avoid abrupt steering maneuvers.
- Merge slowly, since sudden movements can cause your vehicle to slide.
- Look farther ahead in traffic than you normally do. Actions by other vehicles will alert you to problems more quickly, and give you that split-second of extra time to

react safely.

- Avoid distracted driving. This includes texting, eating, handheld devices, etc.

Travel Around Snowplows:

- Don't crowd the plow. The front plow extends several feet in front of the truck and may cross the centerline and shoulders during plowing operations.
- Don't tailgate or stop too close behind snowplows. Snowplows are usually spreading deicing materials from the back of the truck and may need to stop or take evasive action to avoid stranded vehicles. If you find yourself behind a snowplow, stay behind it, leaving a safe distance. The road behind a snowplow will be safer to drive on.
- On multi-lane roads, watch for several snowplows plowing in tandem. This type of plowing clears all the lanes of a multi-lane highway quickly and effectively with one pass.
- Snowplows throw up a cloud of snow that can reduce your visibility to zero in less time than you can react. Never drive into a snow cloud, as it could conceal another snowplow.
- Snowplows travel much slower than posted speeds while removing snow and ice from the roads. When you spot a plow, allow plenty of time to slow down.

Trip Preparedness:

- Before leaving home, find out about the driving conditions.
- Safe drivers know the weather, and they know their limits. If the weather is bad, remember, ice and snow, take it slow, or just don't go.
- Clear all the snow off all of your vehicle including roof, windows, head lights, brake lights, and turn signals.
- Make sure you can see and be seen.
- Always buckle up, and remember, when driving in winter, ice and snow, take it slow.
- Give yourself extra time to reach your destination safely.
- Check your vehicle's tires, brakes, fluids, wiper blades, lights, belts, and hoses to make sure they're in good condition before the start of the winter season.

For more information, please visit <https://www.dot.nh.gov/about-nh-dot/divisions-bureaus-districts/highway-maintenance/winter-maintenance-snow-removal-and>

Funding Opportunity for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant

USDOT recently issued the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program's Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) (located at [FY 2026 BUILD Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity | US Department of Transportation](#)).

This NOFO announces up to \$1.5 billion in funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act for projects that will have a significant local and regional impact and improve transportation infrastructure.

The press release is posted here: <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>

Submission and Deadline Requirements:

- **Applications must be submitted online no later than 5:00 pm eastern on February 24, 2026.**
- Complete instructions on how to apply will be posted at [grants.gov](#) and the [BUILD program website](#). Selections are expected to be announced no later than June 28, 2026

Applicants should email questions to: BUILDbgrants@dot.gov

Be Seen After Dark: Visibility Tips for Walking and

Biking

As daylight hours decrease in fall and winter, visibility changes for everyone using Lebanon's roads, sidewalks, and paths. The Pedestrian and Bicyclist Advisory Committee (PBAC) encourages simple safety steps during evening hours.

- High visibility is essential. Bright or reflective clothing and front and rear lights significantly improve the ability of others to see a person walking or biking. These tools are especially important along roadways, at driveways and side-street junctions, and on shared-use paths where lighting may vary.
- Extra care at crossings helps prevent close calls. Before advancing at any road crossing—marked or unmarked—look both ways and check for vehicles turning from side roads. Markings and signs improve predictability, but conditions can change quickly at dusk and after dark.
- Attentive driving protects everyone. As evening darkness arrives earlier, drivers are urged to remain 100% distraction-free, with particular attention at intersections and along narrow corridors where space is limited. Slower speeds increase reaction time and reduce the severity of any potential conflicts.
- Courtesy and a safe speed make shared spaces work. Never assume others can see or hear an approaching person or vehicle. Maintain a speed and distance that allow yielding when necessary, signal intentions early, and pass only when it is clearly safe to do so.
- Planning supports safer trips. The Walk Bike Ride Leb (WBRL) multimodal plan and local maps provide helpful route information for walking and biking in Lebanon.

Mentioning you saw this information about being seen after dark: Visibility Tips for Walking and Winter at Omer & Bob's qualifies residents for 10% off winter bike safety equipment. This discount helps make lights, reflectors, and other visibility gear more accessible as conditions change. Omer & Bob's is located on the Lebanon Pedestrian Mall, 20 Hanover Street, Lebanon.

The Pedestrian and Bicyclist Advisory Committee welcomes questions about local routes and maps and can help travelers navigate options across the city.

2026 NHDOT Traffic Fatality Summit

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Highway Safety has announced that their 2026 Traffic Fatality Summit will take place on **Monday, February 9th from 9AM-2PM at the NH National Guard Training Facility in Pembroke.**

This summit is for NH First Responders to meet, discuss what they are facing when responding to MVA's involving serious injuries & fatalities. This is a great opportunity for Fire/PD/EMS to share concerns, needs, observations and help develop a plan to reduce traffic fatalities.

Click this link to register: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2026-nh-dot-fatality-summit-tickets-1437769119139?aff=oddtcreator>

Environment and Energy

Financial Planning for Drinking Water & Wastewater Systems

Join NHDES for a webinar on the topic of "financial planning" for drinking water and wastewater systems. Speakers include Raffelis and NHDES staff on the importance of financial planning for the future and meeting the system's financial needs today.

This will be the first in a series of webinars focused on financial topics to work towards

financial sustainability.

This webinar will take place on Friday, December 12th, from 10-11:30am.

Use this link to register: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/fe8cc988-dee0-427a-97f1-8d7fca03185e@992deae9-1c4c-42c8-a310-5088af55ba74>

Funding Available through the Granite State Clean Fleets Grant Program

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Mobile Sources team has released a \$7.5 million request for proposals (RFP) through the Granite State Clean Fleets (GSCF) program.



GSCF is a competitive reimbursement program funded by the **Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust** (VW Trust) focused on reducing diesel emissions by replacing Class 4-8 diesel vehicles, engines and equipment, or installing marine shore power systems. This new round of funding provides up to a 95% reimbursement for eligible projects from state and municipally run entities such as school districts, public community colleges/universities and transit agencies.

NHDES anticipates this will be the final funding round for diesel vehicles, engine and equipment replacements under the VW Trust, so applicants are encouraged to take full advantage of this unique opportunity.

Applications are accepted on a rolling monthly basis until March 30, 2026, at 4 p.m. ET or earlier if all funds are obligated.

More information on eligibility, funding limits, and grant requirements can be found in the GSCF RFP, which is located on the **GSCF webpage**. Terms and conditions of the GSCF program are subject to change. Prior applicants are encouraged to thoroughly review the RFP for updated guidance.

Questions may also be forwarded to the Grants Program Coordinator, Mac Bevier, via email to ms-grants@des.nh.gov or by phone at **(603) 271-8330**.

Env-A 3200 Public Hearing

Env-A 3200, *NOx Budget Trading Program*, is being readopted by the Department of Environmental Services with minor edits. The purpose of this rule is to implement the NOx Budget Program established by state law which requires reductions in ozone season NOx emissions from NOx budget sources, in order to further the effort to achieve the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQs) for ozone.

The rule is scheduled to expire on January 1, 2026, but is subject to extension for the duration of this readoption proceeding pursuant to RSA 541-A:14-a, I.

The public hearing will be held virtually and in person on **Thursday, January 8, 2026 at 11am**.

Physical location: Room 208C, DES Offices, 29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH.
OR

Phone: 1-603-931-4944, Phone conference ID: 887 428 759#

You can find a copy of the proposed rule and public hearing announcement/rulemaking register here:

RULEMAKING NOTICE: Env-A 3200 NOx Budget Trading Program | NH Department

New Hampshire Looking for New Ways to Address Road Salt in Freshwater

A recent article published in the New Hampshire Bulletin details the recurring issue of road salt seeping off roads and into New Hampshire's waterways, overall posing a mounting threat to drinking water and wildlife.

To learn more, [click here](#).

Municipal Support & Economic Development

Plan Webinar: Best Practices for Planning Boards

Join Noah Hodgetts and Brendan McDowell from the NH Office of Planning and Development (OPD) on **Thursday, December 18, 2025 from 12-1pm** for the PLAN Webinar: *Best Practices for Planning Boards - Proposing Zoning Amendments, Hearing Applications, and Issuing Decisions*.

This presentation will feature a review of New Hampshire's zoning amendment process, including key dates for posting notices and conducting public hearings. They will also discuss best practices and tips for board members and planning staff on how to operate as a board when hearing an application. Topics will include applicable RSAs; organization and rules of procedure; determining application completeness; findings of fact; and the notice of decision. They will also cover general etiquette of a planning board.

To register, please click [here](#). Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email from Microsoft Teams; check your spam folder if you do not receive the confirmation. The webinar will be recorded and posted [here](#).

This course is eligible for AICP Certification Maintenance (CM) credit. Certified planners who complete the course may claim CM credits in accordance with APA/AICP guidelines. Be sure to log your credits in your CM log upon completion.

For more information, please contact OPD at planning@livefree.nh.gov

NHMA Guidance on Changes to Laws Governing Elections, Town Meetings, & More

The New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) has posted updates to their guidance on elections, town meetings, zoning, land-use, and more.

To view the new guidance documents, click [here](#).

AgeWellNH Looking For Your Input

AgeWellNH, an initiative of the NH State Commission on Aging, recently launched a survey to gather public input for a 10-year vision to make NH a better place to grow older. Like elsewhere in the state, the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee region is rapidly aging. This demographic shift requires a strategic vision for how to adapt to the needs of an aging population.

Click [here](#) to take the survey.

For information on Molly's scheduled conversations, please email Molly at msinger@dexteritymanagement.com

Community Happenings

Northern Borders Regional Commission - Fall 2025 Catalyst Awards

Northern Borders Regional Commission announced their Fall 2025 Catalyst Awards with multiple projects selected in the UVLSRPC region!

- Sullivan County Conservation District was awarded \$250,000 to establish a shared-use food processing hub in Unity with a commercial kitchen, training programs, and equipment for farmers and food entrepreneurs
- The Well Collaborative in Claremont was awarded \$821,353.60 to repurpose a historic church in Claremont into a community hub with childcare, a commercial kitchen, and meeting space
- The City of Claremont was awarded \$430,000 to advance the Sugar River Revitalization and Brownfields Redevelopment Project by improving pedestrian access and preparing sites for community and commercial use. The project will transform a remediated brownfield into a riverwalk and public gathering space.
- The Acworth Historical Society has been awarded \$268,311.00 to modernize and expand the Acworth Village Store, a historic general store and community hub. The project will improve flood resilience, energy efficiency, and ADA accessibility, supporting local farmers, artisans, and entrepreneurs. It aims to preserve a vital economic and social institution in rural New Hampshire.
- Mascoma Valley Preservation has been awarded \$400,000.00 to complete rehabilitation of two historic properties in Grafton, NH, for small business incubation and outdoor recreation. The project includes a general store, community center, and trail access improvements to support tourism and economic activity.

Congratulations to these municipalities and organizations for the exciting projects in our communities. Spring 2026 NBRC funding is just around the corner — visit nbrc.gov for more information or email Tim Josephson at tjosephson@uvlsrpc.org



Borrow an E-Bike!

The Upper Valley E-Bike Lending Library is a free selection of four e-bikes of assorted styles and retail costs that has one- and two-week residencies in towns and workplaces throughout the Upper Valley. While the e-bike library is stationed at a particular lending location, people can try multiple bikes at “Demo Days” or sign up to borrow a single bike overnight to see how an e-bike might fit into your lifestyle. Book a bike [here!](#)

Full Commission Meeting Dates FY 2026

- February 11, 2026
- April 8, 2026



If you have any questions or concerns, please call Chris at 603-448-1680.

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