



August 11, 2025

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte  
and the Honorable Executive Council  
Statehouse  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: Council of Partner Agencies

**INFORMATIONAL ITEM**

Pursuant to RSA 12-O:8, the following report details activity for the Council of Partner Agencies (CoPA), administered by the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA), for calendar year 2023-24.

CoPA was established in RSA 12-O:7. The council's purpose is to consult with and advise the Commissioner of Business and Economic Affairs regarding policy, programs, and operations of the department and to establish a framework for communication and coordinated activities among its members.

The mission of CoPA: a multi-organizational forum that develops, coordinates, and implements broad economic policy initiatives that, through both systemic and specific changes, lead to sustained and expanded economic improvements for New Hampshire.

The council meets at least quarterly, and all meetings are properly noticed to comply with RSA 91-A. All meetings are held at BEA.

The council is comprised of the following statewide organizations, as noted in RSA 12-O:7:

- New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA)
- New Hampshire Business Finance Authority (BFA)
- New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA)
- New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA)
- Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH)
- University System of New Hampshire (USNH)

In addition, CoPA invites groups to its meeting to speak on issues pertinent to members and the state's economic vitality.

During 2023-24, CoPA members undertook the following activities:

- Continued joint awareness and promotion of each organization's activities, resources, and efforts.
- Housing initiatives, which included:
  - InvestNH, which completed the awarding of \$100 million of funds toward workforce and market-rate housing (more than 30 projects); building demolition, and zoning grants. The program has supported nearly 5,000 new units coming online and contributed to broader efforts by partners and communities to build and permit as many as 25,000 units by the end of 2024.
  - In partnership with NHHFA, enhanced municipal engagement in the areas of the Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) and the Housing Champions Program. As of the end of 2024, there were 72 communities that received Housing Opportunity Grants (ranging in community size from Waterville Valley to Nashua). In addition, 18 Housing Champions were named in 2024 (Ranging in size from Enfield to Manchester).
- Broadband initiatives, which saw the continued buildout of more than 50,000 unserved and underserved locations, particularly in rural areas, through BEA's Office of Broadband Initiatives. At the conclusion of the Capital Projects Fund grant being used by BEA to do said buildouts, more than 99 percent of locations statewide will have access to highspeed broadband internet; one of the highest rates in the country.
  - To address the less than 1 percent without access to highspeed internet, BEA is working with additional federal funds to connect those areas.
- Ongoing discussions with CCSNH and USNH on how to best develop and place workers into New Hampshire companies through programs such as ApprenticeshipNH and UNH Career Services. BEA also partners with higher-education entities to connect businesses to existing post-secondary resources (i.e., Keene State College optics program).
- Discussion of childcare initiatives in the state and how CoPA could participate in these efforts.
- In 2023-24 BFA provided 187 loans, which helped to create and keep more than 3,000 jobs in the state. BFA also facilitates programming in partnership with the State, such as an allocation through the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI).
- CDFA continued to increase its capacity to positively impact and strengthen New Hampshire communities, with at least \$25.6 million infused into NH communities and 117 community-based projects funded. The relationship has been further strengthened with Division of Economic Development, as Deputy Director Cynthia Harrington serving as chair of CDFA's Board of Directors at this time.

During the last biennium, and beyond, CoPA and its members have played a vital role in helping the state economy recover from the pandemic and the state has emerged strong. BEA continues to find benefit in working with its partners; such cooperative efforts multiply the impact each organization can have in the expansion of the state's economic development.

Please let me know if there is any additional information we can provide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "T. Caswell".

Taylor Caswell  
Council Chair / BEA Commissioner