STATE of the REGION

Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

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Presenter: David J. Preece, AICP

Executive Director and CEO
Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

- Coordinating agency for the planning initiatives of 13 communities in the region.

- Formally organized in 1966

- City of Manchester and 12 surrounding municipalities with populations ranging from 3,600 to 110,000

- 2008 Population Estimate – 262,000
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- 490 square-mile Region
- Represents over 20% of New Hampshire’s Population and jobs, and 18% of New Hampshire’s Housing
- Largest MPO in New Hampshire – Regional Transportation Planning
Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

• To guide, coordinate and promote sound growth and development.

• To prepare, maintain and encourage the implementation of a comprehensive plan for the Southern New Hampshire region.

• To serve as the resource agency and information clearinghouse for the Southern New Hampshire region; to assist municipalities with their plans and programs.
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• To establish a public information program to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the inhabitants of the Southern New Hampshire Region.

• To craft effective and efficient solutions that will preserve the special character and valuable resources of the region by taking a regional approach to address development concerns.
Regional Comprehensive Plan
November 28, 2006

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Economic Development – Issues

• Despite the numerous benefits of economic development planning, such as attracting good salaried skilled jobs, improving or expanding the local tax base, or seeking a balance in quality of life and growth management, there are only a few municipalities within the region that promote such planning or practice it.

• The largest barriers to economic growth within the region are the lack of infrastructure to support development.

• As the region continues to grow in population, economic development will become increasingly important for two reasons. First is the provision of goods, services, and jobs to sustain a greater number of residents. Second is to attract and maintain commercial and industrial businesses that provide the tax base to fund schools, roads and other municipal services.
Economic Development Goals

SNHPC Regional Comprehensive Plan Policy Recommendations

• Encourage the update and study of local land use regulations that will promote and sustain the type of economic development desired by the community;

• Work with municipalities to establish public/private partnerships, local economic development committees and commissions, and the adoption of the comprehensive or strategic economic development plans;

• Maintain and expand the number of businesses that offer essential goods and services within the region, readily available to all residents;

• Work with The Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce METRO CENTER and other economic development agencies to develop and implement additional incentives and technical support to create a dynamic business mix.

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Hooksett Economic Development Plan
• Ongoing assistance to Town’s newly formed economic advisory committee.

Derry Commercial/Industrial Atlas
• Funding received from REDC to produce Atlas (summary of properties) zoned for commercial and industrial use in Derry. Similar to product prepared for Hooksett.

Regional Economic Development Plan
• Funded through CTAP Collaborative Grants: plan to establish for the first time a framework for future economic development planning—EDD and CEDS.

Metro Center-NH
• Support to Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce to participate in economic development for region.
Transportation - Issues

• Driving alone to work contributes to increased traffic volumes, risk of accidents, and pollution.
  – In 2000 - 83% of all residents the region drove alone to work
  – In 2007, 71% of all residents drove alone.

• Traffic volumes continue to increase and as a result, levels of service continue to decrease on the region’s major roads and highways. Daily traffic on the region’s roads and highways is projected to increase from 2.1 million trips per day to 2.8 million trips per day in the year 2025. This amount of traffic is equivalent to an average increase of 1.3% annually.
• Transportation funding is declining statewide, and present funding cannot meet current needs, despite the increases in volume and resulting need for roadway improvements.

• The I-93 widening project will likely have significant growth impacts that will be felt by most if not all communities within the SNHPC region. The consequences of this growth could be increasing traffic and decreasing levels of service on many of the region’s secondary highways and intersections. Communities will need to monitor and plan for these secondary impacts.
Transportation - Goals

Provide a safe, economical, energy-efficient, and convenient transportation system comprised of roads and highways, bike and pedestrian ways, and rail, air, and bus services. This integrated system should provide people within the region the ability to readily access goods and services, and will support the desired regional development pattern.
Transportation - Goals

Continue long-range highway planning on an area-wide scale to provide the framework for regional and statewide improvement program priorities, scheduling and funding.

Make transportation investments and land use decisions that are mutually supportive.
Transportation - Goals

Support adequate investment in all modes of transportation within the system.

Coordinate various public transportation services currently being provided to minimize overlap, duplication and costs and to provide adequate service for the elderly and handicapped.
Encourage municipalities to adopt a local comprehensive transportation plan which considers access management, street connectivity, pedestrian safety and creative funding opportunities, including the provision adequate off-street parking for new development based on projected demand.
Manchester Transit Authority

- July 2006 Edwards and Kelcey perform “MTA Comprehensive Operations Analysis” (MTA COA)
  - Designed to determine how transit can better serve the region’s current needs

- Issues Identified:
  - On-time performance needs to be improved
  - Service is overly complex
  - Downtown service is confusing and inconvenient
Manchester Transit Authority

MTA COA results:
- Better reliability
- Improved coordination
- Faster service
- More direct service
- Simpler service

FY 2008 Ridership: 14% increase
FY 2009 Ridership: 12% increase
Regional Transit Feasibility Study

- April 2007- meeting with MTA- three proposed alternatives to pursue
  1. Route 11 extension: Hooksett- Wal-Mart/Lowe’s, Exit 11 Cabella’s
  2. Route 13 extension: Airport Access Road, Commuter Rail Stations, Merrimack
  3. Route 6 extension: Goffstown- van service between Goffstown Village and Downtown Manchester- employment trips

- Meetings with Bedford, Goffstown and Hooksett- three communities supported the proposed service alternatives, leaving identification of available capital/operating funding to be explored
Regional Transit Feasibility Study

• Coordinated Public Transit-Human Service Transportation Plan
  – In SNHPC region 25% of households have access to 1 or fewer vehicles
  – 51% percent of Manchester households have access to 1 or fewer vehicles
  – NE Economic Partnership estimates that population of Rockingham County aged 65 and over to grow 80% between 2005-2015
  – Elderly comprise about 13% of the total population for the region
  – Approximately 16% of the total population has some form of disability

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Cooperative Alliance for Regional Transportation (CART)

- CART: curb-to-curb transportation system serving the towns of Chester, Danville, Derry, Hampstead, Londonderry, Salem and Windham

- CART is structured as a regional brokerage system intended to improve the efficiency of existing transportation services by centralizing scheduling and dispatching of vehicles

- Funding: CART is funded by FTA with matching funds from each of the service Towns, and grants from NH Endowment for Health, NH Charitable Foundation, and Heritage United Way

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CART

- 12,679 trips provided YTD (Oct-May), representing a 30% increase compared to same period of the previous fiscal year
- Trip purpose FY 09 YTD
  - 34% Personal
  - 28% Medical
  - 14% Employment

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• Popularity continues to grow
• Maintain average budget of 980 monthly service hours-
  trip denials continue to be on the rise
  • Additional funding required
  • Scheduling software needs refining
  • Negotiations between passengers and intake operators
The NHDHHS and NHDOT are working on a plan to develop a network of regional transportation brokerages to coordinate community transportation services throughout the state.

- Received RCC designation by the SCC
- Selected a Citizen Member to serve on the RCC committee
NH Rail Transit Authority (NHRTA)

- 2007- SB75 passes creating NH Rail Transit Authority

- Proposed Station Sites in SNHPC Region
  - Manchester
  - Airport
  - Nashua
State Planning and Research

- Solutions to High Accident Intersections in SNHPC Region
  - Focus on eight intersections identified in the City of Manchester
  - Intersections included in the New Hampshire 2007 Five Percent Report
  - Identify possible countermeasures to address identified intersection issues

- Preliminary Commuter Rail Station Site Evaluation- MBRA
  - Project began determining the feasibility of constructing an MBRA commuter rail station near the planned highway interchange
  - Products produced include conceptual commuter rail site including station layout, parking configuration and internal roadway system

- NH 102 (West Broadway) Access Management Plan
  - Goal is to develop a balance between the mobility and access requirements of the roadway to improve efficiency of movement and enhance safe and efficient access
  - Development of the plan is being tailored to address the specific characteristics of the various portions of the corridor
State Planning and Research

NH 102 Access Management

Preliminary Commuter Rail Station
Safe Routes to School

• Weare Middle School
  – During the first round of funding, Weare Middle School received approximately $4,000 for encouragement activities to generate support
  – Task force is regrouping and planning for round four application period

• Henry Wilson Elementary School
  – During third round of funding, SNHPC received $6,000 to conduct a site evaluation plan for the school
  – Currently wrapping up the site evaluation
  – Plans to pursue additional funding during round four application period
Safe Routes to School

Weare walk to school day

Dismissal time at Wilson School
Ten-Year Highway Plan

CYCLE BEGINS

New Projects are Introduced
Fall of Even Years (2006, 2008, 2010, etc.)
Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) request proposals from constituent communities for candidate projects.

CYCLE BEGINS AGAIN

THE TWO-YEAR CYCLE

Projects are Regionally Ranked
(November - December of Even Years)
The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for each RPC rank projects submitted for consideration based on selection criteria established by each RPC.

RPC Plan Submitted
May 1 of Odd Years
Each RPC submits its regional priorities and recommendations to NHDOT.

Adoption of Statewide Plan
(December – June of Even Years)
The Governor reviews the Statewide Ten-Year Plan and submits it to the Legislature for consideration and approval. Public Hearings are held and input considered.

IMPLEMENTATION
After adoption by the Legislature, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) incorporate approved projects into their Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Ten-Year Plan Drafted/Debated
January – April of Odd Years (07, 09, 11, etc.)
Early in the new year, each RPC's TAC develops and approves a draft of the regional priorities and recommendations for consideration – keeping in mind selection criteria and each project's relative scores – for submission to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT).

Draft Statewide Ten Year Plan Prepared
(May – December of Odd Years)
May – July: NHDOT prepares the draft Statewide Ten-Year Plan, using the information provided by each RPC for submission to the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT).
July – December: GACIT amends the Ten-Year Plan after a series of statewide public hearings and submits it to the Governor.

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Ten-Year Highway Plan

FY 2011- FY 2020 SNHPC Projects

1. **Bedford 13953 – NH 101** – Widen to 5 lanes for approximately 2 miles from NH 114 to Wallace Road
2. **Derry/Londonderry 13065 – I-93** – Construction of Exit 4A – New interchange between existing Exit 4 and Exit 5
3. **Londonderry – NH 28 – NH 28/NH 128 Intersection improvement project**
4. **Derry – NH 28** – Intersection improvements at Kilrea Road and Windham Depot Road
5. **Londonderry – Pettingill Road**, Roadway and infrastructure project
6. **Chester** – Engineering study – **NH 102/NH 121 Intersection**
7. **Londonderry – NH 102 – NH 102/NH 128 Intersection improvement project**
8. **Chester – NH 102/North Pond Road** – Intersection reconstruction
9. **Merrimack-Bedford – 13761** – Widen turnpike to 3-lane typical from Exit 11 in Merrimack to the Bedford Toll Plaza
10. **Londonderry – NH 28** – Widen from two lanes to five lanes - I-93 Exit 5 to Page Road
11. **Londonderry/Derry – 13791** – Shoulders and upgrade drainage from **NH 128** in Londonderry to Derry Compact Line

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I-293 Exits 6 and 7

• Renew interest of the interchange improvements of Exits 6 and 7
  – Safety and Congestion
  – Discussions with Manchester, Hooksett, Goffstown, Bow and Dunbarton
  – Discussions with NH DOT, Executive Council, and Governor: 10-Year Plan
Project Description

– Designed to
  1. identify the transportation land-use related impacts of increased access to the airport access road,
  2. determine if additional planned/proposed development will generate levels of traffic in excess of anticipated capacity

Goals

– Promote safe, efficient, accessible, and diverse multi-modal transportation solution for services and goods
– Ensure continuation of strong municipal services so they continue to provide quality services and meet projected growth
Contamination of the region’s rivers, lakes and ponds can be the result of many actions. Polluted runoff from the land poses one of the largest threats. Urban and suburban land uses, construction activities, septic systems, the use of lawn fertilizers all impact the region’s water quality.

Groundwater is an important natural resource and source of drinking water. To be productive as a water supply source, water must be allowed to flow through and infiltrate the region’s underlying aquifers. As the region develops and the land becomes covered by pavement and buildings, the natural recharge and water quality of these important sources of drinking water may become threatened. There are many high-risk land uses that can also threaten our groundwater.

While New Hampshire remains the second-most forested state in the nation following Maine, forest cover has been steadily decreasing since the early 1980s. Much of this loss is driven by land development. By 2025, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forest predicts the greatest loss of forestland will occur in southeastern New Hampshire. This could accelerate the demise of critical wildlife habitat and sustainable forest management.
Natural Resources - Goals

Protect the region’s natural resources for existing and future generations.

Natural resources have a significant role, both in terms of ecological functions and values as well sustaining the region’s overall environment and quality of life.
New Scientific Assessment and River Simulation Modeling Study

**Purpose:** To allow NH DES, EPA, water supply and wastewater systems, local communities and industries make informed management and regulatory decisions regarding water quality, water supply withdrawals, aquatic habitat, hydroelectric and flood storage.

**Distance:** Mass state line to Lincoln, NH

**Funding:** 50% Federal and 50% State & Local

**Consultant:** Camp Dresser & McKee Inc.

**Time Frame:** Three years
Proposed Scientific Groundwater Assessment and Availability Study

**Purpose:** To allow NH DES, EPA, water supply systems, local communities and industries make informed management and regulatory decisions regarding groundwater availability, supply and quality.

**Phase I:** Southern NH and Nashua Regions – 25% currently served by groundwater

**Requested Funding:** 60% Federal and 40% State and Local

**Time Frame:** Three years

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Natural Resources

• **Source Water Protection Plans**: NH DES Grant Program
  - Weare: Draft under review by NH DES and town
  - Raymond: Technical Review Committee in progress
  - Goffstown: Work to begin Fall 2009

• **Riparian Buffer Studies/Ordinance Recommendations** – Piscataqua Region Estuaries Grant Program:
  Buffer ordinance to be proposed to Raymond planning board

• **Piscataquog River Management Plan Update** – NH DES 604(b) – existing plan currently being updated to reflect new regulations, studies and programs.

• **Piscataquog Watershed Conservation Plan** – NH DES
  Stimulus funding received to develop land conservation plan for watershed.
Source Water Protection Plans

Completed: Town of Hooksett

Currently in Progress: Deerfield, New Boston, Candia and Chester

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Brownfields Program

• **Existing EPA Grant**: $200,000 grant for assisting eligible brownfields petroleum contaminated properties for phase one and two environmental assessment work. The goal is to help seek reuse or redevelopment of sites.

• **New EPA Grant**: $400,000 grant for assisting both petroleum and hazardous contaminated sites – to also include remediation action planning. Three-year grant program to expire in 2012.
Energy - Issues

- More work and education is needed in energy conservation and efficiency to significantly decrease demand for non-sustainable energy supplies that are becoming increasingly more expensive. Communities have an opportunity to take a lead role in educating the public and encouraging energy conservation and energy efficiency at the local level. However, community participation in these efforts has been limited to date.

- Businesses and government, two of the largest energy consumers, need to be better informed about the environmental impact of energy consumption so that they can make more informed and sustainable decisions.

- Local supplies of sustainable energy do not exist nor does a general understanding of energy sustainability, both of which will be essential to reduce dependence on foreign energy supplies and susceptibility to global downturns and reduce demand for non-sustainable energy.
Actively promote energy conservation and strive for sustainable energy, since energy is integral to the economic and environmental well-being of our region.

Access to secure, affordable supplies of energy is required for almost every activity of private citizens, business and government. This can be achieved through conservation and promoting development of local and regional sustainable and renewable energy sources.
Energy Conservation and Reduction of Carbon Emissions

- Community Energy Challenge

- Energy Efficient Development Model Ordinance

- Partnerships - GMCC’s Green Committee and PSNH and Joint GMCC and City of Manchester Sustainability Committee.
Public Utilities and Communication - Issues

- Projected growth of the region will necessitate increased accessibility and expansion of public utilities and communication facilities.
- The Merrimack River holds the key to the region’s future growth. The river will be needed in the near future as both a major water supply source for the region as well as a point of increased wastewater treatment discharge.
- Septage Disposal, Solid Waste and Stormwater Management utilities are also becoming costly issues for local government.
• Support local and regional efforts to provide greater accessibility to public utilities and communication for all residences and the provision of adequate water and sewer capacity to facilitate economic development.
  
  – Public utilities and communication are important lifelines for economic prosperity and development.
  
  – The region cannot grow effectively and efficiently without adequate water systems, wastewater treatment, solid waste facilities, and communications.