



# Strafford Regional Planning Commission News

*"Planning and action for sustainable development and an improved quality of life"*

AUGUST 2004

## Regional Master Plan Policies Adopted

On May 25th, 2004 SRPC Commissioners held their Annual Meeting in Rochester at the Frisbie Community Education and Conference Center and adopted the following sections and appendices of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission Master Plan:

- Sections on: Water Resources, Land Use, and Housing
- Appendices— Regional Housing Needs Assessment, and Nonpoint Source Water Quality Protection Analyses

## Non Point Source Pollution Prevention

Non point source water pollution is the leading source of water quality problems in the United States. Feasible, practical measures can be taken by your community to protect water quality. These measures were incorporated into the land use and water resources sections of the Regional Master Plan to guide the region and municipalities.

## Regional Housing Needs Assessment

The Regional Housing Needs Assessment provides information on projected need for housing units within the region and individual communities through 2010. The Regional Housing Policies were adopted to help achieve SRPC's goal of sustainable development in the region. Sustainable development balances the needs for market rate, workforce, and affordable housing with goals for economic development and environmental protection.

You may download the Regional Master Plan at [www.strafford.org](http://www.strafford.org). It is on the homepage on the left hand side. It is also available at each municipality's Planning Board, Clerk's Office, and Library. Questions—call Gerald Mylroie, Senior Land Use Planner, 603-742-2523, extension 108.

## Regional Environmental Planning Program

SRPC completed two new regional data sets for the Regional Indicators section of this grant: the Town Centers and the Destinations layers. These data sets are base information for evaluation of indicators of sprawl development. Another REPP task was to update the Local Resource Protection Priorities (LRPP) GIS data layer, originally created six years ago. This layer was created by municipalities to identify their priorities for natural and cultural resource protection. The update uses a consistent methodology across the state for identifying conservation priorities in a regional context. The goal is a data layer that is useful for local planning and conservation efforts and in developing regional conservation and development plans. Copies of these data layers and maps are available by calling Ti Crossman, our Senior GIS Analyst at 603-742-2523, extension 110.

## Hazard Mitigation Plans Adopted!

Hazard Mitigation is any action taken to reduce or eliminate the long term risk to human life and property from natural hazards. We prepared Hazard Mitigation Plans this year for the Towns of Farmington, New Durham, and Strafford. These three plans are currently under review by the respective Local Hazard Mitigation Committees before being opened for public comment, and subsequently sent to FEMA for approval. Congratulations are in order for the other five communities for which Plans have already been prepared: Barrington, Dover, Rochester, Rollinsford, and Somersworth. FEMA gave preliminary approval (all but local adoption) to all of these plans. The Somersworth City Council adopted the City's Plan in June. Great Work! Barrington is currently scheduling adoption proceedings. Once a plan is adopted, it is operational and officially qualifies a community for FEMA hazard mitigation funding.

**NOTICE:** Are you interested in receiving our mailings electronically? Please send your e-mail address to [srpc@strafford.org](mailto:srpc@strafford.org)! Thank you!

## Notice of Public Information Meeting & Public Hearing on Regional Master Plan Amendments

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING:**

Land Use: Open Space Conservation/Cluster Development Policies and Model Ordinance Proposals  
Transportation: Access Management Policies Proposal

The meeting will take place on *Tuesday, August 24, 2004 – 7PM* at the Frisbie Community Education & Conference Center Belknap Room, Rochester, NH. Copies are available at the SRPC Office or visit [www.strafford.org](http://www.strafford.org).

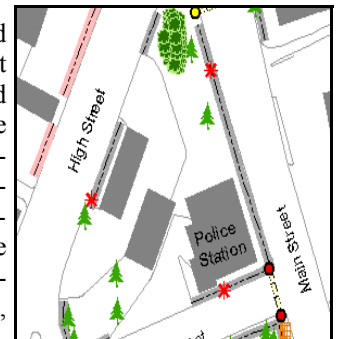
### **PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMISSION ACTION**

*Tuesday, September 28, 2004 - 7PM (Same location)*

*Please RSVP to Penny Finnegan at 603-742-2523, or [srpc@strafford.org](mailto:srpc@strafford.org)*

## Community Development Finance Authority Program (CDFA)

SRPC is providing GIS-based assistance to two Main Street communities – Dover and Somersworth. To the right is the pedestrian amenities and infrastructure improvements layer developed for the use of Somersworth Main Street and for the City and its transportation projects. For Dover Main Street, SRPC is mapping building improvements and building turnover data from 2000 through 2003. These data come from the monthly Main Street status reports.



## SRPC Logo & Website Redesign Coming!

With a grant from the Community Foundation of the Greater Piscataqua Community Foundation, our website will be redesigned as well as our logo. Julia Belshaw, of J. RED Digital Arts in Durham, is working with SRPC staff on these two projects. The goal of the website redesign is to extend the reach of our programs to a greater audience and to provide easier access to important documents. If you have any ideas about features or information that you would like included in our website, contact Penny at [srpc@strafford.org](mailto:srpc@strafford.org), or call 603-742-2523.

## NHMA Municipal Law Lecture Series

Once again SRPC will host the Law Lecture Series at the Newmarket Town Hall Auditorium. The dates are Wednesday, October 13, 20, and 27 from 7 to 9 pm. The registration form may be downloaded at [www.strafford.org](http://www.strafford.org). See you there!

## Need Funding for Outdoor Recreation Project?

The federal grant program for Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCP) is open through November 5, 2004. These 50/50 grant funds can be used to develop facilities or acquire land for public outdoor recreation activities. Projects are limited to a maximum of \$100,000 and a minimum of \$12,000 in federal funds. By October 8, 2004, any project applicant must have filed an intent form. This allows time for a required onsite project review with NH DRED staff. Contact Shari Colby, Office of Recreation Services, at 603-271-3556, [scolby@dred.state.nh.us](mailto:scolby@dred.state.nh.us). Or visit [www.nhstateparks.org](http://www.nhstateparks.org).

*Red Sox Nation: October play is still a possibility...*



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### **Route 108 Shoulder Project Improves Cycling**

An important step in developing a comprehensive regional bicycle network is complete. In July, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation completed the addition of 4 foot shoulders to each side of Route 108 in Durham. New shoulders were added north of the Route 4 by-pass between Canney Road and Bagdad Road. This project completes a missing link for safe bicycle travel between Dover and Durham and ties into the Wildcat bike route improvements completed by the City of Dover and UNH in 2003. Complete and extensive plantings by NHDOT compliment this project and make for a pleasant cycling and driving experience.



Additional shoulder improvements are planned on Route 108 between Newmarket and Newfields in 2006 and between the Oyster River in Durham and Dame Road in Newmarket in 2008. These projects will provide complete and safe bicycle travel on the west side of Great Bay.

### **Seacoast MPO Updates FY05-07 TIP & Plan**

As required under the provisions of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), MPO staff is updating the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY 2005-2007. Concurrently, an air quality analysis is underway to ensure that the projects in the TIP meet federal air quality conformity standards.

The 2005 –2007 TIP is a prioritized list of projects in the Seacoast MPO region scheduled for construction during the FY 2005-2007 period. TEA-21 requires an update to the TIP every two years to ensure consistency with the State Ten Year Transportation Plan.

In addition, the MPO staff is updating the project list from the Seacoast MPO Long Range Transportation Plan. The long-range project list horizon is being extended to the year 2025 to comply with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

The FY 2005-2007 TIP, Long Range Project List and associated air quality analysis will be made available for public review in late August. They will be presented at a public hearing and to the MPO Policy Committee in early fall.

MPO staff has started the update of the Prospectus, the procedural document for the MPO.

### **2004 Traffic Counts Underway**

The Strafford Regional Planning Commission started its annual traffic data collection program. Traffic count data will be collected at 180 locations throughout the SRPC region through September. These traffic counts are vital for improving transportation and land use planning activities. As of July 31<sup>st</sup> more than 40 locations have been counted in the communities of Newmarket, Barrington, Strafford, Northwood and Farmington.

Traffic count data is used in assessing regional air quality. During the summer months the Seacoast region experiences some of the poorest air quality in the northeast. Traffic data is essential for air quality modeling and designing transportation and transit projects that will improve air quality in our region.

Additionally, traffic count data is referenced during land use development decisions. Comparisons are made between past traffic data to assess growth in the region and justify the need for roadway improvement projects.

Residents may notice black hoses stretched across the road at various locations. These hoses are similar to those at a full service gas station. When a vehicle drives over the hose a pulse of air is delivered to an Automatic Traffic Recorder (ATR) that is secured at the side of the road. The ATR and hoses are placed at a location for a five to seven day period and will count the number of vehicles traveling the road during that time.

### **Travel Demand Model Update**

The update of the Travel Demand Model is complete. This effort incorporated a shift to TransCAD modeling software. TransCAD is a GIS based modeling package that allows new and improved capabilities, such as corridor analysis and sub-area model work. The model is currently being used to forecast vehicle miles traveled and to develop emission estimates for air quality conformity analysis. The results of this analysis are used in adopting the FY 2005-2007 TIP for the Seacoast MPO.

As part of the model update, *AM peak* and *off peak* models were developed to complement the existing *PM peak* model. The addition of the AM peak and off peak models improves the precision of the 24-hour analysis necessary for determining air quality conformity.

For more information, please contact Tim Roache, Senior Transportation Planner at 603-742-2523, ext 106, or [troache@strafford.org](mailto:troache@strafford.org). Contact Dale Abbott, GIS/Transportation Analyst, at 603-742-2523, ext 114, or [dabbott@strafford.org](mailto:dabbott@strafford.org). for traffic counts, road inventory, and other transportation data requests.