

Town of Auburn, NH
CTAP Community Planning Road Map



**Prepared for the I-93
Community Technical Assistance Program**

**Adopted by Auburn Planning Board
July 1, 2009**

Introduction

The development of this **Community Planning Road Map** is part of the I-93 Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP). The CTAP program is a New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) **5 year** initiative to assist **26 communities** that will be affected by the rebuilding and expansion of Interstate 93. These 26 communities include: Allenstown, Atkinson, Auburn, Candia, Bow, Candia, Chester, Concord, Danville, Deerfield, Derry, Dunbarton, Fremont, Goffstown, Hampstead, Hooksett, Hudson, Litchfield, Candia, Manchester, Pelham, Raymond, Salem, and Sandown (see following Attachment A, CTAP area map).

The purpose of CTAP is to promote beneficial patterns of growth among all 26 communities to minimize the negative effects of growth on community services, open space, school systems, traffic, environmental quality, and existing residential and commercial development. More information about the CTAP program is available at the NH DOT website at: www.nhctap.com and in the attached CTAP brochure.

CTAP is coordinated by NH DOT, four of the state's regional planning commissions (Central, Nashua, Rockingham and Southern New Hampshire), as well as a number of non-governmental organizations such as the Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests as directed by a CTAP Steering Committee made up of representatives from each of these groups.

CTAP consists of three main planning stages:

- 1. Community Planning Assessment**
A questionnaire designed to help communities determine where they are on the planning curve and where their current planning and zoning will take them in the future.
- 2. Visioning and Planning**
The process in which a community pictures the future it wants and plans how to achieve it.
- 3. Implementation**
Utilizing the community assessment and existing community plans actions are developed and implemented that move the community forward to its ultimate vision.

Currently, the CTAP program is moving into the Visioning and Planning and Implementation stages via the **CTAP Community Planning Road Map**. The CTAP Community Planning Road Map is designed to engage communities in evaluating how they can achieve their planning goals using the planning products, resources and services available to them through the CTAP program.

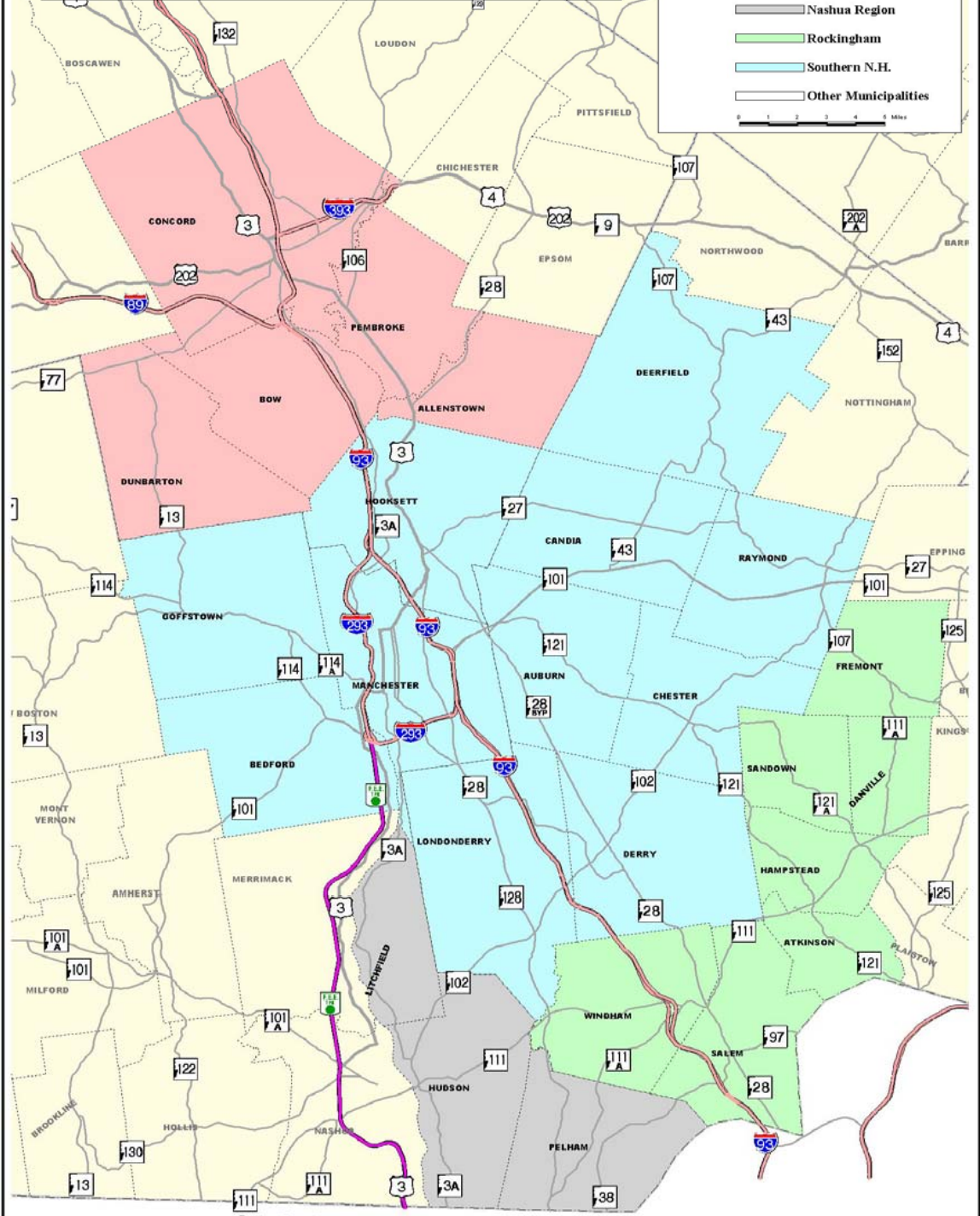
The Community Technical Assistance Program Dealing with Growth

New Hampshire DOT
 Department of Transportation

LEGEND
 Study Municipalities by Regional Planning Commissions

- Central N.H.
- Nashua Region
- Rockingham
- Southern N.H.
- Other Municipalities

0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles



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This **CTAP Community Planning Road Map** prepared for the Town of Auburn identifies and sets forth recommendations and priority actions to guide the town's current and future participation in the CTAP program.

Because Year One of the CTAP program is nearing completion (Year 1 of the program officially ends as of April 2009), this Community Planning Road Map is designed to guide and help assist the Town of Auburn in applying for future CTAP grant funds and utilizing future CTAP resources.

Road Map Planning Process

Development of the CTAP Community Planning Road Map consists of three simple steps:

1. Initial Community Engagement Meeting

This meeting is held in each community to: (1) reintroduce CTAP to community officials; (2) evaluate CTAP products that have been developed for each community to date; and (3) develop a prioritized action plan for the community.

2. Road Map Planning Process

Communities select either the "Plan A" or "Plan B" planning process:

- Plan A: Consists of a pre-meeting review and screening of the Community Planning Assessment; facilitating a public workshop to evaluate recommendations; and developing an action plan.
- Plan B: Consists of an internal review process in which town officials, planning board members, the regional planning commission, CTAP representatives and planning commissioners met to complete a Road Map Plan for the community.

3. Concluding Presentation

The purpose of the concluding presentation is to present the CTAP Community Road Map to the public at an all boards meeting and to describe what it consists of and how it can be implemented.

Auburn's CTAP Community Planning Road Map

The Town of Auburn's Community Planning Road Map is provided in the following attachment. A summary of the Road Map and how it was developed follows.

TOWN OF AUBURN, NH COMMUNITY PLANNING ROADMAP

Assessment

Completed

- Community Planning Assessment
- Enhanced GIS-based Information
- Open Space Assessment
- Community Build-out Analysis and Alternatives

In Progress

- Economic Assets Profile

Future

- Grant-Writing Assistance

Visioning/Planning

Completed

- Conservation Commission Institute

In Progress

- Land Use/Transportation Connection
- Open Space Plan Update
- Wastewater Feasibility Study

Future

- Local Government Workshops
- Economic Development Plan

Implementation

Short term (1–3 years)

- **Wastewater Feasibility Study**
- Economic Development Plan
- Update Town's CIP
- Update Planning Board's Site Plan Regulations
- Develop Dark Skies Ordinance

Medium term (3–5 years)

- Develop Groundwater/Aquifer Protection Regulations
- Roadway Management
- Wetlands Conservation Overlay
- Municipal Office Feasibility Study

Longer term (5–10 years)

- Examine Access Management Tools – Subdivision Regulations
- Historic Markers

Note: Blue highlighted text indicates that these projects are currently being or will be addressed through CTAP program resources

Developing Auburn's Community Planning Road Map

In developing Auburn's CTAP Community Planning Road Map, town officials selected the "Plan A" road map planning process. The "Plan A" road map process consisted of an internal review and screening of the Community Planning Assessment (see following Executive Summary and Summary of Recommendations as well as the following Impact/Feasibility Grid) to create the Road Map. This Road Map was then presented to the Planning Board and the public as part of a concluding presentation held on July 1, 2009 at which time the Auburn Planning Board adopted the Road Map.

The following Auburn Town Officials, Conservation Commission and Planning Board members, CTAP representatives, and staff of the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission participated at a facilitated public meeting held at the Auburn Town Offices on March 26, 2009:

Stoney Worster, Planning Board Chair
James Tillery, Vice Chair, Planning Board
Alan Cote, Planning Board
Jeffrey Benson, Planning Board
Carol Peterson, Planning Board
Ronald Poltak, Planning Board
Paul Raiche, Board of Selectmen and Conservation Commission
Charles Joy, Conservation Commission
Alan Villeneuve, Conservation Commission
Jeff Porter, Conservation Commission
Bill Herman, Town Administrator
Denise Royce, Planning Board Secretary
Jack Munn, Southern New Hampshire Planning staff

As a result of this meeting, the following important planning goals and projects for the Town of Auburn were identified and discussed, including:

- Update Town's CIP
- Develop access management tools as part of Town's subdivision regulations
- Develop a Wetlands Conservation Overlay
- Develop an Economic Development Plan/Strategies
- Update Planning Board's Site Plan Regulations
- Develop a Dark Sky Ordinance
- Install Historic Marker signs throughout town
- Wastewater Feasibility Study
- Municipal Office Building Feasibility Study
- Roadway Management Program
- Develop Groundwater/Aquifer Protection Regulations

Projects currently in progress or recently completed by the town include the following:

- Develop standards for various residential lot sizes
- Create regulations for wildlife protection
- Create density regulations for various types of development
- Develop and adopt a Village Center Zoning District
- Establish an Inclusionary Housing and Age-Restricted Housing Ordinance

Also recognized at the meeting are the CTAP work products which have been completed for Town of Auburn to date, including the Community Planning Assessment; enhanced GIS-based information (land use and aerial photo mapping); Conservation Commission Institute workshops, and a recent open space planning assessment prepared by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF). In addition, SNHPC staff described the CTAP work products currently in progress, such as a PowerPoint presentation on the connection between land use and transportation.

IMPACT:
How much will it matter?

High
Moderate
Low

			Roadway Management Wetlands Conservation Overlay
Municipal Office Building Feasibility Study	Dark Sky Ordinance Update PB Site Plan Regulations Groundwater/Aquifer Protection Economic Development Plan	Update Town's CIP	
	Historic Markers	Access Management Tools/Subdivision Regulations	

Low Moderate High

FEASIBILITY: How possible is it in our community?



Key Elements of Auburn's CTAP Community Planning Road Map

Auburn's CTAP Community Planning Road Map is divided into three parts: projects which have been completed; projects in progress; and future projects (Short Term, Medium Term and Longer Term).

In the Short Term (1-3 years), the Southern New Hampshire Planning will continue to provide Auburn with assistance in updating open space plan and complete economic assets profile for the community.

Both the Open Space Plan and economic assets profiles are currently funded through the CTAP program. In addition, the Town of Auburn intends to apply for a CTAP Target Grant to continue Phase II of its existing wastewater feasibility study. In addition, the Town of Auburn has agreed to use its collaborative CTAP grant to assist the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission in developing a regional economic development plan.

Auburn's CTAP Community Planning Road Map also recommends several additional Short Term projects, including:

- Update Town's CIP
- Update Planning Board's Site Plan Regulations
- Develop Dark Sky Ordinance

In the Medium Term (3-5 years), the Road Map recommends that the Town of Auburn consider the following:

- Groundwater/Aquifer Protection Regulations
- Roadway Management Program
- Wetlands Conservation Overlay
- Municipal Office Building Feasibility Study

In the Longer Term (5-10 years), the Road Map suggests that the Town of Auburn pursue:

- Access Management Tools/Subdivision Regulations
- Historic Markers for historic sites in town

A summary of current available CTAP programs and resources is provided in the following attachment.

COMMUNITY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CTAP: helping communities in the I-93 corridor to proactively plan for growth



The **Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP)** provides resources and tools to help NH communities take a proactive role in achieving the future they desire. CTAP is designed to assist communities with the changes that will arise from the I-93 expansion as well as ongoing growth in the region. By taking a proactive approach to planning, CTAP helps communities to minimize the negative effects of growth on community services, remaining open space, schools, traffic patterns, environmental quality, and existing residential & commercial development.



The CTAP process follows three main stages, each with its own set of programs and resources. The first stage is **Assessment**, which helps communities to determine where they are and where their current planning and zoning will take them in the future. Once assessments have been made, communities can use this information to begin the second stage, **Visioning and Planning**. Visioning is the process in which a community pictures the future it wants and plans how to achieve it. The final stage of the CTAP process is **Implementation**. Implementation takes the assessments and plans that have been developed and turns them into actions that move the community towards its ultimate vision.

ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS

Assessment is the first stage in the CTAP process. It helps communities to determine where they are and where their current planning and zoning will take them in the future.

Community Planning Assessment ~ an expert analysis of your community's current planning status and a roadmap to help you make the best use of CTAP programs. Assessments review a wide range of information including existing zoning and regulations, capital improvement plans, open space plans, and master plans.

Economic Assets Profile ~ an inventory of local assets is key to a solid economic development plan. This program will inventory all assets in your community and incorporate additional data to provide a regional snapshot that will help formulate a long range strategic economic plan.

Community Build-out Analysis and Alternatives ~ using enhanced GIS, this program provides build-out views of your community based on current zoning regulations as well as alternative scenarios under different zoning options. These community analyses will be combined to show how the entire region will be affected by the I-93 expansion and local growth decisions.

Open Space Assessment ~ the Regional Planning Commissions and the Society for the Protection of NH Forests (SPNHF) will work with your community to identify and map land that should remain undeveloped and create ecologically, financially, and legally viable strategies for the protection of these lands.

Enhanced GIS-based Information ~ using the latest land use and conservation GIS data, this program will prepare an updated Natural Services Network for the CTAP region that identifies critical natural services such as water supply, flood control, forestry and agricultural soils, and wildlife habitat. Your community can then use this information to guide both development and conservation practices.



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VISIONING & PLANNING PROGRAMS

Once assessments have been made, communities can use this information to begin Visioning and Planning. Visioning is the process in which a community pictures the future it wants and plans how to achieve it.

Transportation & Land Use Integration Planning ~ this program assists communities in developing a better way to integrate and deliver transportation and land-use planning in and across local and regional master plans.

Open Space & Conservation Planning ~ by identifying open space locations and recommending methods to preserve them, this program will assist your community in improving, enhancing, or creating an open space plan that fits seamlessly into your Master Plan.

High Priority Natural Resource Protection Plan ~ using zoning, regulatory, and voluntary techniques that have worked elsewhere, this program provides the most up-to-date methods to protect high-priority natural resources identified in your Open Space Plan. A public outreach and education component is available to help others see the value of future land use planning.

Agricultural Resources Assistance ~ training and startup technical assistance is available through CTAP for newly formed Local Agricultural Commissions, whose purpose is to promote, protect, and enhance local agriculture and agricultural resources. In addition, a mini-grant program can help your community to create an Agricultural Commission or develop and implement work plans for an established Commission.

Local Government Workshops ~ designed for 3-4 towns to identify and discuss common planning problems and solutions, including those that cross regional boundaries. Workshop topics can be geared to your specific needs.

Conservation Commission Institute ~ a year long series of regional training sessions for those serving on Conservation Commissions. Topics vary based on community needs, but may include land conservation, support for working landscapes, and preservation of local agriculture. A regional environmental protection roundtable will be established to encourage communication, education, and a regional approach to environmental issues.



IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

The final stage of the CTAP process is Implementation. Implementation takes the assessments and plans that have been developed and turns them into actions that move the community towards its ultimate vision.

Innovative Training for Local Government Officials ~ this program provides your local government officials with customized training on topics that address the interests and needs of your community. Innovative delivery methods will be utilized, including discussion boards, post-training support, customized 1-on-1 training, and peer-to-peer training.

Discretionary/Targeted Local Funding ~ your community has access to upwards of \$10,000 for activities that are consistent with CTAP goals but not already covered by CTAP funding. Your local Regional Planning Commission will counsel you on how the funds may be spent.

Local CTAP Collaborative Grants ~ funding is available for two or more local governments to pursue a collaborative project that addresses an immediate concern to their communities and helps to achieve the broad goals of CTAP.

Grant Writing Assistance ~ a Grant Resources Guide, grant workshops, and grant consultation are available to help you prepare proposals for non-CTAP grants that support goals & objectives identified in the CTAP strategic planning process.

Affordable Housing Initiatives ~ the Inclusionary Zoning Implementation Program (IZIP) was created by the NH Housing Finance Authority to provide communities with direct technical assistance grants to address shortages in workforce housing by developing and adopting inclusionary zoning ordinances. CTAP funds will be used to leverage IZIP technical assistance for CTAP communities on a competitive basis.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community Assessment Report

This report is a summary of the CTAP Community Planning Assessment which was completed using the gathered information from the Community Planning Assessment Questionnaire. This questionnaire is attached at the end of the Final Summary

History and Purpose:

The Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) is in the second year of a five-year process. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT) initiated CTAP to provide support to communities projected to experience growth as a result of the Interstate 93 Expansion Project. The goal of the first phase of the program is to conduct Community Planning Assessments of those municipalities designated by the NH DOT as most likely to be affected by the expected increase in population. There are 26 CTAP-designated communities from Salem to Concord and a Community Planning Assessment has been conducted for each town. Eleven of these municipalities are located within the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission Region and include Auburn, Bedford, Candia, Chester, Deerfield, Derry, Goffstown, Hooksett, Londonderry, Manchester, and Raymond. The primary purpose of the Community Planning Assessment is to identify the policies and regulations these municipalities currently have in place to effectively prepare and manage growth.

Process:

The Community Planning Assessment consists of more than 100 questions. The survey is centered on the following four major planning themes:

- A. – Community Infrastructure and Regional Cooperation
- B. – Environmental Protection, Land Use, and Open Space
- C. – Downtowns, Village Centers, and Community Vitality
- D. - The Local Economy

The Steering Committee of the CTAP determined that the questions developed from these themes should address most of the growth concerns of municipalities affected by the Interstate 93 Expansion Project. The attached Community Planning Assessment for the town of Auburn, New Hampshire was completed through a review by Town officials, planning Board members, and staff at the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission. The results are intended to provide community leaders and municipal officials with a basis to make decisions concerning the implementation of policies to address potential growth issues. These results are identified in this Executive Summary.

Findings:

The major planning needs and weaknesses identified by the Community Planning Assessment prepared for the Town of Auburn, New Hampshire are listed as follows:

- **Lack of Age Restricted Ordinance**
- **Lack of traffic calming techniques**
- **Lack of future utilities planning**
- **Lack of Aquifer protection ordinance**

- **Does not provide for range of lot sizes, only 2; Rural and Industrial**
- **Site Plan regulations**
- **Lack of Open Space Plan**

Key Recommendations:

The Community Assessment Report that follows contains an analysis of the findings and recommendations concerning how to best address growth policy initiatives in your community.

- **Update CIP in summer 2007**
- **Use of elderly exemption**
- **Update housing goals to include affordable and workforce housing**
- **Street and lot layout adapted to topography (Subdivision Regulation Road Standards)**
- **Use of access management tools in Rural Planning Area**
- **Include allowance and standards for various lot sizes**
- **Develop Aquifer Protection Ordinance and Wetlands Conservation District**
- **Create regulations within community to protect wildlife or wildlife habitat**
- **Create Open Space Plan**

The Town of Auburn is currently in the process of updating its master plan, the most recent one having been completed in 2002. The town's CIP will be updated during the summer of 2007. Current issues that Auburn needs to address include elderly exemption making it possible for elderly to move into, as well as, continue to live in town. Auburn does currently have housing designated for persons 62 years and older. Within the new master plan the Vision and Goals chapter will include providing affordable and workforce housing which will allow for more diverse housing options. Auburn's Road standards require street and lot layout to be adaptive to the topography of the land. One major issue that Auburn needs to address is the standards for various lot sizes. Currently only two standard lot sizes exist, Rural and Industrial. Because of the future increase in population and town growth there needs to be a larger number of lot size standards to accommodate various types of housing, businesses, and industrial. By doing so all types of growth can be allowed but it will be smart growth that won't detract from the town.

Steps need to be taken in Auburn to protect water sources. Important programs such as an Aquifer Protection Ordinance do not exist as well as a wetlands conservation district. Water sources are easily affected by new growth of any form so by creating these protection plans it will give the town a foundation to enforce water protection on. Standards can be set as well as sites that will require specific attention. Along with water sources, wildlife is impacted by loss of land and environment changes. Since wildlife is an important aspect of a functioning ecosystem a wildlife habitat or wildlife protection plan would be a worthy thing for the town of Auburn to develop. Lastly, an Open Space Plan would be important in evaluating the current open land and conservation areas that Auburn has and would allow for them to be prioritized for protection issues that will arise as the expansion of I-93 continues to develop.

CTAP COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

Part I

Introduction

The Community Technical Assistance Project (CTAP) was implemented in an attempt to help member communities grapple with potential growth issues due to the expansion of Interstate 93. The first phase of the five-year process was to conduct Community Assessments of those municipalities most likely to experience growth due to the expansion of I-93. The ultimate goal of the Community Assessment process is to determine whether communities have policies and regulations in place to manage potential growth effectively.

The I-93 expansion is projected to last until 2012. In an effort to minimize the effects of potential growth, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT) identified 26 municipalities as areas most likely to be impacted. Eleven of these communities are located in the Southern New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (SNHPC) area and include Auburn, Bedford, Candia, Chester, Deerfield, Derry, Goffstown, Hooksett, Londonderry, Manchester, and Raymond.

Potential growth impacts for these CTAP communities could include, among others, an increase in population, traffic, and a greater demand for housing. Consequently, if growth does occur in some or all of these areas, increased demand in municipal services across the board will be expected. CTAP communities will have to plan accordingly.

More than 100 questions were developed by professional planners and municipal officials involved in the CTAP process in an effort to determine if CTAP communities have policies and regulations in place to adequately address potential growth issues. These assessment questions were answered by reviewing existing town websites, ordinances, regulations, and city policies. These assessment questions were also answered with the help of municipal planners and other officials in each community. The questions are grouped around the following four themes which were approved by the CTAP Steering Committee according to the overall goals of the program

- Community Infrastructure and Regional Cooperation
- Environmental Protection, Land Use, and Open Space
- Downtown/Village Centers and Community Vitality
- Local Economy

Many of the assessment questions provided insight as to the status of the community's growth policies and the vision of the CTAP community towards its future development. The questions deal with many different planning issues including land use and mixed-use policies, zoning, minimum-lot requirements, historical preservation, open space, environmental protection, housing, water quality, economic development, and transportation. Another purpose of the assessment was to gauge the level at which public participation is present in each of the communities.

Prior to the publication of this report, municipal officials and Planning Board members of the Town of Auburn were asked to review the preliminary findings of the community planning assessment and any possible growth issues that may have come to light as a result of conducting the survey. This was accomplished at a regular scheduled meeting of the Bedford Planning Board. The assessment questions provided discussion venues where municipal officials and planning board members could voice concerns and ask questions.

In developing this report, the SNHPC considered the insights, concerns, and recommendations offered as well as other communications provided throughout the process and has included these where appropriate. As a result, this report should be viewed as a starting point or as a guide for future planning activities and goals. A copy of the Community Planning Assessment prepared for Auburn is attached.

Part II

Theme A

Community Infrastructure and Regional Cooperation

The purpose of this theme was to determine how the CTAP community has planned for the future in terms of the provision and funding for increased municipal services. This may include new facilities and other infrastructure improvements to help meet these needs. In addition, Theme A analyzed how effective communities have been, and will be, regarding regional cooperation with other local municipalities in an effort to better serve constituents. Special attention was given to communication strategies and cooperation initiatives between communities within regions.

Theme A generated 42 questions dealing with the funding and delivery of municipal services, regional cooperation among local governments, housing, and transportation.

The Steering Committee identified a number of broad goals that CTAP-designated communities should strive to accomplish which are outlined below:

Goals

- Promote the establishment of consistent funding approaches to help pay for improved and expanding public infrastructure and services. Local governments should make certain that their funding strategies are adequate to meet the new level of service provision to meet projected growth needs.
- Evaluate the need for regional cooperation between local governments. Regional approaches can often embellish the delivery of public services and environmental quality, avoid the possible duplication of services, and better allocate financial resources.
- Plan for an adequate supply of housing. The housing stock should reflect local needs and priorities and include housing for a range of income levels.
- Implement strategies to promote safe and efficient multi-modal transportation systems.

Findings:

- **The Town of Auburn regularly participates in mutual aid for police and fire, regional school, however there is no public water or sewer**
- **The Town of Bedford does not utilize Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIFD) or the Community Reinvestment and Opportunity Program (CROP) zones to help fund or stimulate infrastructure improvement in specific areas of the community**

- **The Town CIP was last adopted in 1985 for the period of 1985-1990. The CIP is scheduled to be updated this summer 2007 by the SNHPC**
- **The town has not planned for the provision of future utilities**
- **The community has no specific dark skies lighting ordinance**
- **The Town's zoning ordinance allows for cluster development**
- **Currently no regulations that encourage the implementation of traffic calming techniques**
- **Town lacks an inclusionary housing ordinance**

Recommendations:

The Town of Auburn could benefit in the future by considering TIFDs or CROP zones to help fund needed infrastructure improvements within specific areas of the community. Bonds should also be an option in considering future infrastructure development. The town should begin to plan for the provision of future utilities. The Town may also consider the establishment of a Housing Commission to continue to keep abreast of housing issues and strategies. In addition, the town has no specific dark skies ordinance. Developing such an ordinance would be beneficial in helping to reduce overall light glare and improve star gazing within the community.

Theme B

Environmental Protection, Land Use, and Open Space

The purpose of this theme was to determine how the CTAP community has planned for the protection of land in a way that is consistent and compatible with future growth trends. To achieve these goals communities must focus on future land use strategies and determine how these would help to promote the preservation of natural resources, open space, and environmental protection.

Theme B generated 38 questions dealing with natural resources, green infrastructure, parks and recreational opportunities, rural character, and the preservation of agricultural lands and forests.

The Steering Committee identified a number of broad goals that CTAP-designated communities should strive to accomplish which are outlined below:

Goals

- Promote the preservation and protection of natural resources when addressing the economic needs of the community and region.
- Protect natural resources and the environment including ground water, aquifers, wildlife, and wildlife corridors
- Establish and conserve an interconnected green infrastructure and ensure public access to open space, parks, and other recreational opportunities.
- Maintain rural character whenever possible especially forests and farms.

Findings:

- **The existing Master Plan was approved in 2002. The Master Plan is currently in the process of being updated**
- **Auburn Zoning Ordinance allow for cluster development allowing for some mixed use**
- **Existing Master Plan recommends the development of a Village Center Zoning District which would allow for mixed use development. The current zoning regulations do not allow single-family residential and commercial uses to be developed on the same lot, with the exception of home occupations.**
- **Lack of density bonuses for specific types of development**
- **Town has both a Conservation Commission and an Open Space Committee**
- **No Open Space Plan**
- **Lack of Aquifer protection ordinance**
- **Lack of Wellhead protection program**
- **Lack of Wildlife protection regulations**
- **Auburn is part of the Beaver Lake Watershed Partnership with Towns of Derry and Chester**

Recommendations:

Create Density regulations that provide structure for various types of development including but not limited to residential, commercial, and industrial. Density regulations will prevent over crowding while still creating development that is confined so as to preserve open space. Since Auburn currently does have a Conservation Commission and an Open Space Committee it would be viable to have them focus on creating an open space plan as well as an Aquifer and Wellhead protection program. The Conservation and Open Space groups could work with the Beaver Lake Watershed Partnership to develop these programs and identify areas to be included in them. The development of a Village Center Zoning District would create further mixed use growth that allows for a diversity of housing and commercial units and is geared towards the realization of a walk able community.

Theme C

Downtown/Village Centers and Community Vitality

The purpose of this theme was to determine how the CTAP community has planned for the development and preservation of vibrant community centers which would include an extensive array of cultural and recreational resources. The overall intent is to enhance public participation by establishing areas for community activities around the downtown or common community center which would add rural character and promote a sense of vitality to the village center.

Theme C generated 16 questions dealing with the development of village center districts and the promotion of walkable downtown areas in an effort to maintain the small town New England community tradition. Special emphasis was given to the development of main streets, historic preservation, and landscaping.

The Steering Committee identified a number of broad goals that CTAP-designated communities should strive to accomplish which are outlined below:

Goals

- Develop or enhance downtowns and village centers through the reuse of existing infrastructure and the rehabilitation of buildings with historic value.
- Promote the development of walkable downtown areas which are consistent with historic patterns.
- Enhance Main streets and promote a small community, New England town atmosphere.

Findings:

- **New Master Plan will recommend accommodating mixed uses in Auburn town village and keep them in a compact village center.**
- **There are no designated scenic roads**
- **No formal design guidelines for development**

Recommendations:

The Town of Auburn has a “small compact Village Center” as determined by the 2002 Master Plan. This area of town allows for mixed uses in a central area of the community. The updated Master Plan will include recommendations to accommodate mixed uses in the town village. The updated master plan needs to prepare for mixed use so that commercial and similar types of development can be centralized and kept confined to one location in town. This will prevent other areas of town from becoming spotted with commercial use which will ultimately keep residents happy. Another future priority will be to develop a formal design guide for any new structures created in the village center. A formal design guide will prevent unsightly box stores and chains from detracting from the New England town atmosphere that is strived for in village centers.

Theme D

Local Economy

The purpose of this theme was to determine if the CTAP community has enacted policies that promote economic viability, foster a prosperous business environment, and support agricultural development. The development of a strong local economy should result in increased local employment opportunities and livable wages.

Theme D generated 15 questions dealing with the development of economic development strategies, commercial and agricultural development, and tax incentives to attract new business development

The Steering Committee identified a number of broad goals that CTAP-designated communities should strive to accomplish which are outlined below:

Goals

- Support sustainable and balanced economic growth that reflects the current tax base.
- Strengthen local agriculture and forestry through the support of related infrastructure and economic systems.
- Support the development of new jobs and livable wages.

Findings:

- **No economic development plan**
- **No tax incentives or regulatory relief for businesses to locate in community center**
- **Not a Main Street Community**
- **No agricultural inventory**
- **Zoning ordinance does not protect lands appropriate for agriculture or forestry with substantial minimum lot sizes**

Recommendations:

With incoming population around the region every town is going to have to yield to varying economic growth. Without an economic development plan Auburn could potentially be faced with no economic growth or the wrong types of growth. The town needs to have healthy economic growth to help boost town infrastructure in order to keep it a desirable place to live by providing residents with places to work. Development of an open space plan and zoning ordinance for the preservation of agricultural or forestry land will help the Town of Auburn to balance rural aesthetics against economic needs.

Summary**Overall Findings:**

While the Town of Auburn has achieved and performed planning to manage growth and prepare for the future, it is clear based upon the response to this community planning assessment that the Town of Bedford would greatly benefit from the following key recommendations:

- 1) Develop and Adopt a Town Open Space Plan**
- 2) Develop and Adopt Groundwater/Aquifer Protection Ordinance**
- 3) Adopt and Implement a Village Center Zoning District**
- 4) Develop and Adopt an Economic Development Plan**
- 5) Establish Housing and Agriculture Commissions**
- 6) Draft an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance**