

City of Manchester, NH

CTAP Community Planning Road Map



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

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.

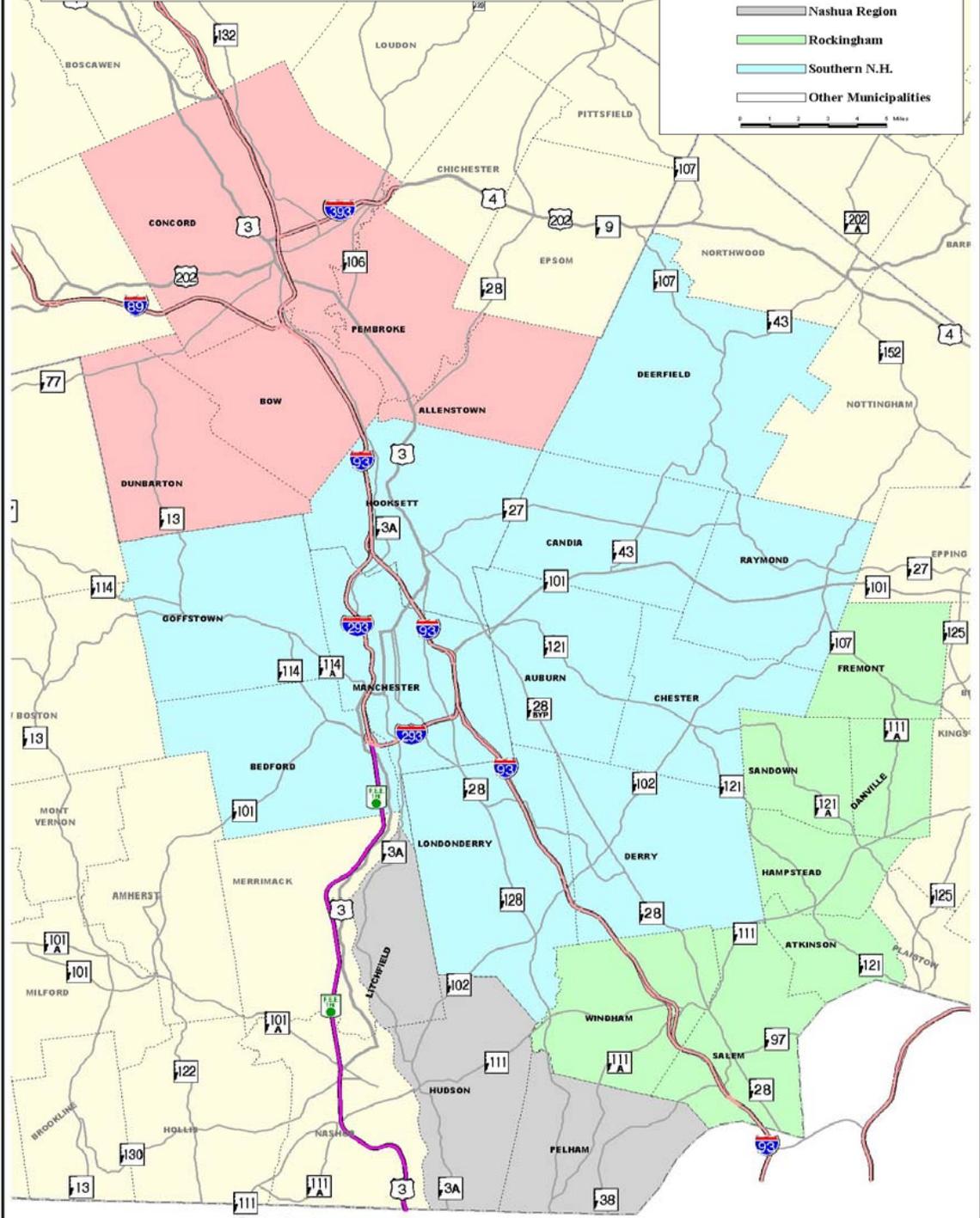
The Community Technical Assistance Program Dealing with Growth

New Hampshire DOT
 Department of Transportation

LEGEND
 Study Municipalities by Regional Planning Commissions

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

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This **CTAP Community Planning Road Map** prepared for the City of Manchester identifies and sets forth recommendations and priority actions to guide the city'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 City of Manchester 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.

Manchester's CTAP Community Planning Road Map

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

CITY OF MANCHESTER, NH COMMUNITY PLANNING ROADMAP

Assessment

Completed

- Community Planning Assessment
- Enhanced GIS-based Information
- Open Space Assessment

In Progress

- Update Emergency Management Plan
- Update Natural Hazards Plan
- Safe Route to Schools

Future

- Energy Audit
- Natural Resources Inventory
- Update 1990 Water Resources Plan
- Brownfields Redevelopment

Visioning/Planning

Completed

- Conservation Commission Institute
- Economic Development Plan
- 2009 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

In Progress

- Master Plan Update
- Neighborhood Revitalization Plans
- Stormwater Management
- Airport Master Plan

Future

- Housing Ordinance
- Update Road Standards – include CSS and Traffic Calming
- Energy Plan/Building Codes
- Corridor Studies – Willow Street

Implementation

Short term (1 –3 years)

- Convention Center Economic Study (Discretionary CTAP Grant)
- Traffic Calming (Target CTAP Grant)
- Pettingill /Airport Access Road Land Use/Transportation Plan (Collaborative CTAP Grant)

Medium term (3–5 years)

- Energy Plan/Codes
- Phase II – South Willow Street Corridor Study
- Intermodal Studies
- Brownfields Redevelopment

Longer term (5–10 years)

- Update Water Plan
- Update Road Standards
- Shoreland/Riparian Buffers
- Commuter Rail to Boston

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

Developing Manchester's Community Planning Road Map

In developing Manchester's CTAP Community Planning Road Map, city 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. The Road Map was then presented to the Planning Board and the public as part of a concluding presentation held on May 28, 2009.

The following city officials and staff of the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission participated at a facilitated public meeting held at the Manchester City Offices on February 13, 2009:

Jay Minkarah, Economic Development Director
Meena Gyawali, Development Coordinator
Leon LaFreniere, Building and Planning Department Director
Pamela Goucher, Chief Planner
Dan O'Neil, Alderman
Ray Clement, Planning Board Chair
David Preece, SNHPC Executive Director
Jack Munn, SNHPC, Chief Planner

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

- Convention Center Expansion Economic Study
- Corridor Studies – Willow Street Phase II
- Update Road Standards – include CSS and Traffic Calming Techniques
- Stormwater Management Ordinance – include LID Techniques
- City Energy Plan – Audit/Building Codes
- Natural Resources Inventory – include NSN and WAP
- Shoreland Protection/Riparian Buffers
- Update Emergency Management Plan (in progress)
- Update Natural Hazards Plan (in progress)
- Update 1990 Water Resources Management/Protection Plan
- Master Plan Update (in progress)
- Neighborhood Revitalization Plans
- Visioning – Goals/Objectives
- Pettingale /Airport Access Road Land Use Plan (collaborative effort with towns of Bedford and Londonderry)
- Intermodal Studies

Also recognized at this meeting were the CTAP work products which had been completed for the City of Manchester 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.

Before reaching a decision on the community road map and the above projects, a meeting with Bedford/Londonderry town officials was held on March 6, 2009. The outcome of this meeting was that a joint project with the City of Manchester and surrounding towns evaluating the land use and transportation impacts of the Airport Access/Pettingale Roads would be in the interest of the city and the region.

IMPACT: How much will it matter?	High		Traffic Calming Techniques Pettingale/Airport Access Road Land Use Plan	Convention Center Economic Study
	Moderate	Stormwater Management Ordinance Shoreland Protection/ Riparian Buffers	Affordable/Workforce Housing Energy Plan/Ordinances	Natural Resources Inventory Water Resources Plan Intermodal Studies
	Low			
		Low	Moderate	High

FEASIBILITY: How possible is it in our community? 

Key Elements of Manchester's CTAP Community Planning Road Map

Manchester'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 City of Manchester has applied for a \$15,000 Discretionary CTAP Grant to conduct the Convention Center Economic Development Study; is considering a \$10,000 Target CTAP Grant to prepare Traffic Calming plans with streetscape and road profiles and/or an arts and culture study; and a \$10,000 Collaborative CTAP Grant to prepare a transportation/land use plan for the Pettingill/Airport Access Road area in coordination with the towns of Bedford, Londonderry and Merrimack.

In the Medium Term (3-5 years), the Road Map recommends that the City of Manchester consider the following planning projects:

- Energy Plan/Building Codes
- Phase II – South Willow Street Corridor Study
- Intermodal Studies
- Brownfields Redevelopment
- Improve/Expand Sidewalks
- Continue to implement Rail/Trail projects

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

- Update Water Plan
- Update Road Standards
- Shoreland/Riparian Buffers

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 Planning 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.

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 (NHDOT) initiated CTAP to provide support to communities projected to experience growth as a result of the Interstate 93 Expansion Project which stretches from Salem to Concord. 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 along the I93 corridor 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 around the following four major planning themes:

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

The CTAP Steering Committee 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 Manchester, 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 City of Manchester, New Hampshire are listed as follows:

Key Recommendations:

- 1. The City of Manchester's current regulations should be amended to encourage energy conservation.**
- 2. The city should explore providing tax exemptions for alternative energy installations.**

- 3. The city should also explore requiring best management practices in its drainage, sedimentation, and erosion control measures to assure the integrity of important land areas as well to protect surface water resources.**

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 Planning Assessments of those municipalities most likely to experience growth due to the expansion of I-93. The ultimate goal of the Community Planning 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 stretched out along the I93 as areas most likely to be impacted.

Some of the potential growth impacts that the CTAP communities could experience include, increased 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 web sites, ordinances, regulations and city policies. The assessment questions were also answered with assistance from the municipal planners and other officials in each community.

Many of the assessment questions provide 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. Furthermore, the assessment is designed 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 Manchester 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 the survey. This was accomplished at a regular scheduled meeting of the Manchester 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 Manchester is attached.

Part II

Theme A

Community Infrastructure and Regional Cooperation

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

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. These goals 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 City of Manchester has municipal agreements with surrounding towns for water service through Manchester Water Works and sewer service through the Environmental Protection Division.
- Manchester has an updated capital improvement program (CIP) which is updated each year.
- The city has seven census tracts that were recently dedicated as Community Reinvestment Opportunity Zones (CROP) by the State of New Hampshire.
- Manchester has adopted impact fees which are enumerated in Section 13 of the city's Zoning Ordinance.
- Planning for the provision of future utilities and facilities is extensive and includes police and fire, increasing school capacity, repairing library and school computers, and maintenance and expansion of future utilities, etc. as outlined in the Master Plan and Community Improvement Plan (CIP).
- The City of Manchester's current regulations do not encourage energy conservation, although this will be focus area in the Master Plan update.
- The city has tax exemptions for the elderly.

- Manchester has no specific Inclusionary Housing Ordinance.
- The Planning Board has encouraged traffic calming measures in certain areas.
- Alternative transportation is encouraged in the Central Business District (CBD) and the Amoskeag Mill yard Mixed Use District (AMX) as described in Section 4 of the city's zoning ordinance.
- Manchester is actively working with the New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority, the SNHPC and neighboring communities to extend commuter rail services from Boston to downtown Manchester and the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport through Lowell, MA and Nashua, NH.

Recommendations:

The City of Manchester has accomplished extensive planning for future transportation and land use needs and the vibrance of the city's economic, cultural, and social life is a reflection of this accomplishment. Multi-modal transportation is encouraged in Manchester through the use of MTA buses and expansion of bike and pedestrian paths across the city.

Theme B

Environmental Protection, Land Use, and Open Space

The purpose of this theme is to determine how CTAP communities have 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. These goals 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:

- Manchester's existing Master Plan is out of date and a new Master Plan is currently being developed.
- The zoning ordinance has several innovative land use techniques in use such as; impact fees, environmental characteristics zoning, and accessory dwelling units.

- The city's land use regulations require minimum densities as well as a range of lot sizes.
- The city has several zoning districts that allow for mixed-use residential and commercial development such as the Redevelopment District which focuses on mixed use in the areas lying between the Central Business District (CBD) and the Residential Multifamily Districts (R-3, R-SM). The Amoskeag Mill yard Mixed Use District (AMX) is intended to provide for a diversity of uses.
- The City of Manchester does not provide a property tax exemption for alternative energy installations.
- Manchester does have a stormwater management ordinance.
- The city has inventoried and mapped Prime Wetlands and important surface water waters. Lake Massabesic is protected through an Overlay District.
- The city has used several different funding mechanisms for acquiring open space such as; wetland mitigation and other funds from Airport and Manchester Water Works, general obligation bonds, tax revenues, and LCHIP.

Recommendations:

Energy Conservation will be an issue of fundamental importance as the population increases and energy supplies become more taxed. The importance of alternative energy installations and alternative energy sources will become more apparent in the coming years. The City of Manchester should explore providing tax exemptions for alternative energy installations. Manchester should explore requiring best management practices in its drainage, sedimentation, and erosion control measures to assure the integrity of important land areas as well to protect surface water resources.

Theme C

Downtown/Village Centers and Community Vitality

The purpose of this theme is to determine how the CTAP communities have 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 village 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. These goals 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, New England town atmosphere.

Findings:

- The City of Manchester’s zoning places great emphasis upon redevelopment for mixed use in the CBD and Mill yard area.
- Manchester has a sign ordinance, Article 9 of the city’s zoning ordinance.
- Manchester has nominated Commercial Street and the entire Amoskeag Mill yard as a “Cultural and Scenic Byway”. This byway has been approved and funding has been granted to accomplish certain improvements in the area.
- The city’s Subdivision/Site Plan regulations encourage the preservation of existing trees within the right-of-way of existing and proposed roadways.
- There are numerous neighborhood associations that participate in planning and community development.
- The city’s Master Plan update involves a Steering committee working with the Planning and Community Development Department which meets with community members and citizen interest groups. The city also implemented a website survey to help facilitate community participation.

Recommendations:

The City of Manchester has done extensive work in redeveloping the Amoskeag mill yard for mixed commercial and residential use. This area is protected through a historic overlay district and redevelopment has spawned job growth in city in a diversity of industries. This mixed use area is also walkable and has public transit availability through MTA. The city’s public involvement efforts have been noticed in the current Master Plan update and future planning should continue to involve interest groups, neighborhood associations, and concerned citizens. Expansion of mixed use development is recommended and should continue to drive job creation and opportunity for workers of varying skill levels and backgrounds.

Theme D**Local Economy**

The purpose of this theme is 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. These goals 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:

- The City of Manchester recently contracted with Angelou Economics of Austin, Texas to create a Global Economic Development Strategy. This plan is available on the city's website.
- Most commercial expansion occurs along South Willow Street and Elm street.
- The downtown area (Central Business District and Mill yard) has become the center of Manchester with vital anchors including the Verizon arena and the Fisher Cat ballpark.
- The 1993 Master Plan contains no specific section or strategies pertaining to farmland protection. Although farmland is sparse in this urban environment, encouraging opportunities for community gardens should still be a priority.
- The Conservation District and the Lake Massabesic Protection Overlay District set aside land for forest and water protection.

Recommendations:

The City of Manchester has planned extensively for economic growth, allowing for several mixed use zoning districts and investing heavily in recreational centers such as the Fisher Cats ballpark and Verizon arena. While job opportunities exist in the city, quality of life is a major pull factor that assures future growth. The quality of life is enhanced by the city's investment in historic preservation; the arts in general, open space, and transportation diversity and infrastructure improvements.