

Town of Sandown, New Hampshire  
**CTAP Community Planning Roadmap**



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

**by the Rockingham Planning Commission**

**Adopted by the Sandown Planning Board**

**June 15, 2010**

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I-93 Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP)*



## **I. Sandown CTAP Community Planning Road Map**

### **A. Introduction to the CTAP Community Planning Road Map**

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 (italicized are in the Rockingham Planning Commission region): Allenstown, *Atkinson*, Auburn, Sandown, Bow, Candia, Chester, Concord, *Danville*, Deerfield, Derry, Dunbarton, *Fremont*, Goffstown, *Hampstead*, Hooksett, Hudson, Litchfield, Londonderry, Manchester, Pelham, Pembroke, Raymond, *Sandown*, *Sandown*, and *Windham* (see Attachment A, CTAP area map on following page). [Note: Communities in the Rockingham Planning Commission region are italicized.]

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](http://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.

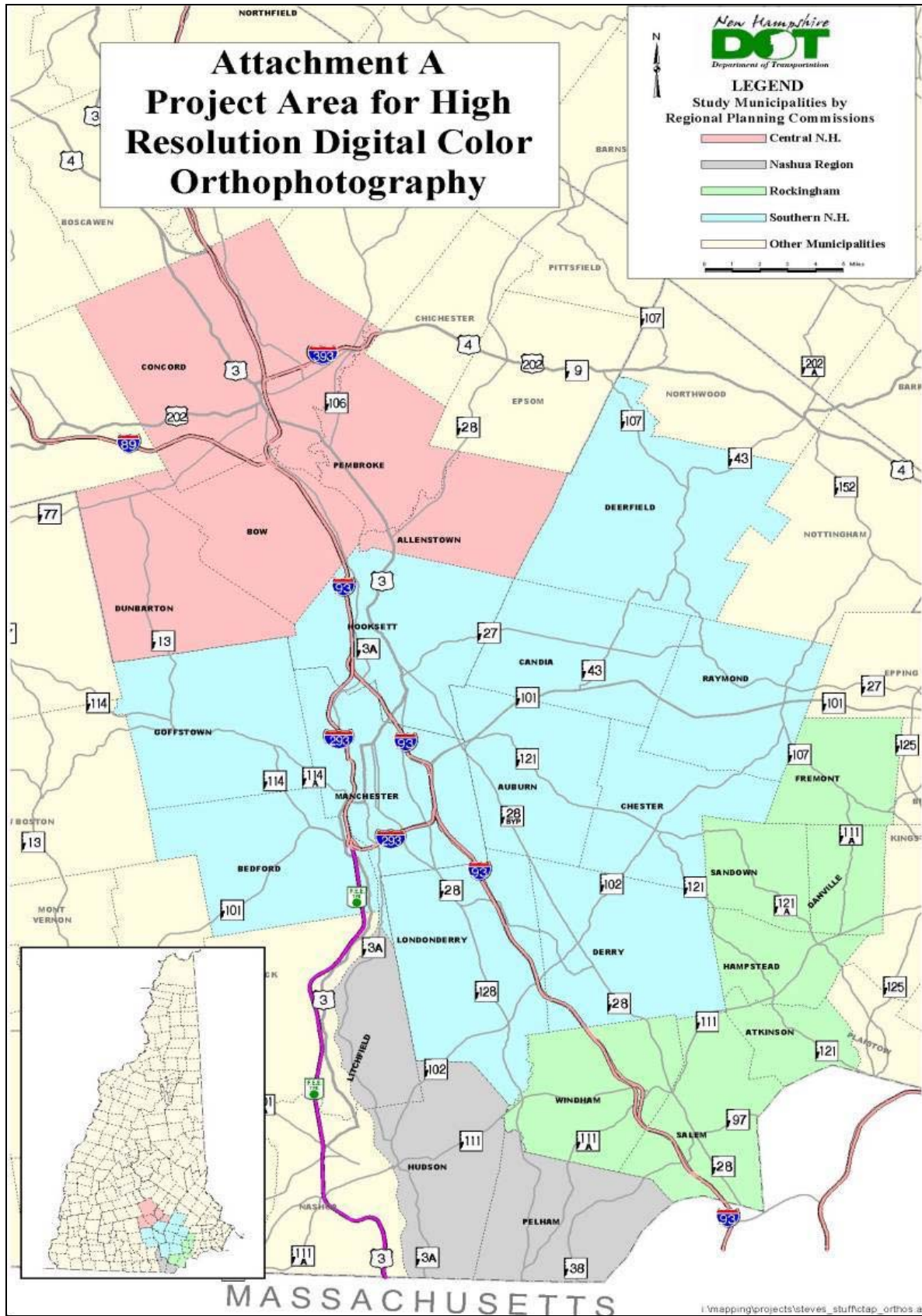
#### **2. Visioning and Planning**

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.

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 made available to them through the CTAP program.



## **B. Road Map Planning Process**

Currently, the Sandown CTAP program is moving into the *Visioning and Planning and Implementation* stages via the *CTAP Community Planning Road Map*.

This CTAP Community Planning Road Map prepared for the Town of Sandown 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 completed and Year Two will conclude in August 2010, this Community Planning Road Map is designed to guide and help assist the Town of Sandown to develop a prioritized action and work plan to address the anticipated future growth in the CTAP region.

Development of the CTAP Community Planning Road Map consisted of a three step process.

### *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.

*Sandown selected Plan B to complete their planning process.*

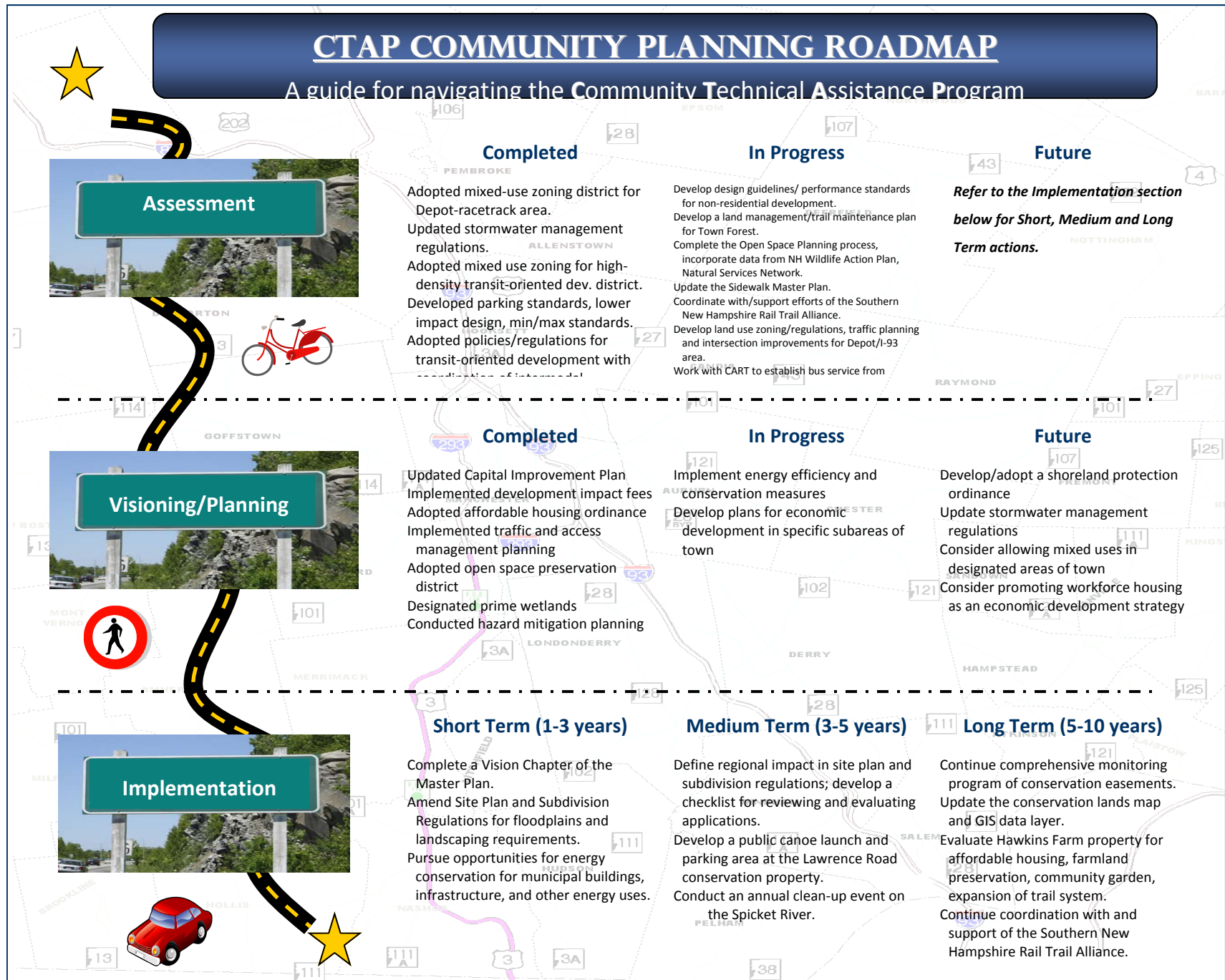
### *3. Concluding Presentation*

The purpose of the concluding presentation is to present the CTAP Community Road Map to the public at a meeting with elected officials, the planning board, conservation commission and other stakeholders to describe the development and contents of the plan and how the plan can be implemented.

## **C. Sandown's CTAP Community Planning Road Map**

The Town of Sandown's Community Planning Road Map is provided in the planning diagram on the following page. The planning diagram serves to summarize the results of the *Visioning and Planning* stage of the CTAP program.





**D. Developing Sandown’s Community Planning Road Map**

In developing Sandown’s CTAP Community Planning Road Map, town officials selected the “Plan B” road map planning process. The “Plan B” road map process consisted of an internal review and screening of the Community Planning Assessment to create the Road Map (see following Executive Summary and Summary of Recommendations as well as the Impact/Feasibility Grid).

The following Sandown representatives and staff of the Rockingham Planning Commission participated at an internal screening and review meeting held at the Town Offices on March 29, 2010 :

- Nelson Rheaume, Selectmen
- Stephen Brown, Selectmen
- Hans Nicolaisen, Selectmen
- Tom Tombarello, Selectmen
- Mark Traeger, Planning Board and Conservation Commission
- Lynne Blaisdell, Office Manager
- Theresa Walker, Rockingham Planning Commission

A second meeting, designed to provide an in-depth review of the original assessment and to finalize the road map was held on May 18, 2010. The following Sandown representatives and staff from the Rockingham Planning Commission participated in this meeting:

- Donna Green, Planning Board
- Marilyn Cormier, Planning Board
- Matt Russell, Planning Board and CIP Committee
- Ed Mencis, Planning Board
- Steve Meisner, Planning Board
- Nelson Rheaume, Selectmen
- Steve Keach, Town Engineer
- Theresa Walker, Rockingham Planning Commission

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

- Comprehensive review and updating of subdivision and site plan review regulations;
- Completing a community master plan visioning session;

- Development of a lighting ordinance to protect the night sky and rural character;
- Establishing a local Agricultural Commission;
- Continuing to assess culvert function along Sandown roads.

The Community Planning Road Map was adopted by the Sandown Planning Board on June 15, 2010.

*CTAP Work Products*

Also recognized at this meeting are the CTAP work products which have been completed for Town of Sandown to date, including a Community Planning Assessment and Assessment Summary. Grant funded projects include the mapping and assessment of prime wetlands and a road surface inventory. Additional work products to be completed for the Town of Sandown in 2010 include an enhanced GIS-based information (build-out analysis, land use and aerial photo mapping).



**Feasibility Grid**

<p><b>IMPACT:</b> How much impact will this action have on our community?</p>	<b>HIGH</b>			<p>Comprehensive review and updating of subdivision and site plan review regulations</p> <p>Completing a community master plan visioning session</p> <p>Complete a new well for municipal buildings</p>
	<b>MODE RATE</b>		<p>Establishing an agricultural commission</p>	<p>Continuing to assess culvert function along Sandown roads</p>
	<b>LOW</b>		<p>Completing a CART survey</p>	<p>Development of a night sky ordinance to protect the night sky and rural character</p>
		<b>LOW</b>	<b>MODERATE</b>	<b>HIGH</b>

**FEASIBILITY:** How feasible is it to accomplish this in our community?

**E. Key Elements of Sandown’s CTAP Community Planning Road Map**

Sandown’s CTAP Community Planning Road Map is divided into three parts:

- Completed Projects
- Projects in Progress
- Future Projects/Actions (Short Term, Medium Term and Ongoing Long Term).

***Completed Projects***

- Updated and adopted the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)
- Revised existing cluster and affordable housing regulations – Adopted an Open Space Development Ordinance with provisions for affordable housing
- Adopted regulations to ensure housing is available for, and accessible to, the disabled
- Identified areas for mixed-use development
- Adopted techniques for low impact development
- Updated stormwater management regulations
- Developed and adopted an Open Space Plan
- Adopted an Open Space Development Ordinance to encourage in-fill development to prevent sprawl
- Established a local Energy Committee.

***Projects in Progress***

- Define development of regional impact
- Adopt regulations to encourage energy conservation
- Consider opportunities for compatible mixed residential/office or residential retail uses
- Revising subdivision and site plan review regulations
- Maintain a road system action plan

***Short Term Projects/Actions***

In the Short Term (1-3 years), Sandown will:

- ***Immediate Action*** – Complete a comprehensive review and update of subdivision and site plan review regulations
- ***Immediate Action*** – Complete a community master plan visioning session
- Develop and lighting/night sky protection ordinance
- Revise subdivision and site plan review regulations
- Complete a CART survey
- Establish an Agricultural Commission

- Continue to assess culvert function along Sandown roads
- Define Agriculture and the Right-to-Farm in the Master Plan
- Complete a new well(s) for the municipal buildings along Main Street

***Medium Term Actions***

In the Medium Term (3-5 years), the Road Map recommends that the Town of Sandown consider the following projects and/or actions:

- Increasing the recycling rate; provide information to residents on incentives to recycle

***Ongoing and Long Term Actions***

In the Long Term (5-10 years), the Road Map suggests that the Town of Sandown pursue the following ongoing projects and/or actions:

- Complete an Economic Development Plan

**ROADMAP ACTION PLAN**

QUESTIONS	IMMEDIATE ACTIONS	
	#1 Comprehensive Review and Updating of Subdivision and Site Plan Review Regulations	#2 Completing a Community Master Plan Visioning Session
1. List the following: steps/tasks and that are involved to accomplish this action; and deadline/ milestone for each step/task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a sub-committee of the Planning Board</li> <li>Hire a consultant</li> <li>Review exemplary model regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community advertising</li> <li>Reserving venue</li> <li>Identifying and confirming speakers</li> <li>Meeting supplies: flip charts, paper, and markers</li> </ul>
2. Who will be responsible for spearheading the effort?	Mark Traeger, Planning Board and Conservation Commission member, and chair of the sub-committee	Marilyn Cormier, Planning Board member and sub-committee chair, with assistance from Fred Daley, Planning Board member
3. What resources are required or support needed to accomplish this action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultant time</li> <li>Examples of model regulations and information on best practices</li> <li>Administrative Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice on how-to conduct visioning session</li> <li>Advice on outreach and advertising</li> <li>People with facilitation skills</li> <li>Implementation and follow-thru</li> </ul>
4. What CTAP resources could support the implementation of this action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CTAP grant funds for consultant</li> <li>Community Assessment</li> <li>Roadmap Report</li> <li>Model regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting facilitator</li> <li>Funding for advertising, meeting supplies</li> </ul>
5. Identify the barriers or resistance to this action and identify ways to overcome them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowing best practices</li> <li>Difficulty of job</li> <li>Ensuring changes are in compliance with NH RSA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of public interest</li> <li>Lack of facilitation skills</li> <li>No funds for advertising</li> <li>No funds to hire professional meeting facilitator</li> </ul>
6. Who are likely collaborators or stakeholders that should be aware of and can contribute to accomplishing the action?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rockingham Planning Commission</li> <li>Steve Keach, Town Engineer</li> <li>Other towns with newer regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rockingham Planning Commission</li> <li>UNH Cooperative Extension (meeting facilitation)</li> <li>All Sandown residents</li> </ul>
7. Anything else that should be identified for this action?	Combining subdivision and site plan review regulations	

## 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.





## **II. Sandown Community Assessment Report - Executive Summary**

### **A. Introduction**

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

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.

### **B. Process**

Assessment questions were answered through a review of existing town and city policies and were completed with the help of municipal personnel in each of the communities. The questions were grouped around the following four themes, which were approved by the CTAP Steering Committee according to the overall goals of the program.

A Community Assessment Survey was completed for the town of Sandown. The survey, which consisted of more than 100 questions, centered around four major planning themes, which included:

- 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 Community Assessment was completed through a collaboration of elected officials, municipal employees, and staff at the Rockingham Planning Commission. The results should provide community leaders with a basis to make decisions concerning future growth, and may also serve as starting point for discussion of possible projects for inclusion in the CTAP Discretionary Grant Program Application.

### **C. Key Recommendations**

The Sandown Community Assessment report that follows contains findings and recommendations concerning how to best address growth in your community. The report recommends twelve strategies (listed below by Theme) that may be helpful in dealing with potential future growth.

**Theme A: Community Infrastructure and Regional Cooperation**

**Update and adopt the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).** The current CIP was completed in 2005 but never adopted.

**Plan for future solid waste and septage disposal and expand recycling efforts -** Currently, the Town of Sandown has no specified site or contact for septage disposal and no mandatory recycling program.

**Define development of regional impact -** Adopt the policies drafted by RPC for dealing with development proposals having regional impact.

**Adopt a lighting ordinance protecting the night sky** – The RPC has model “Dark Sky” lighting ordinances for limiting outdoor lighting to protect views of the night sky.

**Review opportunities to extract impact fees from new development** – The Town of Sandown is currently applying impact fees for schools and roads and should consider fees for other services.

**Revise existing cluster and affordable housing regulations** – The 2005 Master Plan identified problems with exiting cluster and affordable housing regulations which may be preventing these regulations from being used effectively.

**Adopt regulations encouraging energy conservation** – The RPC has model regulations and policies for energy conservation in new construction and municipal buildings.

**Adopt regulations to ensure housing is available for, and accessible to, the disabled** – These regulations should be considered when reviewing the existing cluster, elderly and affordable housing regulations.

**Be aware of existing regional transportation projects** – Consider regional transportation efforts and establishing a transit-oriented development district.

**Consider opportunities for compatible mixed residential/office or residential retail uses** – These mixed use opportunities could be available in the existing Business District and in a future transit-oriented development district.

**Adopt techniques for Lower Impact Development** – Such techniques could include minimum and maximum parking requirements, to reduce impervious surface. The RPC had model ordinances for Low Impact Development.

**Theme B: Environmental Protection, Land Use, and Open Space**

**Adopt the natural resource protection regulations recommended in the 2005 Master Plan** – The regulations included protection of prime wetlands, protection of vegetated shoreland buffers, protection of wildlife habitat and habitat corridors, and protection of aquifers.

**Consult the NH Fish and Game Wildlife Action Plan and the Land Conservation Plan for New Hampshire’s Coastal Watersheds when considering land conservation projects** – Both of these reports prioritize undeveloped land in Sandown that should be protected to conserve water resources, wildlife habitat, and productive soils.

**Update stormwater management regulations** – Consult with RPC for model stormwater management regulations and policies to address management during construction.

**Develop and adopt an Open Space Plan** – The Conservation Commission and Planning Board should work together to incorporate the findings of NH Fish and Game Wildlife Action Plan, Natural Services Network, and the Land Conservation Plan for NH’s Coastal Watershed into a Open Space Plan that prioritizes land conservation efforts in Sandown.

**Theme C: Downtowns, Village Centers, and Community Vitality**

**Adopt policies to encourage in-fill development to prevent sprawl** – Consult the RPC for regulations to encourage and guide in-fill development, such as a provisions to develop the real portion of a lot in the Business District.

**Identify and designate scenic roads** – Sandown has many roads with historic and scenic viewsheds. Official designation of these roads can assist with maintaining the community’s rural character.

**Consider mixed-use development** – The Planning Board and Board of Selectmen should review existing land use zone and identify areas in Sandown suitable for mixed-use development, such as the Business District.

**Review the 2003 Community Profile created by UNH Cooperative Extension** – The Community Profile contains many recommendations relative sustaining and enhancing community vitality, including the creation of the Sandown Ambassadors, a community service association intended to unite town service organizations.

**Theme D: The Local Economy**

**Develop and adopt an Economic Development Plan** – Developing an Economic Development Plan would provide Sandown’s boards, commissions, and residents with an opportunity to

discuss and debate Sandown's current community needs and identify mechanisms for meeting these needs.

**Define agriculture in the Master Plan and conduct an agricultural inventory** – Sandown's residential growth has made it easy to ignore and neglect the needs of farm and forestry operations. Recognizing the need and value of these businesses in the Master Plan helps to protect their viability. An agricultural inventory would help identify these operations and enable landowners to participate in discussions about protecting and strengthening the remaining farm and forest economy.

**Reference the NH Right-to-Farm Law in local regulations** – New Hampshire has a strong tradition of agriculture and forestry. Referencing the Right-to-Farm law in the Master Plan and local land use regulations reinforces Sandown's commitment to the local farmers and foresters.