



# **Strafford Regional Planning Commission**

---

*“Planning and action for sustainable development and an improved quality of life”.*

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: March 17, 2005

For information contact:

Cynthia Copeland, AICP, Executive Director

Gerald Mylroie, AICP, Senior Land Use Planner

603 / 742-2523

## **CITIZENS INVITED TO PLAN FOR REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

The Strafford Regional Planning Commission, the state designated agency that advises 18 communities on how to plan for development and conservation, invites citizens, municipal officials, business owners, and non-profit organization representatives to help plan for regional growth management at a Public Workshop taking place at the Frisbie Community Center in Rochester on Thursday, March 24, 2005 from 7pm to 9pm. Citizens agree they do not want development to continue to sprawl across the landscape, or “Business as Usual”. Targeting growth and development into existing urban and village centers and creating “Quality Centers” is preferred. “Quality Centers” are planned, mixed use, liveable and walkable urban or village areas and their adjacent neighbors, surrounded by Conservation Areas. The Conservation Areas could be used for agricultural, forestry, park and recreational uses, and natural resource protection. The challenge is how could citizens and their municipal governments achieve it? The Strafford Region Vision 2020 Workshop’s purpose is to discuss how we could achieve the “Quality Centers” plan. Implementing the plan could save \$60 to \$100 million in property taxes according to SRPC planners. Also it would improve land use, water quality, natural resource protection, affordable housing, economic development and transportation. To create “Quality Centers” that are liveable and walkable in existing villages and urban centers, ways will be discussed to create economic incentives. These

## Strafford Regional Planning Commission

Press Release – continued

include: increase municipal impact and service fees outside of the Quality Center, change land use zones to promote conservation, and/or adopt a local or regional transfer of development rights program.

“We hope the region’s citizens will continue to participate in this important planning program as we cooperate to set the regional context for local development and conservation programs,” said Cynthia Copeland, AICP, Executive Director.

Citizens who want to avoid urban sprawl, higher property taxes, poor or insufficient water, more traffic congestion, loss of conservation lands, and other regional issues should attend this SRPC Public Workshop. Citizens are encouraged to not wait for a problem in their neighborhood to express their concerns or describe how things should be improved. SRPC hopes citizens will act now to create the Regional Master Plan for future growth and conservation in the Strafford Region and improve our quality of life!

To enable existing villages and urban centers to evolve into “Quality Centers,” municipalities’ would need to adopt a new “Quality Planning” Strategy. The Strategy would include improved development standards while permitting an increased number of housing units per acre. This “Quality Planning” strategy, known as planned unit, mixed use, or infill development, would maximize the villages’ and urban centers’ central area and adjacent neighborhoods potential for improved development. Rochester has started this by adopting and permitting planned unit developments. However, it was noted this strategy would need to be targeted toward designated service areas and enable an additional mixture of uses.

## Strafford Regional Planning Commission

Press Release – continued

Implementing the “Quality Centers” plan could have major advantages in meeting citizen goals of minimizing property taxes, creating livable walkable communities, conserving lands and rural character, providing affordable housing, and increasing social capital and economic development. Targeting development with better development standards could address citizen concerns about the cost of public services and infrastructure and the rising property taxes needed to finance these costs.

### **Public Access to Information**

Information about the Vision 2020 – Strafford Region Planning Program is posted on the SRPC website at [www.strafford.org](http://www.strafford.org) and is available at the SRPC office, via mail, or by calling SRPC.

Persons wishing to comment on regional planning issues, the vision for the region, goals and projects are welcome to send email at [srpc@strafford.org](mailto:srpc@strafford.org), call (603) 742-2523, or attend meetings of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission.

### **Additional Meetings**

Additional SRPC meetings planned as part of the Vision 2020- Strafford Region Master Plan update include:

- Thursday, April 21, 2005, 7-9PM  
SRPC Commission Meeting: Vision 2020 - Public Hearing and Action on Regional Master Plan Land Use Policies and Implementation Strategies.  
Frisbie Community Education & Conference Center, Rochester
- Thursday, May 26, 2005, 7-9PM – (Back up date for Additional Public Hearing Discussion or Action if required.)  
SRPC Commission Meeting and Vision 2020 - Public Hearing and Adoption of Vision 2020 Regional Master Plan Land Use Policies and Implementation Strategies.  
Frisbie Community Education & Conference Center, Rochester

**Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC)**

SRPC's mission is to plan and take action to achieve sustainable development and improve the quality of life in the region. SRPC serves as an advisor to local governments and organizations on planning, development and conservation issues. SRPC has been active in regional planning for over 30 years as one of the nine Regional Planning Commissions established by the New Hampshire legislature through RSA 36:46. SRPC is composed of eighteen communities including all thirteen municipalities in Strafford County, three communities in Rockingham County and two communities in Carroll County.

SRPC works to improve the region by coordinating local planning, balancing economic progress with environmental protection and community well-being, promoting orderly growth and efficient land use and transportation systems, and addressing issues of regional concern. SRPC's professional planning staff assists in land use, transportation, environmental and economic development planning; support services; project management; and geographic information system mapping and analysis.

Municipalities, persons or organizations may contact SRPC by calling 603/742-2523 or by e-mail at [srpc@strafford.org](mailto:srpc@strafford.org).

END