

Meeting of the SRPC Commissioners, MPO and EDD

Friday, March 20, 2026 9:00 – 10:30 AM

Hybrid Meeting (Conference Rm 1A, SRPC Office & via Zoom)

In accordance with RSA 91:A, the Commission requires an in-person quorum. So long as an in-person quorum, Commissioners may participate virtually. Guests may attend the meeting virtually or at the SRPC Office. All participants, both in-person and virtual, can communicate contemporaneously.

Meeting URL: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85802372877>

Meeting ID: 858 0237 2877

Telephone-only Access: +1 646 558 8656

These instructions have also been provided at www.strafford.org. If anybody is unable to access the meeting, please email mtaylorfetter@straffordrpcnh.gov or call 603-994-3500 (x115).

Agenda Item	Time	Pre-Meeting Notes
1) Introductions	9:00-9:05	
2) Commissioner Roundtable	9:05-9:15	Updates from your community
3) Action Items a. Minutes from February 20, 2026	9:15-9:20	See meeting packet
4) Regional Plan Workshop a. Regional Plan Structure and Timelines b. CEDS Themes, Goals, and Action Items c. Group Activity – Themes and Goals • Transportation • Land Use and Environment	9:20-10:20	Refer to the memo. At the meeting plan to vote on priority CEDS actions. For the group activity we will split into 2 groups for brainstorming.
5) Other Business	10:20-10:25	
6) Citizens Forum	10:25-10:30	
7) Adjourn	10:30	

Reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are available upon request. Include a detailed description of the accommodation you will need along with your contact info. Please make your request as early as possible; allowing at least 5 days advance notice. Last minute requests will be accepted but may be impossible to fill. Please call (603) 994-3500 or email info@straffordrpcnh.gov



RULES OF PROCEDURE

*Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization, and
Strafford Economic Development District*

Meeting Etiquette

Be present at the scheduled start of the meeting.

Be respectful of the views of others.

Ensure that only one person talks at a time. Raising your hand to be recognized by the chair or facilitator is good practice.

Do not interrupt others or start talking before someone finishes.

Do not engage in cross talk.

Avoid individual discussions in small groups during the meeting. When one person speaks, others should listen.

Active participation is encouraged from all members.

When speaking, participants should adhere to topics of discussion directly related to agenda items.

When speaking, individuals should be brief and concise when speaking.

The Strafford Regional Planning Commission & Metropolitan Planning Organization holds both public meetings and public hearings.

For public meetings, guests are welcome to observe, but should follow proper meeting etiquette allowing the meeting to proceed uninterrupted. Members of the public who wish to be involved and heard should use venues such as Citizen Forum, Public Hearings, Public Comment Periods, outreach events, seminars, workshops, listening sessions, etc.

DATE: March 13, 2026

TO: SRPC Commissioners

FROM: Jen Czysz, Executive Director
Kyle Pimental, Assistant Director
Colin Lentz, Principal Transportation Planner
Michael Polizzotti, Senior Economic Development Planner

RE: March 20, 2026, Agenda Items & Upcoming Meeting Schedule

Regional Master Plan Workshop

Staff have continued work on the various components of the upcoming regional plan update, *Forward-Thinking: A Comprehensive Plan for the Strafford Region*. At the upcoming Commission meeting on March 20, 2026, staff will present findings that align with the various plan components and solicit feedback from Commissioners with activities and facilitated conversations.

As each of the plan sections are on a staggered completion timeline, they are each at different points in their development.

Component	Anticipated Adoption
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)	June 2026
Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)	September 2026
Land Use and Environment (LU/ENV)	December 2026

For all plan sections, commissioner can view the results work conducted throughout 2025 and into early 2026:

- [Summary of Outreach Activities and Findings](#)
- [Summary of Local Master Plan Themes](#)

Utilizing these findings and additional research and background, SRPC staff have compiled draft themes for each section of the regional master plan update. The following documents can be found within your meeting packet. Please note, each section reflects its relative point in the staggered plan development process.

CEDS Themes, Goals, and draft Action Items

- The Themes and Goals for the CEDS have been reviewed and finalized with the help of the CEDS Strategy Committee.
- The Action Items are still in draft form, and we will be gathering feedback from Commissioners on these draft Action Items at the March Commission meeting.



MTP Draft Themes and Goals

- The Themes and Goals for the MTP are in draft form for further brainstorming and feedback from Commissioners at the meeting.

Land Use and Environment Preliminary Themes and Goals

- These proposed items are in a preliminary form, and we hope to gather feedback from Commissioners on these items at the March meeting.
- Think about what might be missing,

Ahead of the upcoming Commission meeting, we ask that you please review these three documents and come prepared to provide feedback to help us finalize actions to include in the CEDS and establish organizing themes for the MTP and LU/ENV sections of the Regional Plan.

At the March Commission meeting, all Commissioners will have the opportunity to provide feedback on and vote to prioritize the proposed draft CEDS action items. Commissioners will then divide into two groups, where they can choose to provide feedback on either the drafted MTP (transportation) themes and goals, or the land use and environment preliminary draft themes and goals.

Draft Schedule of Upcoming Meetings

(subject to change)

Monthly Meetings: 3rd Friday of the month, 9-10:30 AM, SRPC Office, Conf. Room 1A
Quarterly Field Trips: Thursdays, 3:45-5:30 PM, in Sept., Dec., Feb., and Jun.

Date	Location	Program	Tentative Agenda Items
Fri. April 17, 2026 9-10:30 AM	SRPC	SRPC	• NYU Student Childcare Phase 2 Presentation • Data Snapshot • Continue Regional Plan Goal Setting activity
Fri. May 15, 2026 9-10:30 AM	SRPC	EDD	• CEDS Final Draft Presentation and start of Public Comment Period
Fri. Jun. 19, 2026* 9-10:30 AM	SRPC	RPC EDD MPO	• CEDS Adoption and Final Presentation • Business items
Thu. Jun. 25, 2026 4:30-7:30 PM	The Oaks Somersworth	RPC	• Annual Meeting Dinner SRPC at 55: Rooted in History, Focused on the Future

* Note, this date is a holiday.

Meeting of the SRPC Commissioners

Friday, February 20, 2026 9:00 – 10:30 AM

Hybrid Meeting (Conference Rm 1A, SRPC Office & via Zoom)

1. Introductions:

Chair P. Rasmussen called the meeting to order and asked for introductions:

P. Rasmussen, Durham; Michael Lehrman, Durham; Steve Stancel, Wakefield; Joe Boudreau, Rochester; Mark Richardson, Somersworth; Matt Towne, Barrington; Rick Healey, Rochester; Don Manter, Northwood; Michael Williams, COAST; Marshall Goldberg, Brookfield; Kate Buzard, Middleton; John Mullen, Middleton; Katrin Kasper, Lee; Krysta Gingue, Dover; Kean McDermott, Dover; Sarah Wrightsman, Newmarket; Steve Brown, Dover.

Staff present: Jen Czysz, Mark Davie, Colin Lentz, Michael Polizzotti

Commissioners and Committee members on Zoom: Jack Wade, NHDES; Lindsey Williams, Dover; Bill Wtson, NHDOT; Glen Griswold, Nottingham

Staff on Zoom: Lisa Murphy

P. Rasmussen announced that the Executive Committee appointed Steve Stancel from an alternate to a regular member of the EC, and that M. Lehrman was appointed Vice Chair to replace Peter Nelson, who resigned in January. Two alternate positions remain open.

2. Commissioner Roundtable

K. McDermott announced that May is Bike Month and noted that the 15th is Bike to Work Day. He added that the Seacoast Area Bicycle Riders organization is preparing its annual Bike Month celebration and continues to host bike-friendly events year-round. People are invited to reach out if they have questions or want to get involved or scheduled for events.

J. Boudreau reported that three companies have submitted early proposals to redevelop the Care Pharmacy property with a mix of residential and retail uses. He also spoke about regional housing projections, he feels optimistic about meeting demand but sees a continued shortage of lower-cost housing options, such as affordable apartments.

Finally, he highlighted growing regional infrastructure needs. Rochester is considering repairing or replacing the arena—estimated at \$5 million and \$20 million, respectively—and he emphasized that communities across the region will face significant costs for infrastructure improvements, particularly in water and sewer, in the coming years.

M. Towne provided a reminder of the workshop series held in the Barrington Library. ACLU is presenting on how you can use your personal power. The free event is scheduled March 12.

K. Gingue reported that the Dover Land Use Master Plan Chapter is finished and approved by the Planning Board and encouraged everyone to look at the overlay created for the zoning districts.

J. Czysz stated that there are two alternate vacancies on the Executive Committee and asked for volunteers to reach out to her or Megan.



3. Action Items

a. Minutes from December 19, 2025

b. Minutes from January 16, 2026

M. Bobinsky motioned to accept the December 19 and January 16 minutes. Following discussion, S. Wrightsman seconded the motion and added an amendment to correct the attendance list in the January 16, 2026, minutes. All members voted in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

c. Mid-year Budget Adjustment

J. Czysz stated that each year, we look at the budget and make any adjustments to reflect changes since the budget was adopted back in June. Each year as we set up the budget, there is some speculation and unknowns. This process allows us to update our budget within our financial reports and better track progress against the budget.

Some notable adjustments to the budget revenues include the reduction in funds to several projects that have taken longer to move through the contracting process or were slower to commence than anticipated. There were also several projects initially entered with smaller placeholder award amounts that have now been awarded and budgets firmed up. Additionally, there is the addition of a few new awards not previously anticipated.

On the expense side, differences include adjustments to staffing levels to cover for leaves of absence; confirmation of health plan selections post open enrollment; increased costs for computer replacements, office internet, and the annual audit; decrease in the anticipated travel costs; and various adjustments to outsourced contracts to reflect project progress.

S. Wrightsman moved to approve the proposed budget amendment with a second by M. Bobinsky. All members voted in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

d. Approval of CEDS strategy committee members

M. Polizzotti reported that the Strafford Economic Development District (EDD) CEDS Strategy Committee held its first meeting on January 30, 2026. A list of voting and non-voting members is included in the packet for Commissioners to review.

Because of the timing of the CEDS kickoff, the initial committee membership was compiled using the categories outlined in the bylaws. Although the first meeting has already taken place, the full slate of members is being presented for formal review. As vacancies arise, the bylaws allow the committee to nominate and appoint new members internally to maintain balanced representation. Staff will continue outreach efforts to engage large employers and developers for future participation. Steve Stancel volunteered to serve on the Committee.

The Committee determined that previous motions should have been followed by a roll call vote.

S. Brown moved to approve the CEDS Strategy Committee members as presented and to reconsider the earlier votes using a roll call for those motions. M. Williams seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and all members voted in favor. The motion passed. J. Wade and B. Watson abstain.

e. 2026 Regional highway safety performance targets

C. Lentz explained that federal law requires SRPC to set annual transportation safety performance targets for all public highways in the region. These targets reflect incremental progress toward the Vision Zero goal—eliminating all fatalities and serious injuries on New Hampshire roads, which SRPC has formally adopted as its guiding policy.

He reviewed the data sources and trends used to establish long-term goals, including seatbelt-use statistics and crash factors. The analysis shows that most crashes stem from human behavior—distraction, sun glare, texting while driving, alcohol use—as well as infrastructure issues such as inadequate signage and increased traffic volumes.

The recommended long-term goals for 2035 include:

- 75% reduction in fatalities
- 50% reduction in serious injuries
- 100% elimination of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries

SRPC staff recommended setting regional targets for the number of fatalities and serious injuries, while supporting the statewide targets for the rates of those metrics. There was brief discussion on how emerging technologies, such as driverless vehicles, might influence future safety data.

Michael Bobinsky made a motion to approve the 2026 safety targets and seconded by M. Williams. A roll call vote was taken. All members voted unanimously in favor; motion passed.

4. Discussion Items

a. Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress Analysis

Mark Davie reported on the Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress analysis completed by SRPC and Rockingham RPC in partnership with COAST and UNH Wildcat Transit. The project, carried out through late 2024 and early 2025, created an accessibility and safety index for more than 300–400 transit stops across the two regions.

The analysis combined NHDOT roadway data, municipal sidewalk data, and information from the 2019 Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress project. It evaluated sidewalk and shoulder conditions, right-of-way width, traffic volumes, and speed limits. Each road segment received a stress score from 1–5 (where 1 represents low stress, 4 is high stress, and 5 is pedestrian-restricted), including separate scores for each side of the road and for street crossings.

Key deliverables included:

- A Transit Stop Study and PLTS conditions map
- A full report summarizing methodology and findings
- Site plan regulation guidance and model language for municipalities
- Suggested off-site improvement guidance and proposed revisions to Dover’s traffic impact analysis criteria. The project aims to help communities improve pedestrian safety, accessibility, and planning around transit stops.

5. Other Business

There was no other business.

6. Citizens Forum

No Citizens spoke.

7. Adjourn

At 10:47 AM-M. Bobinsky motioned to adjourn. D. Manter second. All in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Taylor-Fetter

Strafford Economic Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2026 - 2030

Overview

The **Lenses**, **Themes**, **Goals**, and **Action Items** below have been developed based on extensive feedback received from following:

- SRPC's Comprehensive Plan Update workshop held in April 2025.
- Comprehensive Plan Survey and public engagement events held from the Spring of 2025 through Winter 2026.
- Strafford EDD Board of Directors meeting held in November 2025.
- Strafford EDD Strategy Committee Meetings held in January 2026 and February 2026.

Lenses

These lenses are **overarching principles** that will impact many, if not all, of the themes that follow.

- **Regional Partnerships and Collaboration:** Strengthening public and private partnerships, expanding civic engagement and community involvement, and building economic development and volunteer capacity.
- **Resiliency and Future Readiness:** Increasing the region's ability to anticipate, withstand, adapt to, and recover from disruptions such as economic shocks, environmental factors, and demographic shifts.
- **Quality of Life and Community Identity:** Preserving, leveraging, and enhancing the natural, cultural, and community attributes and quality of life factors that define our region and attract and retain families, workers, and businesses.
- **Age Friendliness:** Plan for changing demographics- including an aging population and fewer children- that will impact workforce, housing, childcare, healthcare, and business operations.

Themes and Goals

Housing

Goal Statement: Diverse and affordable housing options that support workforce needs and economic growth while leveraging the region's capacity for development and investments, and existing built assets.

Sub-Goals:

- Address housing supply constraints across all housing types.
- Address affordability challenges (including property tax burdens) to better attract and retain the workforce.
- Promote adaptive reuse and redevelopment opportunities.
- Ensure development balances needs for housing and protection of the environment and natural assets.
- Plan for development in coordination with water and sewer capacity and investments.

Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship

Goal Statement: A resilient and innovative regional economy which supports businesses, non-profits, and entrepreneurs, where these groups and industries can quickly adapt and be prepared for emerging social, environmental, and technological trends, and can engage in data-driven decision making.

Sub-Goals:

- Monitor and help businesses and economic development stakeholders respond to emerging trends and challenges (e.g. tariffs, technological advancement, energy production and storage, shifting market conditions).
- Support businesses and entrepreneurship through resource navigation, connecting businesses/entrepreneurs to tools, technical assistance, and funding opportunities.
- Cultivate a strong business community through networking/public-private partnership opportunities.
- Continue to maintain robust data metrics to guide decision making, track economic performance, and identify opportunities for growth.
- Promote the region's specialty industries and innovation (aerospace, advanced manufacturing, etc.).
- Support business attraction and retention strategies that diversify the tax based and reduce reliance on property taxes, while improving understanding of how state business taxes influence local tax pressures.
- Analyze research on the diversification of energy types to power cost effective, sustainable business operations and economic activity.

- Capitalize on the region's strong broadband infrastructure as a competitive advantage and strengthen digital literacy initiatives.

Workforce, Education, and Childcare

Goal Statement: A strong and supported workforce with access to affordable childcare; alongside a sustainable and robust talent pipeline that addresses existing workforce challenges through proactive planning and partnerships to identify emerging trends, skills gaps, and the region's education systems.

Sub-Goals:

- Understand and identify opportunities to address workforce challenges, including attraction and retention.
- Identify and align current and emerging business needs with workforce training and education (addressing skills gaps).
- Promote, leverage, and enhance the region's high-quality education systems (K-12, technical training, and Higher Ed) to strengthen long-term talent development.
- Support the expansion of childcare affordability and availability to enhance workforce participation.

Healthy and Vibrant Communities

Goal Statement: A region that continues to prioritize leveraging, enhancing, and protecting its built infrastructure, local and regional assets, and cultural identity that strengthen it and make it a desirable place where people want to live, visit, and do business now and in the future.

Sub-Goals:

- Preserve and market the region's unique natural, cultural, and recreational assets as a means to attract and retain families, workers, and businesses.
- Identify opportunities to boost community vibrancy and promote community pride and respect.
- Strengthen and promote strong community feel and sense of place to drive the local economy.
- Support healthy lifestyles and communities accessible via all forms of transportation.
- Promote healthcare access and affordability.
- Improve connections between recreation, natural assets, and town centers.
- Improve connectivity and transportation access for all, including walkers, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers, within and between communities.
- Promote thoughtful land use planning for emerging uses, such as data centers, to protect community health, character, and quality of life.

DRAFT Action Items

Action Item	Primary Theme	Relevant Lens(es)	Crossover Theme(s)
Continue to convene the Tri-Region Economic Development Stakeholder (TREDS) group to encourage and facilitate information and ideas sharing.	All	All	-
Maintain open communication with businesses and municipalities regarding economic development issues, best practices, or funding opportunities.	All	All	-
Provide technical assistance to municipalities and collaborate with partners in our region to promote proactive economic development strategies and best practices.	All	All	-
Cultivate strong relationships with a wide variety of partner organizations to promote regional approaches to economic development and to advocate on behalf of our region.	All	All	-
Maintain an up-to-date Priority Project List for the purpose of supporting local infrastructure projects and advocating on behalf of priority projects to potential funders.	All	All	-
Maintain an up-to-date Regional Master Plan for the purpose of providing local and regional planning assistance to identify regional needs and potential solutions.	All	All	-
Regularly update the CEDS and Data Snapshot to provide relevant economic, demographic, and housing data to communities and stakeholders, and key indicators, trends, and analyses.	All	All	-

Support business resiliency planning through collaborations with municipalities and partners to help business withstand economic shocks.	Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship	Regional Partnerships and Collaboration Resilience	Workforce, Education, and Childcare
Support regional conversations and planning related to energy diversification and energy resilience for businesses and economic infrastructure.	Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship	Resilience	Healthy Communities
Research and promote tools for economic development, such as Central Business Service Districts and Opportunity Zones 2.0.	Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship	Resilience	Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Assist municipalities with updating their Economic Development Master Plan chapters.	Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship	Resilience Quality of Life and Community Identity	Workforce, Education, and Childcare Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Finalize and promote an “Economic Development Ecosystem” to serve as a central resource that highlights all economic development partners and organizations and what assistance they provide.	Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship	Regional Collaboration and Partnerships Resilience	-
Continue to work with municipalities to ensure that local hazard mitigation plans are updated regularly to improve the resilience of municipal infrastructure and encourage more resilient development patterns and techniques.	Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Resilience Regional Partnerships and Collaboration	Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship
Continue to work with SRPC’s municipalities to plan for the impacts of extreme weather and/or sea-level rise on their communities.	Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Resilience Regional Partnerships and Collaboration	-
Leverage SRPC’s Brownfields Program to increase opportunities for facility rehabilitation, development and land acquisition and maintenance to strengthen and promote vibrant communities.	Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Resilience	-

		Regional Partnerships and Collaboration	
Consider people of all ages across all planning functions and promote opportunities for further information and resources.	Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Regional Partnerships and Collaboration Age Friendliness Quality of Life and Community Identity	Workforce, Education, and Childcare
Promote the findings of the Pedestrian Level of Traffic Stress study and provide technical assistance to municipalities seeking to improve walkability and community vibrancy.	Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Regional Partnership and Collaboration Resilience	-
Use Communities for Healthy Aging Transition (CHAT) action plans to provide technical assistance to communities.	Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Resilience Age Friendliness	Housing Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Continue updating and promoting the Arts and Culture mapping tool.	Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Regional Partnerships and Collaboration Quality of Life and Community Identity	
Continue conducting sidewalk and accessibility audits in communities in partnership with local municipalities to identify areas for infrastructure improvements for accessible, multimodal transportation in communities.	Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Age Friendliness Regional Partnership and Collaboration Quality of Life and Community Identity	-
Support regional initiatives and partnerships that promote recreation, tourism, and cultural assets as drivers of economic vitality and quality of life.	Healthy and Vibrant Communities	Regional Partnerships and Collaboration	-

		Quality of Life and Community Identity	
		Resilience	
Provide technical assistance to municipalities updating zoning ordinances, land use regulations, and Master Plans to support diverse housing types, including ADUs, mixed-use development, and adaptive reuse.	Housing	Quality of Life and Community Identity Age Friendliness	Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Map potential priority areas for development based on access to infrastructure and other factors to support housing, economic development, and community revitalization.	Housing	Resilience Quality of Life and Community Identity Age Friendliness	Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Track building permit data to identify trends in development.	Housing	Quality of Life and Community Identity	Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Support and assist communities exploring regional partnerships for infrastructure upgrades of expansions (e.g. water and sewer infrastructure).	Housing	Regional Collaboration and Partnerships Resilience	Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Complete the RHNA Implementation project and promote it as a tool for municipalities looking for guidance on balancing housing production needs with environmental protection.	Housing	Regional Collaboration and Partnerships Resilience Quality of Life and Community Identity Age Friendliness	Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Continue collecting data and conducting research regarding the childcare system, including partnership that explore employer-sponsored childcare.	Workforce, Education, and Childcare	Age Friendliness Regional Partnership and Collaboration	Healthy and Vibrant Communities

Assist municipalities with updating their zoning ordinances and regulations to remove barriers and support expanded childcare availability.	Workforce, Education, and Childcare	Resilience Age Friendliness	Workforce, Education, and Childcare Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Complete Phase 2 of the NYU Regional Childcare Project and promote the deliverables amongst municipal staff, land use boards, and current and prospective childcare providers.	Workforce, Education, and Childcare	Resilience Age Friendliness	Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship Healthy and Vibrant Communities
Review and update the Employer Toolkit developed by SoHo Creative Studios to help businesses in the region address workforce challenges.	Workforce, Education, and Childcare	Regional Partnerships and Collaboration	Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship
Convene workforce development partners, employers, and educational institutions to strengthen alignment between training programs and industry workforce needs.	Workforce, Education, and Childcare	Regional Partnerships and Collaboration Resilience	Business, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship

Strafford Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2026

Draft Themes and Goals (March 20, 2026)

The draft themes below were compiled based on input received throughout the region during outreach for SRPC's update to the Regional Master Plan.

Overall Questions for Commissioners:

- Are the themes distinct enough as presented (not too much overlap between them)?
- Do the draft goals strike a balance between aspiration and realism?
- Any major topics that aren't covered or you think should be highlighted more?

PROPOSED THEMES

Theme: Alternatives to Driving

A personal vehicle is still all-but essential, however people under 35 and older adults desire options other than driving. The region needs to develop its interconnected, multimodal transportation system. Public transit can move high volumes of people efficiently and safely for a range of trip purposes, but lacks the state financial support for buses to run more frequently. The Amtrak Downeaster is very popular and demand for passenger rail service is increasing. Its full potential cannot be met without regional collaboration and state investment.

Draft Goals:

- Increase passenger rail frequency through the region
- Increase access to public transit
- Improve connectivity between modes
- Reduce gaps and barriers in pedestrian network

Notes/Questions for Commissioners:

Theme: Trails

Trails are an economic engine, and they connect members of a community. Trails are a safer, and can be a less expensive alternative to sidewalks that contribute to rural town feel. They can be a footpath through the woods, a multiuse rail trail, or a paved path parallel to a local road or highway.

Draft Goals:

- Increase trails and connectivity within and between municipalities.
- Increase access to and awareness of state rail trails.

Notes/Notes/Questions for Commissioners: This theme came out of outreach results as a distinct desire from respondents – separate from Alternatives to Driving.

Theme: Housing Impacts

More people are unable to afford housing close to the things they need. This increases reliance on personal vehicle travel which puts strain on the transportation system. People who were living in the region pre-covid facing greatest burden to improving their housing situation (and starting families).

Draft Goals:

- Decrease the [effective] distance between housing and essential services and destinations.

Notes/Questions for Commissioners: Housing development is a uniquely local-control issue; how can we effectively frame discussion about regional-ism around housing?

Theme: Equity (Aging Population & Families)

In a rural area like the Strafford region, being able to drive alone is critical for transportation independence. People without the ability to drive are unable to reach critical destinations or participate in the economy. Compared to other parts of NH, the region has excellent public transportation, with a diverse range of providers for seniors and people with disabilities. However, service gaps remain in both geographical coverage and service types. The population continues to age and the gap between seniors and critical services will continue to widen without increased transportation support.

Draft Goals:

- Ensure all residents have access to transportation that serves their basic needs regardless of age or physical ability.
- Increase public transportation services in underserved areas
- Increase transportation connections with large employers in the region

Notes/Questions for Commissioners: The goal of this section is to focus on the people side of the equation – *Who* is being served (or not).

Theme: Safety

Zero is the only acceptable number of fatalities and serious injuries. Safety needs to take priority over convenience, volume, and speed for vehicles. Downtowns and commercial centers need to be safe for the widest range of people and users possible in order to thrive. Rural region with specific rural safety hazard. Differentiate primary “uses” of highways. If we want to change the “culture” of driving, the infrastructure needs to prescribe what we want.

Draft Goals:

- Zero deaths and serious injuries on public highways.
- Reduce vehicles speeds in commercial centers and neighborhoods.

- Separate pedestrian traffic from vehicle traffic.

Notes/Questions for Commissioners: Safety is an expansive topic. The general plan is to use the regional Safety Action Plan as a primary guide for actions. Do you have other recommendations on how to focus this section?

Theme: State of Good Repair

The condition of public infrastructure is critical for the regional economy. Maintaining roads, bridges, and busses in a state of good repair is increasingly costly; replacing them can represent a local budget crisis. A more regional approach to funding transportation infrastructure improvements is needed as project costs continue to exceed local resources. The transportation network needs to be upgraded in anticipation of more frequent stronger storms with more precipitation, higher tides, and shifts in population due to climate change. The financial burden of maintaining a public transportation system maintenance is unequally shared in NH.

Draft Goals:

- Support maintenance of municipally owned transportation infrastructure.
- Increase regional collaboration for infrastructure maintenance and improvement.
- Focus on infrastructure improvements that reduce capital and maintenance costs.
- Increase the resilience of transportation infrastructure

Notes/Questions for Commissioners: This theme holds the most potential for driving a conversation around regional cooperation and investment. Do you have recommendations for how to frame that conversation?

Strafford Regional Planning Commission

Forward Thinking: A Comprehensive Plan

Land Use and Environment

Proposed Lenses, Themes, and Initial Draft Goals

The draft lenses, themes, and goals below have been developed based on extensive feedback received during SRPC's Comprehensive Plan Update workshop held in April 2025, the Strafford EDD Board of Directors meeting held in November 2025, and the Strafford EDD Strategy Committee Meeting held in January 2026.

Proposed Lenses

These lenses are overarching principles that will impact many, if not all, of the themes that follow.

- **Conscious Development**
 - Development in already developed areas
 - Sprawl Prevention
 - Infill Planning
 - Demographic changes
- **Conservation**
 - Recreation
 - Tourism
 - Environmental Stewardship

Proposed Themes and Associated Goals

- 1. Infrastructure Availability:** Utilize existing urban areas to reduce the impact of limited access to utilities, transportation, and water infrastructure capacity on SRPC communities.
 - Water and sewer installation in communities is costly and impractical, but necessary for development opportunities
 - Responses suggest growth in already developed areas:
 - New transportation infrastructure increases burdensome runoff and habitat fragmentation
 - Take advantage of current public investments to support new private investment

- Use existing transportation corridors as hubs for mixed use development, roadside vegetation management, and shared-use paths for bikers and pedestrians

2. Balanced Spaces: The SRPC community's high interest in greenspace, recreational assets, and waterways calls for thoughtful development.

- Recreational assets can serve as a "launch" point:
 - Identifying characteristics the community looks for in preservation
 - Directing attention to areas that should be preserved
- Indexing and promoting municipal ownership of land for conservation
- Revise town and city center regulations to allow for more attainable development; height limits, multi-family units, TIFs, etc.

3. Historic Resources & Town Center: Enhancement and preservation of cherished downtowns, village centers, and historic mill districts to preserve community character, prevent sprawl, and serve as bases for local businesses.

- Look to successful conservation development tools such as RSA 79-E, TIF districts, transferring of development rights, and CDBG grants
- Focus on infill planning and pedestrian-safe environment
- Provide convenient services, amenities, and attractions for visitors
- Investigate conversion of mill space into residential to revitalize downtown businesses

4. Community & Regional Character: Community character is being defined by differing expectations among age groups, where people are "from", remote work status, proximity to Boston, and recreation.

- Individuals and families move here for the outdoor assets and cultural ecosystem services
- Support local businesses important to the region

5. Housing: Aging in place, upscale consumers moving into the region, and local attitudes are impacting SRPC housing availability and affordability.

- People moving into the region who can afford higher prices are impacting availability and region pricing
- Newcomers reported that local attitudes and opposition were impacting housing
- Housing is not adaptable to aging because of transportation options and poor community connectivity
- Rental homes for families (3-4 bedrooms) have not been included in the rapidly expanding rental market for affordability
- Small starter homes were reported as most needed housing in the community by 76% of respondents.

6. Resilience: SRPC community calls for climate change mitigation and adaptation tactics. [note: this item will likely move to a separate Climate Addendum]

- Awareness of climate change effects in the region and impacts on the community
- Avoid building on water ways due to sea level rise
- Explore installation of solar and land reuse practices

7. Recreation: Recreational identity of SRPC and tourism-related strategies.

- SRPC communities as day trips from Boston and Southern NH, rather than individual destination
- Utilization of state benefits from the RecReady campaign

8. Equity: SRPC is ensuring a seat for at the table all community voices.

- Maintain regular contact with planning commissions and stakeholders
- Ensure all voices are part of the conversation
- Reserve a seat for a UNH student during Commission meetings