

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Completed CTAP Community Planning Assessment Summary Report & Questionnaire



Prepared on Behalf of the Town of Hooksett

By:

The Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission



Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

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. This questionnaire is attached at the end of the Final Summary

History and Purpose:

The Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) is in the second year of a five-year process. The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (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 Hooksett, 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.

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Findings:

- 1) **Implement the recommendations contained in the town's 2004 Master Plan pertaining to affordable and workforce housing.**
- 2) **Establish a Village Center Zoning district**
- 3) **Develop and implement a Wellhead Protection Program**
- 4) **Develop a Natural Resources Inventory**
- 5) **Create an Economic Development Plan**
- 6) **Develop an Agricultural Inventory**
- 7) **Establish an Agricultural commission**

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

Key Recommendations:

The town of Hooksett could benefit in the future by implementing the recommendations contained in the town's 2004 Master Plan pertaining to affordable and workforce housing. The creation of a Natural Resources Inventory would benefit the town greatly. This inventory would identify areas of ecological importance and designate areas as high priority for preservation. Although the Town of Hooksett has a Village Center and a Village Plan, there have been no specific zoning changes to establish a Village Center Zoning District. Establishment of a Village Center Zoning District could also allow for an additional area where mixed use would allow for residential and commercial uses on the same lot.

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.

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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 Hooksett 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 Hooksett 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 Hooksett is attached.

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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.

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Findings:

- The Town of Hooksett regularly participates in mutual aid for police and fire with neighboring towns. There is also agreements in place for water supply, however the town's lacks agreements for sewer and solid waste.
- The Town of Hooksett has a Capital Improvement Program for FY 2006/07 to 2011/12. The CIP will be updated again in 2010
- The Town of Hooksett has established TIF districts
- The town has not pursued the use of CROP zones at the present time
- No Dark Skies lighting ordinance
- The town does have an Impact Fee Ordinance and the Impact Fee schedule is updated annually by the Planning Board
- The town operates a transfer station and recycling center
- The town does have an age restricted housing ordinance
- No Inclusionary Housing Ordinance
- There are no standards in the site plan regulations which define when a traffic impact study should be required.
- Elderly Tax Exemptions were increased last year

Recommendations:

The town of Hooksett could benefit in the future by implementing the recommendations contained in the town's 2004 Master Plan pertaining to affordable and workforce housing. While the town allows multi-family housing and cluster housing in its medium density residential district and mixed use districts having a specific ordinance will allow the town to match housing needs with population growth and local economic factors. Defining when a traffic study should be required is vital to future planning of development.

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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:

- **The Town of Hooksett's 2004 Master Plan recommends a number of revisions to the town zoning ordinance to provide for better consistency including; Open Space Preservation, creation of a Village Mixed Use District as well as an Office/Business Park Overlay along Route 3, establishment of new industrial sites and zoning, and implementing growth control measures**
- **Innovative Land Use Techniques are allowed through the town zoning ordinance such as, Performance Zoning, Cluster Zoning, Impact Fees, and Environmental Characteristics Zoning for Wetlands Conservation Overlay Zone, Prime Wetlands, and Groundwater Resource Conservation District.**
- **A Range of lot size are provided for throughout the low, medium, and high density residential districts**
- **Hooksett has an Open Space Plan, it was prepared by SNHPC in 2004**
- **Nonresidential uses not required to be along major roadways**

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- **Lack of formal Natural Resources Inventory**
- **Lack of specific prohibition against development within a floodplain**
- **Lack of Wellhead Protection Program**
- **Town Master Plan makes no specific mention of protection and preservation of wildlife habitats**

Recommendations:

Hooksett's environmental protection, land use planning, and open space activities are extensive and have been effective over the years. The creation of a Natural Resources Inventory would benefit the town greatly. This inventory would identify areas of ecological importance and designate areas as high priority for preservation. A wellhead protection program is needed in accord with the towns' current water resource management practices. The SNHPC is currently working on a Wellhead Protection Area Inventory and Assessment for the Town of Hooksett. Preservation of wildlife habitats should also be an important part of the town's environmental protection efforts. This should be an area to be explored extensively in the next Master Plan update.

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:

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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:

- **Hooksett is a Preserve America Community**
- **Hooksett has established a Village Center called Hooksett Village, however it is not a specific zoning district**
- **Mixed uses are defined by what is permitted in a particular zoning district. There are currently no mixed use provisions which allow for a residential and commercial use to exist on the same lot or within the same building except in Mixed Use district 5.**
- **Then town has not designated scenic roads**
- **Lack of preservation of existing trees within the right-of-way of existing and proposed roadways**

Recommendations:

Although the Town of Hooksett has a Village Center and a Village Plan, there have been no specific zoning changes to establish a Village Center Zoning District. Establishment of a Village Center Zoning District could also allow for an additional area where mixed use would allow for residential and commercial uses on the same lot. This would have the added benefit of contributing to the model of a “walkable community” where commercial, retail, and residential activities are all located near each other. Hooksett has done extensive planning for historic preservation, being the first community in the state to be designated a Preserve America Community. This designation makes available certain grants and funding opportunities related to historic preservation.

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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 town does not have an Economic Development Plan nor does it participate in the Main Street Program.**
- **An Exploration Committee for Economic Development has been formed to address this issue.**
- **The community does not provide tax incentives for business to locate in the community center**
- **The community has not identified anchors that could be used to spur economic activity**
- **Lack of agricultural inventory and mapping of prime agricultural soils.**
- **Lack of agricultural commission.**

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Recommendations:

Although Hooksett has experienced strong economic growth in the past, the Town does not yet have an Economic Development Plan in place to address existing issues and future concerns. Participating in the Main Street program may prove helpful as a corollary to the Village Center Plan goals and implementation. The feasibility of allowing commercial and residential uses on the same lot in the Village center should also be explored. Establishment of an Agricultural Commission should be explored to help support and promote local agricultural business development.

Summary

Overall Findings:

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

- 1. Implement the recommendations contained in the town's 2004 Master Plan pertaining to affordable and workforce housing.**
- 2. Establish a Village Center Zoning district**
- 3. Develop and implement a Wellhead Protection Program**
- 4. Develop a Natural Resources Inventory**
- 5. Create an Economic Development Plan**
- 6. Develop an Agricultural Inventory**
- 7. Establish an Agricultural commission**

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Town of Hooksett Community Planning Assessment

Theme A: Municipal Services/Facilities & Regional Cooperation

High quality municipal and educational services and facilities and effective regional cooperation and communication

A-1 Funding and Delivering Municipal Services and Regional Cooperation

Goals

- Assist local governments in establishing stable, consistent funding approaches for public infrastructure and services.
- Ensure continuation of strong municipal services and schools so that they continue to provide quality services and meet projected growth.
- Develop and support new methods of regional cooperation that enhance local government delivery of public services while ensuring environmental quality.
- Allocate financial resources on a regional basis.

Specific Assessment Questions:

Is your community a member of an RPC?

Yes. Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

Do you have appointed commissioners who regularly attend?

Richard G. Marshall and Michel N. Jolin

Is your community a participant in any mutual aid agreements for police, fire, water and sewer, solid waste, etc?

Yes. Standard mutual aid agreements are in place for police and fire with neighboring towns. The South and Central Hooksett Water Precinct currently have agreements in place with Manchester Water Works for water supply. There are no agreements in place for sewer or solid waste and the Town of Hooksett is currently setting up a municipal ambulance crew to replace the services of Tri-Town.

Does your community participate in any regional service agreements, including SAUs?

Yes. Hooksett participates in SAU 15 and has an agreement in place with the City of Manchester for its high school students.

Does your community participate in other regional municipal cooperative efforts?

No.

Do you have an existing procedure for incorporating regional impact into the plan review process?

No formal procedure in land use codes. Rely on State Statutes 36:54 and 36:55.

Does your community have an updated Capital Improvements Program in place and if so, when was the CIP last adopted?

Yes for FY 2006/07 to 2011/12. The CIP will be updated again in 2010.

Does your community use Tax Increment Financing, community development funds, or Community Reinvestment and Opportunity Program (CROP) zones to provide infrastructure improvements in specific areas?

Yes. The Town has established TIF districts in the past and is currently working on a new TIF district to finance improvements for the proposed Cabela development to be located off Exit 11. The Town has not pursued the use of CROP zones at the present time.

Does your community have impact fees and if so, for what type of facilities/services?

Yes. See Article 29, Impact Fee Ordinance, adopted 5/8/01 in the town's zoning ordinance. An Impact Fee Schedule is updated periodically by the Planning Board for Schools, Recreation, Roads, Public Safety.

Does your community charge exactions (or off-site improvements) and if so, for what type of facilities/services?

Yes. Section 19.03 of the Town's recently adopted Development Regulations require the developer to bear his share of the costs of off-site improvements necessitated by his development as determined by the Planning Board. If the development cannot function without completing the offsite improvements, the developer is required to provide the improvements and they are not counted toward any credit for roadway impact fees. Also, Section 3.17 of the Development Regulations requires the developer to bear his share of the costs of off-site improvements necessitated by his development.

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Has your community planned for the provision of future utilities?

Yes. The Town of Hooksett has three independent water systems – the Hooksett Village Water Precinct, the Central Hooksett Precinct, and Manchester Water Works. Each precinct determines and plans for the installation of water mains and services. Some of this work is conducted by developers as projects are accepted to the system. There are also a number of private water systems operating in Hooksett: Pembroke Water Works and Pennichuck Water Works. The Town of Hooksett also has a wastewater treatment facility and sewer collection system operated by the Hooksett Sewer Commission. In 2001, the Commission adopted a Wastewater System Master Plan identifying needed improvements. Due to a significant increase in requests for sewer extensions, the Commission issued a temporary moratorium on new sewer extensions in 2004. This moratorium is currently still in place.

Does your community require underground installation of utilities?

Yes. Section 11.16 of the Town's recently adopted Development Regulations requires all electric, telephone and cable systems be installed below ground to the satisfaction of the specific utility. However, Section 3.12 of the Development Regulations requires that only provision shall be made for the site to be serviced by necessary utilities is required.

Does your community have an outdoor dark skies lighting ordinance? If so, what ordinance is it a part of?

No. There is no dark skies lighting ordinance in any of the town's land use regulations. However, the town's new development regulations now includes outdoor lighting standards which were adopted on May 14, 2007.

Are streetlights required or encouraged in any areas?

No. Section 3.13 of the town's development regulations indicates that provisions for outdoor lighting shall be made, but there are no specific streetlight requirements. Section 11.16 states that on proposed town roads, the utilities shall be located in a 15-foot wide utility easement adjacent to the 50-foot right-of-way.

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What long-range plans has your community made for meeting its future water supply needs?

The Hooksett Village Water Precinct is investigating the possibility of installing new wells to be located on the east side of the Merrimack River. Also, the planning board is currently working with the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission to update the town's existing water resources protection and management plan. The town's old water plan indicates that previous surface water supply sources within the community are no longer adequate as drinking water sources due to costly water treatment requirements. This leaves Lake Massabesic as the only major surface water supply serving the community. In addition, the town is blessed with many medium and high-yield stratified drift aquifers.

What are your current arrangements for septage disposal – does your town have a specified site and corresponding contract?

Private haulers in Hooksett currently have a contract for disposal at a facility in Allentown.

Has your community planned for its solid waste and recycling needs?

Yes. The town operates a transfer station and recycling center and the town's master plan estimates that current facilities are adequate to handle recycling and a 29 percent increase in solid waste in the future.

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A-2 Housing

Goal

- Ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing stock for a range of income levels that reflects regional and local needs and priorities.

Specific Assessment Questions:

How has your community planned for future housing needs?

The town's 2004 master plan recommends that the town work with the NH Housing Finance Authority and other agencies to assist residents with limited financial means in obtaining housing; that the planning board continually assess the timing and specifics of a growth management strategy; that the town amend its cluster development ordinance to assist in the provision of affordable housing; that the town explore other smart growth techniques to foster affordable housing; and proactively seek out opportunities to attract affordable housing. In addition, the plan recommends updating the March 1998 build out analysis as soon as possible.

Are the population and employment projections within your Master Plan consistent with regional and state projections?

Yes. The town's 2004 master plan includes both Southern NH Planning Commission's projections and the State of NH population projections from 2000 to 2020. There are no employment projections in the master plan.

Does the community's Master Plan reference and/or make use of the regional housing needs assessment in evaluating the housing needs within the community?

Yes. However, the regional housing needs assessment (2000) prepared by SNHPC included in the town's 2004 master plan is not the most up to date assessment which is January 2005. This should be updated in the town's master plan.

Where within your community is new residential growth occurring?

According to the town's 2004 master plan the greatest concentration of residential uses occurs in southeast Hooksett in the areas served by Rt. 3, Mammoth Road (Rt. 28), Bypass 28, Whitehall Rd (Rt. 27), and Smyth Road. Smaller, yet significant, residential concentrations occur west of the Merrimack River along Rt. 3-A, Hackett Hill, South Bow, Goffstown, and Roy roads, and the Hooksett Village area. Large new residential growth areas within the University Heights, Carriage Hill and Heads Pond Development area located on the east side of the Merrimack River within the north central region of the community.

Do the community's land use regulations provide for a wide range of housing types (single-family, duplexes, manufactured homes, apartments, etc.)?

Yes. There are a total of five standard residential zoning districts which permit a wide variety of residential uses and two mixed use districts which permit various densities and types of residential use. Except, manufactured housing within Hooksett is only permitted in manufactured housing parks and subdivisions.

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Are accessory apartments permitted/allowed?

Yes. Accessory apartments are permitted within the MDR & LDR zoning districts.

Does the community's land use regulations allow multi-family (> or = 3 units per dwelling) residences?

Yes, multi-family is permitted by right in the medium density residential district, high density residential district, elderly, older persons, and handicapped housing district, cluster housing, mixed use district 2 and mixed use district 5. Multi-family must be served by municipal water and sewer, the density can not generally exceed 2 units per every 2 acres and the frontage of lots may not be less than 200 feet.

Does your community have an age-restricted housing ordinance? If so, it is limited to 55+ or 62+?

Yes. Article 7 in the town's zoning ordinance. The ordinance includes housing for both 55+ (older person housing) and 62+ (elderly housing).

Do your community's regulations encourage energy conservation?

No. But the town's current building codes represent the minimum legal energy efficiency for structures. There are no special provisions to require higher insulation values, decrease building perimeters, optimize electrical lighting, use high-performance glass, encourage day lighting, utilize passive solar heating and cooling systems, utilize high-efficiency mechanical equipment, optimize HVAC systems, encourage energy-efficient appliances and equipment, and employ passive solar design.

Do your community's regulations encourage housing that meets disabled and/or universal design standards?

Yes. Article 7 in the town's zoning ordinance provides for handicapped buildings as a special exemption in the medium and high density districts. All handicapped housing must comply with the design requirements of the "Architectural Barrier-Free Design Code for the State of New Hampshire." Also, the town's building codes reflect the minimum legal handicapped requirements as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

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Has your community taken any steps (such as tax relief programs) to help senior citizens remain within their own homes?

Yes. Elderly Tax Exemption limits increased last year.

Do your Master Plan or land use regulations define affordable and workforce housing? If yes, how are these terms defined?

Affordable housing is not defined in the town's land use regulations, but the town's 2004 master plan utilizes the NH Housing Finance Authority definition of low income as 80 percent of median income which works out to be in the Manchester area based on the HUD definition of Low Income as a family of four if the family's yearly income is \$54,550 per year or less (\$26.41/hour). With this income, it is assumed that a Low Income family can afford a \$164,000 home or pay \$1,363 a month to rent an apartment.

Does your community have an inclusionary housing ordinance or provide bonuses for affordable and workforce housing?

No.

What steps has your community taken to provide and preserve affordable and workforce housing?

See answers to question one. Recommendations contained in the town's 2004 master plan need to be implemented.

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A-3 Transportation

Goal

- Promote safe, efficient, accessible, and diverse multi-modal transportation solutions for services and goods.

Specific Assessment Questions:

Do the provisions of the master plan and zoning ordinance encourage a continuous street network? How is the connectivity of new streets ensured?

Yes. The town's development regulations (Section 11.12) requires the arrangement, character, extent, width, grade and location of all streets to be considered in their relation to existing and planned streets, to topographical conditions, to the public convenience and safety, and their appropriate relation to the proposed use of the land to be served by such street. In addition under these regulations, proposed streets in a development shall provide for the continuation of the principle streets in adjoining areas or to their proper projection when adjoining land shall have been subdivided. Also, the town's zoning ordinance (Article 3, section H.) requires all streets, drives, other connection to an existing right-of-way be made only after obtaining approval for such connection from the planning board. The town's master plan addresses specific road improvements and highway studies as well as a major study of the town's roadway network including improving access with an additional bridge crossing the Merrimack River. There is however, no discussion in the town's master plan on the need for local road connectivity.

Are cul-de sacs addressed (in the context of the street network of the town) in your regulations? If so, what aspects are regulated?

Yes. The town's development regulations (Section 11.12) addresses the maximum length of cul-de-sac streets which is 1,200 feet as measured from the nearest road. However, a longer cul-de-sac may be approved if there is reasonable potential for connection of the cul-de-sac street through adjoining land to another approved street. The potential for connection is based on traffic circulation, development patterns, and topography. The Planning Board shall determine if a cul-de-sac is to be permanent, i.e., not connecting, or temporary, i.e., providing a connection to adjacent property.

Does the Planning Board permit design waivers for reduced pavement width and the installation of cape cod curbs?

There is no reference to or use of the concept of Planning Board waivers in the town's development regulations. The Planning Board is given authority to make determinations if a longer cul-de-sac is appropriate according to specific guidelines as noted above, however, no such guidelines exist with respect to curbing such as cape cod curbs, or to pavement width or to some of the other design standards within the town's development regulations such as streets.

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Are dead-end streets permitted and if so, what is the maximum street length allowed?
Only as a cul-de-sac subject to the town's development regulations as referenced in the question above. The minimum length is 500 feet and the maximum length of cul-de-sac streets is 1,200 feet.

Does the community's road standards reflect the character and topography of the existing area in terms of slope and sight distance?

Yes. Specific street grades and site distances are outlined in a Table of Geometric Standards in the town's development regulations. Site distances at intersections and/or grade changes must be in accordance with AASHTO standards (Section 11.12.4).

Do road standards vary depending on anticipated traffic volumes?

To a certain degree, the Table of Geometric Standards sets forth the minimum road standards which may be increased where traffic volumes warrant a higher level of design as ordered by the planning board (note #3 to this table). However, there are no traffic volumes noted in this table for the different functional classification of the town's roads as arterial, collector or local.

What is the community's policy for issuing building permits on Class VI roads?

The town's zoning ordinance (Article 3, Section J.) states that all building lots shall have frontage on a publicly approved street of Class 1 through Class 5. Frontage along a limited access highway, and frontage along any other public highway over which the control of access does not rest with the Town of Hooksett, or the State of New Hampshire, and Class 6 highways, shall not be deemed to meet the frontage requirements as set forth in this ordinance. In order to create a lot or obtain a building permit on a lot with frontage on a Class VI road requires a variance from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. It appears that the Town Council has adopted a Class VI Road Policy which basically follows the requirements of RSA 674:41.

Has the community considered bicycle or pedestrian transportation on a town-wide scale in the Master Plan or other planning documents?

No. There is reference to the need for bike paths and walking trails and the work of the Hooksett Heritage Trail Committee, but there is no town-wide bike or pathways plan developed for Hooksett.

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Do the land use regulations require sidewalks or bicycle paths or other pedestrian paths *within* new residential or commercial development?

Yes the Town's Development Regulations 11.12 requires sidewalks to conform to the Table of Geometric Standards and the construction of sidewalks in industrial, commercial and high-density residential districts. The Planning Board determines whether sidewalks are required on one or two sides of proposed roads based upon proposed intensity of the development, traffic characteristics, potential pedestrian destinations and other factors.

Are trails or other pedestrian connections required or considered *between* developments in the plan review process?

No. While the town's master plan recognizes the need for sidewalks and/or crosswalks and the development of a sidewalk plan to create "livable and walkable" communities, there are no requirements or regulations for pedestrian connections between developments.

Do parking requirements in the community vary by use classification or zoning district? If so, what are they?

No. The town's parking standards are based on type of use and are now found in Section 15 of the town's development standards.

Does the community permit/encourage or require sub-compact parking spaces?

No. There are no sub-compact parking requirements in the town's parking standards (Section 15).

Does the community's parking regulations include maximum as well as minimum parking requirements, i.e., setting a limit on the amount of parking allowed?

No. The town's parking standards are minimum only.

Do the community's regulations and transportation planning practices encourage the implementation of traffic calming techniques?

No. There are no references to or mention of traffic calming practices in the town's master plan or land use regulations.

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Do the community's land use regulations require the submission of traffic impact studies or analyses for new and enlarged developments? If so, when is a study required?

Yes. The town's zoning ordinance and in particular the mixed-use zoning districts require the submittal of a community impact statement which includes traffic impacts. However, there are no standards in the site plan regulations which define when a traffic impact study should be required. This needs to be addressed.

Does your community encourage alternative transportation? If so, is this accomplished through the land use regulations or other means?

Yes. The town's 2004 master plan recognizes the need for alternative transportation, particularly for handicapped and elderly and public transportation services. However, there are no standards or regulations in the town's land use ordinances which are designed to help accomplish this.

If transit or other transportation alternatives exist, does your community encourage or allow transit-oriented development?

Not applicable. At the present time, there are no forms of public transit in Hooksett and this has been identified as an area of concern.

Does the community have access management standards? Are they restricted to a specified area in the community or to specified uses?

No. There are no specific access management standards in the town's land use regulations. There are limited standards in the town's development regulations dealing with driveways, arterial streets and railroad right-of-way where the Planning Board may require marginal access streets, reverse frontage with screen plantings, and deep lots with rear service streets (Section 11.12).

Does the community have a memorandum of understanding with the DOT regarding driveway access on state highways?

No. There is no formal MOU in place with NH DOT regarding driveway access. District 5 Office is currently working with communities in region to develop an MOU. The benefits to the town would be increased opportunities to comment and review driveway permit applications, advanced notification, and plan copies. Municipalities may work with NH DOT to establish more stringent curb cut standards.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Theme B: Environmental Protection, Land Use, and Open Space *Strengthened protection and expanded access to natural resources and open space*

Environmental Protection, Land Use, and Open Space Protection

Goals

- Protect natural resources in harmony with meeting economic needs of the community and the region.
- Protect natural resources and environmental health, including ground water and aquifers, wildlife, and wildlife corridors.
- Establish and conserve an interconnected green infrastructure.
- Ensure convenient and nearby public access to open space, parks, and recreational opportunities.
- Maintain unique and diverse rural character of the community and region by protecting and preserving farm and forestlands.

Specific Assessment Questions: *Land Use*

Does your Master Plan have a vision chapter and a land use chapter?

Yes.

Has your community updated your Master Plan within the last five years? If not, how old is your plan?

Yes, it was last updated in 2004.

In what ways is your zoning ordinance consistent/or not consistent with the recommendations and projected land uses in the Master Plan?

The town's 2004 master plan identifies a number of revisions necessary to the zoning ordinance which would provide for better consistency. These include: open space preservation of specific tracts of land; establishing new active recreation area; work cooperatively with residents in the Hooksett Village to create a Village Mixed Use District as well as an Office/Business Park Overlay along Route 3; construct a connector road (College Park Drive) from Rt. 3 at Cigna west to the intersection at Merrimack and Main Streets (This road should be opening within the month); re-build intersection of Rt. 3 and Industrial Park Drive to facilitate development of commercial/retail area; construct easterly and northern segments of Parkway to open up land for University Heights and Head's Pond developments; study the feasibility of new bridge over river; locate new fire substations and potential new school site; establish new industrial sites and zoning; and consider implementing growth control measures.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Does your community's zoning ordinance allow innovative land use techniques as listed in RSA 674:21? If so, which ones?

Yes. Performance Zoning, Cluster zoning (Article 8), Impact Fees (Article 29) and Environmental Characteristics Zoning for Wetlands Conservation Overlay Zone (Article 18), Prime Wetlands (Article 18-A) and Groundwater Resource Conservation District (Article 19). The town's zoning ordinance also employs a number of mixed-use zoning districts which promote master planning for planned unit development. Also the planning board is currently exploring growth control measures.

Do the community's land use plans and regulations establish minimum densities to promote efficient use of land?

Yes. There are minimum lot sizes in residential districts which range from 2 acres in low density to ¾ and 1 acre in medium density based upon availability of water and sewer to less than ¾ in high density. Multi-family must be served by municipal water and sewer, the density can not generally exceed 2 units per every 2 acres and the frontage of lots may not be less than 200 feet. There are also density limitations spelled out in the Elderly, Older Person and Handicapped Persons district (Article 7) except the ZBA may allow a density of 15 units per acre and there shall be no more than 4 persons per unit with a maximum number of bedrooms of 2 per unit. Ten percent of all the units must be ADA compliant. Permitted density within cluster housing (Article 8) is based upon a formula which reduces the overall tract area by 15% for utilities and roads and subtract out all jurisdictional wetlands and water bodies and then divide the remainder by the minimum lot area for a dwelling unit in the underlying district. There are also a variety of density limitations established for the town's various Mixed Use Districts – 1 through 5.

Does the community have different land use plans for villages, town center districts, other neighborhoods, and open, less dense rural areas?

Yes. The Mixed Use District 5 requires that a master plan be submitted for land held in common ownership. All development must be consistent with the master plan. There is also an urban design plan for the Hooksett Village area. Also, Amendment # 3, proposes new urban residential zoning for the May meeting.

Do your community's regulations provide for a range of lot sizes? If so, what are they?

Yes. See answer to questions above.

Does your Master Plan and land use regulations encourage higher density development where water, sewer, and other infrastructure currently exist?

Yes. See answer to questions above.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Does the community's Master Plan encourage, and the zoning ordinance provide, for at least one or more zoning districts that allow a mix of residential and commercial uses?

Yes. Mixed Use District 5 permits both residential and commercial development in accordance with an approved master plan for the district.

Do the community's land use plans encourage traditional neighborhood development or the development of new villages?

Not directly. Mixed Use District 5 encourages the development of a Village Center, but there is no typical Village District within the town's zoning ordinance.

Does your community's zoning ordinance allow backlots?

No. There are no specific provisions or standards for backlots or flaglots within the town's zoning ordinance.

Does your community's zoning and/or development patterns locate nonresidential uses along major roadways or are those uses concentrated at intersections of major roads in a "village" or node?

The town's 2004 master plan encourages nonresidential uses to be clustered around major interchanges and intersections, however, the town's existing commercial and industrial districts are scattered along the town's major roadways.

Does your community have an historic resources inventory? Historic district(s)? Demolition delay bylaw?

The town's 2004 master plan does not address historic resources or identify a town-wide historic resources inventory. However, Hooksett Historical Society has identified 78 significant historical sites within the town. In addition, the town's master plan recommends a village district zone with design guidelines, but not a historic district. The town has no demolition delay ordinances.

Are there any brownfields located in the community and does the community have any local plans to redevelop them?

Yes. NH DES has identified 16 potential brownfield sites in Hooksett containing hazardous substances and a 102 potential petroleum sites within the community. There are currently no plans to develop them. The SNHPC prepared a grant application to EPA to seek funding to identify and explore brownfields development opportunities within the region.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Does the community provide a property tax exemption for alternative energy installations per RSA 72:61-74?

No.

Specific Assessment Questions: *Natural Resources*

What strategies and actions is the community taking to protect natural areas?

The town has identified and adopted a prime wetlands ordinance as well as a groundwater resource conservation district. The town has in place a wetlands conservation overlay district as well as floodplain regulations in the town's subdivision regulations. Also town has adopted erosion and sediment control regulations as part of both the subdivision and site plan regulations. In addition, the planning board has adopted landscaping requirements as part of the board's site plan regulations. SNHPC is also currently working to develop a source water protection program for the town and updating the town's water resources management and protection plan. SNHPC has also assisted in the town in developing an open space plan. The town's conservation commission has also been active in seeking wetland mitigation and obtaining conservation easements. In addition, the town participated in the past in the Local Resource Protection Priorities Program and identified 51 natural and cultural sites worthy of protection. This information is part of the SNHPC's REPP. It was last updated by the town in 2004.

Does the community have a Natural Resources Inventory? If yes, when was the last inventory conducted?

Not in a formal sense, however, in 2003, students from UNH conducted a study identifying priority lands for conservation efforts. This report is part of the town's 2004 master plan.

Are there any local boards or commissions active in environmental protection?

Yes. The conservation commission and planning board. A number of town representatives and residents also recently participated in a master plan and land use regulation audit as a component of the 3i Process through the Jordan Institute (see attached report).

Does your community participate in the National Flood Insurance Program?

Yes. The town's floodplain regulations are part of the town's development regulations (Section 6.11 and 13) and Section 00-7 Floodplain Development of the most recent edition of the Town of Hooksett, NH "Other Ordinances".

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Does the community's land use regulations prohibit development within the floodplain and if so, how?

No. The town enforces the floodplain regulations identified as Special Flood Hazard Areas as part of the town's development regulations (Section 13). These regulations require all subdivision proposals greater than 50 lots or 5 acres to include base flood elevation data. However, these regulations do not prohibit development within the floodplain.

Do the community's land use regulations require best management practices in its drainage, sedimentation and erosion control measures and if so, what examples are included?

Yes. There are erosion and sediment control regulations (Section 6.12 and 14) in the town's development regulations. These regulations define and require BMPs as part of the submittal of an erosion and sediment control plan that must conform to the Storm Water Management and Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook for Urban and Developing Areas in New Hampshire published by the Rockingham County Conservation District. Some examples include use of natural vegetation where ever possible, temporary seeding, mulching and priority use of natural drainage systems, including streams, wetlands, swales, ditches, etc.

Do the regulations require the submittal of drainage calculations and stormwater management plans? **Yes. The Town's Development regulations require the submittal of drainage calculations as part of a drainage report prepared and stamped by a licensed engineer.**

Does the community have regulations for erosion and sediment control during construction as well as post-construction?

Yes. Section 14 Erosion Prevention Plan (EPP) is required for any site involving 2 acres or more of impact and Section 3.05 Erosion Control Plan must include a stormwater management or drainage report, indicating how increased runoff, sedimentation, and erosion shall be controlled during and after construction of required improvements.

What storm interval(s) are required for drainage analysis calculations?

10-year (storm event) for closed drainage systems and checked at 25-year; 25-year for all open drainage and checked at the 50-year; cross culvert pipes connecting wetlands or outletting a wetland at 100-year; storm water detention and retention systems 50-year with 1' freeboard and checked at 100-year; and bridges 100-year (Section 11.13 Drainage Design Criteria – Development Regulations).

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Has the community adopted a stormwater management ordinance?

No, but there are drainage design and runoff control regulations (Section 11.13 and Section 14) as part of the town's development regulations. The Planning Board's site plan regulations refer to these standards. Revisions included in new development regulations.

Does the community have regulations for gravel excavating operations?

Yes, the Hooksett Sand and Gravel Ordinance.

Has the community adopted a Wetlands Conservation District?

Yes. The Wetlands Conservation Overlay District (Article 18) and Prime Wetlands (Article 18-A) in the town's zoning ordinance.

Does the community have wetland buffer or setback requirements and if so, what are they?

Yes. There is a 75-foot prime wetland buffer and for wetlands of one acre or more or very poorly, poorly or somewhat poorly drained soils, a 25-foot setback from the wetland boundary is to remain in its natural, undisturbed state; a 40-foot setback from wetland boundary to any building or paved area 2,400 square feet in size; a 75-foot setback from wetland boundary to any septic tank or leach field and any roadway and/or driveway crossing. Per zoning changes of May 2007 (if approved) all wetland crossings will require conditional use permit from planning board.

Have prime wetlands been inventoried and mapped within the community? Are there regulations in place protecting prime wetlands?

Yes. See answers to question above.

Does the community have an Aquifer Protection Ordinance?

Yes. Article 19 Groundwater Resource Conservation District in the town's zoning ordinance.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

What mapping source is the basis of the district?

The basis for the district is a map developed by NH DES, dated March 1999, which is based upon a report titled “Geohydrology and Water Quality of Stratified Drift Aquifers in the Middle Merrimack River Basin-South Central NH” prepared by the U.S. Geological Service in cooperation with NH DES Water Resources Division, dated 1995.

Has the community developed a Wellhead Protection Program and local regulations?

No. However, SNHPC is currently working with the town to establish a wellhead protection program with local regulations and emergency management plans.

Does the community have land use regulations in place to protect surface water resources?

Yes. The zoning ordinance (Section Article 3, section M) requires that all property located on the east side of the Merrimack River and abutting the eastern boundary of the Boston and Maine railroad proposed for nonresidential development must leave the existing natural vegetation buffer zone of 100 foot in width and in areas where an adequate vegetative buffer zone does not currently exist, the Planning Board may require the planting of a new buffer zone. The same requirement applies to all properties abutting the west side of the Merrimack River. The State of New Hampshire Shoreland Protection Act requirements also apply to the Merrimack River.

Does the community have Shoreland or Riparian Buffer regulation in place?

Yes. See answer to question above.

Does the community’s land use regulations utilize LID¹ performance standards and/or encourage use of environmentally-friendly techniques and materials, such as porous pavement?

No.

¹ LID is “low-impact development”, a series or network of stormwater techniques and performance standards that utilize the natural environment to reduce the impacts of development.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Has the community adopted the recommendations found in the Land Conservation Plan for New Hampshire's Coastal Watersheds, the Wildlife Action Plan, or the Natural Services Network? If not, would the community like more information about these plans?

No. However, an audit was recently conducted of the town's master plan and land use regulations to assess where these recommendations could be implemented (see attached report).

Has the community adopted regulations to protect wildlife or wildlife habitat?

No.

What actions, if any, has the community taken in cooperation with neighboring communities to protect wildlife or wildlife habitat at the regional scale?

The town's conservation commission is active working with the Bear Paw Regional Greenway Land Trust and other conservation commissions from neighboring towns.

Specific Assessment Questions: Open Space Preservation

Does the community have an Open Space Plan? When was the plan last updated?

Yes. It was prepared by SNHPC for the town in 2004. The plan is still relevant and active within the community.

Does the community's Master Plan consider the protection and preservation of wildlife habitats?

The town's 2004 master plan considers unique natural features preserve and expand undeveloped open space, trail systems and to identify specific wildlife habitat, however no specific recommendations or actions related to wildlife protection is identified. This is an area that needs to be updated in the town's master plan.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Do the community's zoning districts require a minimum amount of open space in each development?

Yes. The Low Density and Medium Density Districts allow 30% lot coverage; High Density District allows 10% coverage; Elderly, Older Person and Handicapped Persons zone allows 50%; Cluster Housing requires 25% open space; Commercial and Industrial Districts allow 75% coverage; Mixed Use District 1 allows 75% coverage; Mixed Use District 2 requires 30% open space; Mixed Use District 3 allows 75% coverage; Mixed Use District 4 allows 75% coverage; and Mixed Use District 5 requires 30% open space. The Groundwater Conservation District permits no more than 50% of any lot to be covered by impervious surfaces and buildings.

Do the community's land use regulations require developers to connect open spaces to existing greenways and other open space destinations within the community?

No. There are no provisions for connecting open space in Cluster Housing or any of the other town districts requiring open space to existing greenways or other existing open space within the community. The town's Open Space Plan, however, recommends that this be considered.

Do the community's land use regulations allow/require/or promote conservation subdivisions? Are conservation subdivisions mandatory in any zoning district within the community? If so, what is the acreage requirement? Is a density bonus offered?

Yes. Article 8 Cluster Housing in the town's zoning ordinance. However, cluster housing is not mandatory in any zoning district or on lots greater than a specified number of acres. There is also no density bonus.

Does the community's land use regulations require new development to consider existing natural landscape features in the design of the site?

Not specifically. Only Section 3.14 in the Development Regulations indicates that provision shall be made for protection of natural features.

What funding mechanisms has the community approved to acquire open space? (For example, bonds, the dedication of current use penalty taxes, capital reserve fund or conservation fund for land protection and acquisition, other mechanisms)?

Yes. In 2004 the community voted to raise the amount of land use change tax from 25 to 1005 to be deposited in the town's conservation fund. This fund is used to purchase or obtain conservation easements and protect land. The conservation commission also utilizes wetland mitigation to protect conservation land as part of NH DOT projects and has worked with Manchester Water Works and other large developers to set aside conservation land. The town however, has not protected or acquired land through the use of bonding.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

If your community dedicates current use penalties for land protection and acquisition, what is the percentage?

Yes. 100% as noted above.

Does your community have an open space committee and/or an active local land trust?

***No. The conservation commission is responsible for the town's conservation fund.
There is no active local land trust within the community.***

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Theme C: Downtown/Village Centers and Community Vitality *Vital, diverse, safe, and participatory communities with rural character, vibrant community centers, and a wide range of cultural and recreational resources*

C-1 Downtowns and Village Centers

Goals

- Target and support new development and redevelopment of existing downtowns and village centers, reusing built infrastructure, and rehabilitating buildings of historic value.
- Promote walkable downtowns and villages consistent with historic patterns within the community and region.
- Maintain small community New England “feel” with vibrant community centers and main streets, and historic preservation of buildings and landscape.

Specific Assessment Questions:

Does your community have an established traditional compact center or village area? If so, how many are there and what are they commonly named?

Yes. There is one main established traditional village center within the community and it is named the Hooksett Village.

Does your community’s zoning support these areas?

No. The town’s 2004 master plan recommends establishing a new Village District zone for this area.

Does your community have in place a Village Master Plan or Village Plan Alternative Ordinance?

Yes, the town has a planning study entitled “Hooksett Village Design Study” which was conducted as a result of two “charrettes” in March 2004. There is no village plan alternative ordinance in place.

Does your community have a policy to locate new public buildings near the community center?

Yes. The town’s master plan recommends that public and community buildings and facilities be maintained and located within the Hooksett Village.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Are there public places that encourage community gathering such as parks, central plains/greens, or community centers?

Yes. There are a number of public gathering places in Hooksett which include: the town offices, the library, post office, the community school and the town's recreational facilities and parks. There are no central plains/greens or community centers.

Does your community have an infill development policy² or ordinance in place?

No.

Are residential uses and mixed uses encouraged or allowed within the central village or traditional downtowns area?

Yes, but only according the uses permitted in the zoning district. There are currently no mixed use provisions which allow a residential and commercial use to exist on the same lot or within the same building except within the Mixed Use District 5 zone.

Does your community have a sign ordinance? What are its dimensional/ and other key provisions?

Yes. Article 20 of the town's zoning ordinance. The maximum sign size in a residential area is 6 square feet and signs permitted in commercial, industrial and mixed use districts can not exceed 50 square feet or 25 feet in height. Flashing or moving signage is not permitted.

Has your community designated scenic roads? If so, how many and what are they named?

No. The Highway Department has been contacted for this information and a reply is pending.

Does your community have design guidelines for new commercial and residential development? If so, are these guidelines advisory or mandatory?

Yes. There are general architectural standards in the town's development regulations (Section 3.04), but these guidelines are advisory in nature and discourage long unbroken expanses of wall and encourage the use of façade divisions, such as building jogs, textures and roof lines.

² Infill development is defined by EPA as “a strategy for accommodating growth and preventing sprawl through greater density and efficiency in land use development.” Examples include rear lot development, redevelopment in existing developed areas, etc.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Is the maximum size and scale of new development as permitted in the community's zoning ordinance an appropriate scale for the community?

(We need help with this question)

Does your community's ordinance require the installation of street trees and landscaping for new and enlarged developments, both along existing roads and on roads to be constructed?

Yes – only as required by the Planning Board. Section 11.12 of the town's development regulations provides that street trees shall be planted in the esplanade areas of all new streets. Tree pits shall be at least 3 feet in diameter by 2 feet in depth and filled with good loam free of stones over 2 inches in diameter, sods and clay.

Does your community's ordinance encourage the preservation of existing trees within the right-of-way of existing and proposed roadways?

No.

Does your community's ordinances preserve and enhance stone walls, both along the rights-of-way of roadways and across the landscape? If so, what ordinances are used to accomplish this?

Yes. As required by RSA 231:157 and 158 Scenic Roads.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

C-2 Vibrant Communities

Goals

- Support and encourage safe and diverse communities with a wide range of cultural and recreational resources.
- Foster an atmosphere wherein community members are actively involved and participate in civic life in their communities.

Specific Assessment Questions:

Are the citizens within your community active in community planning and growth initiatives?

Yes. _____

To what extent are community residents and business owners aware of your community's Master Plan?

The Master Plan is located on the Town website. Copies are also available at the Town Public Library and the Planning Department.

How does your community encourage public involvement and recruit new board members?

Public Hearings held on various issues. Also posting on the town's website for more information.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Theme D: Local Economy

Strengthened economic, business, and agricultural development that provides local employment and livable wages

D-1 Economic Vitality and Business Development

Goals

- Support sustainable and balanced economic growth and tax base.
- Support broad-based business development that provides local employment and livable wages.

Specific Assessment Questions:

Does your community have an economic development plan?

Exploration Committee for Economic Development. Committee has been established. 1st meeting is scheduled for 4/24/07

Does your community participate in the Main Street program?

No.

Where does your Master Plan anticipate or specify new nonresidential development to take place?

Exit 10, Exit 11, Hooksett Village, Rt 3 North, Rt 3 South, Bypass 28.

Where is most of your community's new commercial or industrial growth occurring?

Exit 10 and Exit 11 areas. Along Rt 3, Bypass 28.

Is residential development permitted in retail or commercial areas?

No.

Does the community provide tax incentives for businesses to locate in the community center or other priority areas, e.g. RSA 79E tax relief for downtown improvements?

No.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Does the community provide regulatory relief for businesses that locate in the community center?

No.

Has the community identified anchors (such as a post office or municipal building) which could be used to spur economic activity within the community center?

No.

D-2 Agriculture and Rural Working Landscapes

Goals

- Strengthen local agriculture and forestry by supporting related infrastructure and economic systems.

Specific Assessment Questions:

What strategies for protecting farmland are in your Master Plan?

Since Agriculture in Hooksett only accounts for 5.6 percent of the existing land use, little strategies have been implemented to protect it. However, in Appendix B of the Town Master Plan, which lists the target economic entities that provide good paying jobs and enriches Hooksett's quality of life, Agriculture is listed among the more prominent economic entities present in Town. By categorizing agriculture as an important aspect of the town's economy, Hooksett has helped to preserve the agriculture that does exist in the municipality.

How does the community's Master Plan and zoning ordinance define agriculture?

The Hooksett Town Zoning Ordinance defines Agriculture as: Cultivation and harvesting of agricultural crops according to recognized soils conservation practices. Including the protection of wetlands from pollution caused by fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides used in such cultivation and sedimentation caused by erosion.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Does the zoning ordinance protect lands appropriate for agriculture and forestry with a substantial minimum lot size that discourages single-family tract housing and preserves large sites for forestry or agricultural uses?

(We need help with this question)

Does the community map the location of farms and prime agricultural soils?

No.

Do the ordinances require HISS³ mapping or county soils where on-site septic systems are required?

No.

Does your community have an Agricultural Inventory?

No.

Do your community's ordinances require the mapping of prime soils for agricultural in development proposals?

No.

Does your community have any districts that are restricted for agricultural uses only?

No.

Does your community have an agriculture commission?

No.

Does your community reference the right-to-farm law in its zoning ordinance?

No.

³ HISS stands for high intensity soils mapping, a site-specific requirements for soils analysis.

Town of Hooksett, New Hampshire

Other possible questions to ask the audience during the presentation of results—

How much do you know about CTAP? Would you like to know more?
(We need help with this question)

What planning tools would be helpful to your community?
(We need help with this question)

What did you think of this survey, and how do you think the town could use this information?
(We need help with this question)