

Enclosed please find additional background reading material:

1. Recommendations on an Outreach Strategy & Tactics for the New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions.
2. Report to the New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions.
3. Planning for the Region Article (below)

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## **Planning for the Region**

### *Regional Planning Retreat Sets Clear Direction*

On November 5th, UVLSRPC Commissioners and other local officials representing communities from the Region's northern reach along the Connecticut River in Orford and Piermont south to Acworth spent the day at Dartmouth College's Lyme Skiway working together to identify the top five areas of focus for UVLSRPC for the next five years. Each of the Region's three job centers were well represented with participants from Claremont, Newport, and Charlestown; New London and Sunapee; and Hanover and Lebanon. We heard the concerns of small towns such as Cornish and Goshen becoming more aware of the need to prepare for increased growth pressure, as well as those of communities already facing growth-related issues, such as Plainfield, Washington, Grafton, Goshen and Enfield. Several members-at-large participated as well to provide us with the benefit of their broad regional viewpoints.

Each participant shared information on the needs of their community and issues on the forefront of local discussions. UVLSRPC staff worked with Bill Gould, a facilitator with the Executive Service Corps, to identify overarching themes and areas of common concern. The result was consensus on the following five focus areas:

#### Planning for and Managing Growth

Guidance to planning boards on tools for preparing for, shaping and directing growth will continue to be a cornerstone of the Commission's work. Communities continue to be concerned about sprawl. We heard of a need for more information on what tools have and have not worked in other areas to direct growth to areas where infrastructure exists.

#### Resource Protection

Protection of the natural, cultural and physical features that make the Region special continues to be a high priority.

### Economic Sustainability

There was consensus that UVLSRPC should continue to focus on the key elements of economic sustainability, including the jobs-housing balance, economic development to strive for livable wages throughout the Region, and a sustainable transportation system. UVLSRPC staff was encouraged to explore increased involvement in school issues, e.g. strengthening the relationships among educators, employers and communities. Energy is also an area of growing concern.

### Education and Advocacy

The need for education on current best practices in planning continues to grow as the Region's population grows, along with the complexity of the issues faced by local officials. Participants also supported a strong advocacy role for UVLSRPC in facilitating regional cooperation, and identified ways to enhance outreach efforts with more use of electronic communications.

### Solid Waste

The cost and availability of solid waste disposal options is once again becoming a pressing issue for the Region's communities.