DRAFT for Public Review
(January 12, 2015)

UVLSRPC Regional Plan 2014

Chapter 1

Telling the Story: Introduction, Public Outreach, What We Heard, and Regional Vision

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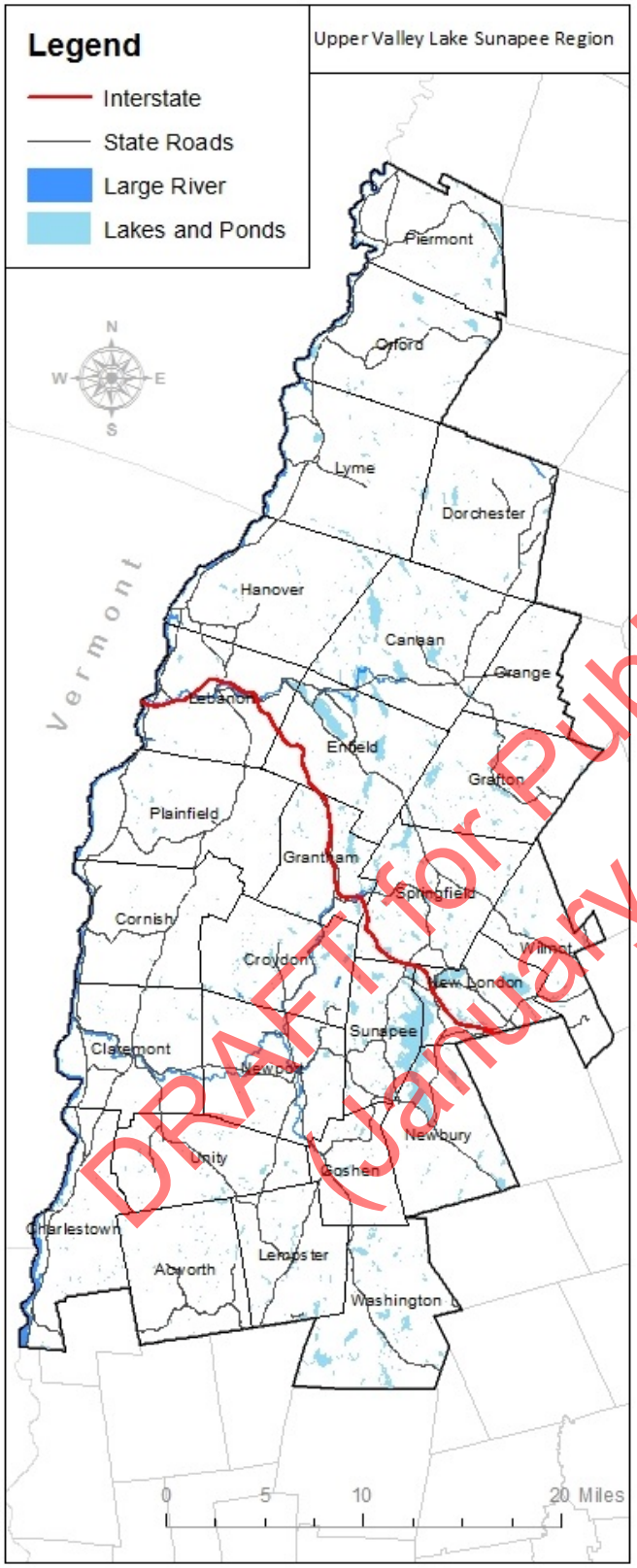
1.1 INTRODUCTION



About the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC

The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) is a voluntary association of 27 cities and towns in western New Hampshire, enabled under Chapter 36 of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated. The Commission's activities include providing planning-related technical assistance to member communities, coordinating inter-municipal planning projects, and conducting public outreach and education on planning-related matters in the region.

These activities are supported by annual dues from member communities, contracted services for member communities, and state, federal, and private categorical grants. Each community and county in the region has the authority to appoint two Commissioners (or three Commissioners for communities with a population higher than 10,000) to represent that community or county's interest in regional affairs, and oversee administrative and fiduciary matters related to the organization.

The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission has been providing professional planning assistance to the region's municipalities since 1963, when the organization was founded as the Upper Valley Development Council. The Commission's areas of expertise include comprehensive land use planning, transportation planning, natural resource planning, community/economic development, public participation, housing, solid waste management, and pre-disaster mitigation planning.

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Commissioners of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RPC

Chair- Jeffrey Kessler (Town of Newport)
Vice Chair- Nancy Rollins (Town of New London)
Treasurer -Peter Guillette (Town of Grantham)
Assistant Treasurer/Secretary- Katherine Connolly (Town of Hanover)

Acworth
Brian Miller
Laurence Williamson

Charlestown
Vacant

Claremont
Thomas Rock
Richard Wahrlich

Cornish
William Lipfert

Croydon
Vacant

Dorchester
William Trought

Enfield
Dan Kiley
Steven Schneider

Goshen
Vacant

Grafton County
Ken Morley

Grantham
Thain Allan
Peter Guillette

Hanover
Katherine Connolly
Jonathan Edwards
Joanna Whitcomb

Lebanon
Dan Nash

Lempster
Mary Grenier

Lyme
Dan Brand
Sam Greene

New London
Bob Crane
Nancy Rollins

Newbury
Katheryn Holmes

Newport
David Hoyt
Jeffrey Kessler

Orange
Vacant

Orford
Ann Green
Harrison Pease

Piermont
Vacant

Plainfield
James Taylor

Springfield
Kevin Lee
George McCusker

Sullivan County
Lionel Chute
Jessie Levine

Sunapee
Aaron Simpson
Josh Trow

Unity
William Schroeter
Robert Trabka

Washington
Vacant

Wilmot
John O'Connor
Linda Scofield

Members-At-Large
Peter Gregory
Julie Magnuson
Nancy Merrill
Mark Scarano

Purpose of the UVLSRPC Regional Plan

Pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 36:47, the UVLSRPC Regional Plan is intended to advise the region's 27 municipalities on matters related to the future development of the region. The plan is intended to preserve the quality of life in the region, and has been designed to direct development in accordance with the region's existing and future needs, while maintaining the region's traditional settlement patterns.

The plan presents a bold vision for the future of the region. However, achieving that vision will require integrating key issues facing the region, including land use, transportation, housing, economic development, natural resource conservations, and public health. The vision, goals, and strategies presented in this plan are the result of substantial input from municipal leaders and the general public. Public input included guidance from the UVLSRPC Regional Plan Advisory Committee, analysis of the 27 municipal master plans from the region's communities, participation at special events around the region, meetings with municipal leaders, an online forum specific to the UVLSRPC region, and a telephone survey of residents of the region.

This plan is advisory in nature, purpose, and effect. Adoption of the plan by the UVLSRPC in no way changes the structure or authority of local governments. Rather, the plan is intended to strengthen the decision-making capacity of local governments by providing information and guidance that can support municipal master plans and policies. The plan recognizes the independent traditions of local government in New Hampshire and seeks to facilitate inter-municipal cooperation. The adoption of this plan means that the UVLSRPC commits its staff and program resources to achieve the plan's goals and recommendations.

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1.2 PUBLIC OUTREACH

Regional Advisory Committee

The UVLSRPC Regional Advisory Committee is a subcommittee of the Regional Planning Committee of the Commission. The Regional Advisory Committee was created in order to provide guidance to the staff of the Commission on the development of the UVLSRPC Regional Plan.

The Regional Advisory Committee participated in and conducted public outreach efforts for the UVLSRPC Regional Plan. The Committee assisted staff in reviewing data and public input, and advised staff on the overall goals of the initiative. The Committee also reviewed and amended templates from statewide advisory committees to fit the unique context of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region.

Regional Advisory Committee

William Trought (Town of Dorchester)
Dan Kiley (Town of Enfield)
Steve Schneider (Town of Enfield)
Joanna Whitcomb (Town of Hanover)
Ken Morley (Grafton County)
Dan Brand (Town of Lyme)
Jeff Kessler (Town of Newport)
Aaron Simpson (Town of Sunapee)
Nancy Merrill (City of Claremont)
Shawn Donovan (City of Lebanon)
Tom Rock (City of Claremont)
Jonathan Edwards (Town of Hanover)
Bob Crane (Town of New London)
Nancy Rollins (Town of New London)

The Committee will also present the draft of the UVLSRPC Regional Plan to the full Commission for adoption.

Master Plan Analysis

UVLSRPC staff reviewed the Master Plans of all twenty-seven municipalities within the region as a starting point in the development of the Regional Plan. While 41% of the communities in the region have not updated their Master Plan in the last 10 years, the plans still provide a valid starting point because they serve as policy documents that demanded public participation regarding future decision-making.

The average Master Plan in the region is between eight and ten years old. There are a number of communities that are in the process of updating their Master Plan, or have completed a new update within the last two of years. However, in some cases, those plans have not yet been formally adopted. In these cases, the Commission chose to begin with what has been formally adopted by the public and work from that point forward. With the guidance of the Regional Advisory Committee, the Commission reviewed all 27 municipal Master Plans in the region.

Since 2002, municipalities in New Hampshire have been required to create a vision section within their master plan. Ten municipalities within our region have not updated their Master Plan since this time, and thus, do not yet have vision sections within their Master Plans. Determining values and goals and understanding the vision of these communities was a more difficult analysis but was completed by drawing conclusions from other parts of the Master Plan.

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Special Events

Between June and December 2012, UVLSRPC staff and Commissioners attended twelve outreach events throughout the region. Two activities were available for public input during these sessions, including: 1) A visual preference survey; and 2) An open response to the question: "What is most important to you in your community?" UVLSRPC staff and/or Commissioners participated in the following events:

- Canaan Speedway Races (7/14/2012)
- Dorchester "Going Places" Race (7/22/2012)
- Lebanon Farmers' Market (8/9/2012)
- Newport Farmers' Market (8/10/2012)
- Cornish Fair (8/18/2012)
- Newport Apple Pie Craft Fair (8/25/2012)
- Claremont "Reach the Peak" Race (9/22/2012)
- Claremont Fall Festival (10/6/2012)
- Lebanon-Hanover Football Game (10/12/2012)
- Lempster Christmas Craft Fair (11/17/2012)
- Listen Community Dinner (11/26/2012)
- Wilmot Holiday Craft Fair (12/1/2012)

Members of the public completing a visual preference survey at the Cornish Fair on August 18, 2012.

In total, 507 people completed either the visual preference survey or open response question at the twelve events. Their responses are summarized in the "What We Heard" section.

Meetings with Municipal Leaders

In the fall of 2013, the UVLSRPC convened ten meetings with municipal leaders. The meetings included members of Selectboards, City Councils, Planning Boards, and municipal staff. The purpose of the meetings was to review public feedback received by the Commission and ensure that municipal projects are incorporated into the UVLSRPC Regional Plan. Topics included Housing, Transportation, Economic Development, Natural Resources, Cultural Resources, Utilities and Infrastructure, Public Facilities, Energy Efficiency, and Natural Hazards and Adaptation.

The meetings with municipal leaders were held as follows:

- Town of Croydon (9/23/2013)
- Town of Cornish (9/25/2013)
- Town of Orford (10/1/2013)
- Town of Canaan (10/3/2013)
- Town of Washington (10/8/2013)
- Town of New London (10/10/2013)
- Town of Sunapee (10/17/2013)
- City of Lebanon (10/22/2013)
- City of Claremont (10/24/2013)
- Town of Charlestown (10/28/2013)

Municipal leaders discussing local projects in the City of Claremont on October 24, 2013.

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New Hampshire Listens Forum

Through the statewide Granite State Future collaborative, *New Hampshire Listens*, a civic engagement initiative of the Carsey Institute at the University of New Hampshire held ten regional forums around the state to gather regional themes to inform the development of each of the nine regional plans in the state. One *New Hampshire Listens* forum was held in the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region on February 26, 2013 in the City of Claremont. Approximately 70 municipal leaders and interested citizens participated in the discussion.

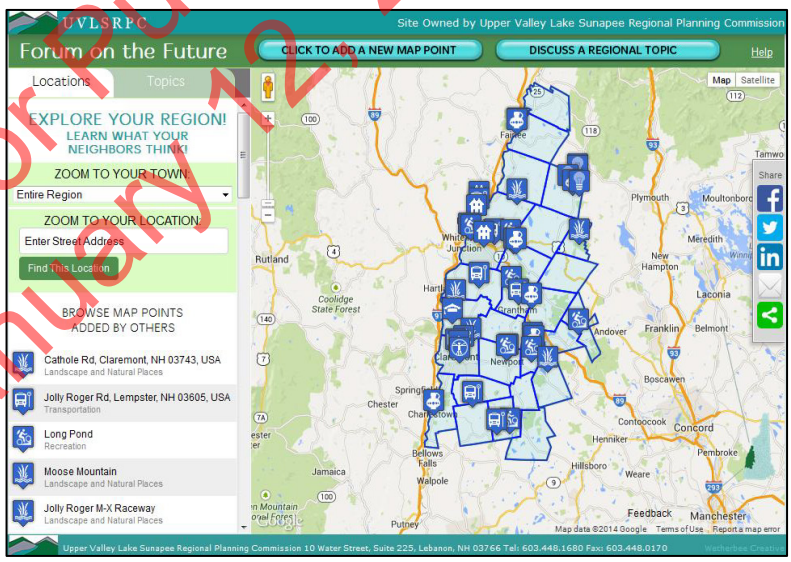
Following the forum, *New Hampshire Listens* published a summary of the evening's discussion, which is available for download on the UVLSRPC's Regional Plan website: regionalplan.uvlsrpc.org.

Online Forum on the Future

Recognizing that some members of the public are unable to participate in public meetings due to work schedules, personal commitments, or other schedule conflicts, UVLSRPC staff established an online "Forum on the Future" to allow public input remotely and electronically.

The Forum on the Future was an interactive mapping framework hosted on the UVLSRPC website. Through the interactive map, users could "pin" comments or suggestions to a specific location of interest. Comments received fell into thirteen categories:

- Arts and Culture
- Education
- Governance
- Health and Wellness
- Housing
- Jobs/Economy
- Landscape/Natural Resources
- Local History
- Public Safety/ Emergency Services
- Recreation
- Social Life
- Transportation
- Utilities/Energy



The Forum on the Future remains active on the UVLSRPC website. To date, comments have been received for nearly sixty unique locations around the region.

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Telephone Survey

Through the statewide Granite State Future collaborative, the nine regional planning commissions in New Hampshire pooled funding to hire the University of New Hampshire (UNH) Survey Center to conduct a telephone survey of New Hampshire residents. The UNH Survey Center is an independent, non-partisan academic survey research organization and a division of the UNH College of Liberal Arts.

Between May 9 and July 21, 2013, the UNH Survey center conducted a telephone survey of 2,935 New Hampshire adults. As part of the survey process, the UVLSRPC and Southwest Region Planning Commission pooled funds to allow the UNH survey center to oversample our regions of the state. This oversampling allowed statistical significance for the survey results within our regions and allowed comparisons between survey results for the two regions versus the statewide results. The overall margin of error for the survey was +/-2.2%.

Survey questions covered transportation and broadband infrastructure, housing, economic development, natural resource management, energy and natural hazard mitigation. A full report detailing the survey results can be found on the UVLSRPC's Regional Plan website: regionalplan.uvlsrpc.org. Some survey responses are highlighted in the discussion of "What We Heard" section that follows.

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1.3 WHAT WE HEARD

Public input guiding the development of the UVLSRPC Regional Plan was received via many channels. In some cases feedback was written, in some cases it was verbal, and in some cases was visual (via preference surveys).

This feedback guides all of the technical components of the UVLSRPC Regional Plan which follow. It also resulted in a series of nine key regional themes which have guided the development of the vision, goals, and implementation strategies detailed in the plan.

Key themes facing the region over the next twenty years include:

- Preparing for Slower Population Growth;
- Serving an Aging Population;
- Addressing Deteriorating Infrastructure;
- Encouraging Affordable and Accessible Housing;
- Responding to Non-residential Development Pressure;
- Building upon the Region's Economic Strengths;
- Fostering High-Quality Education and Workforce Training Opportunities;
- Preserving the Region's Landscape and Natural Resources;
- Adapting our Built Environment for Severe Storm Events.

In the "Word Cloud" (above), the words most often repeated in regional outreach events appear larger.

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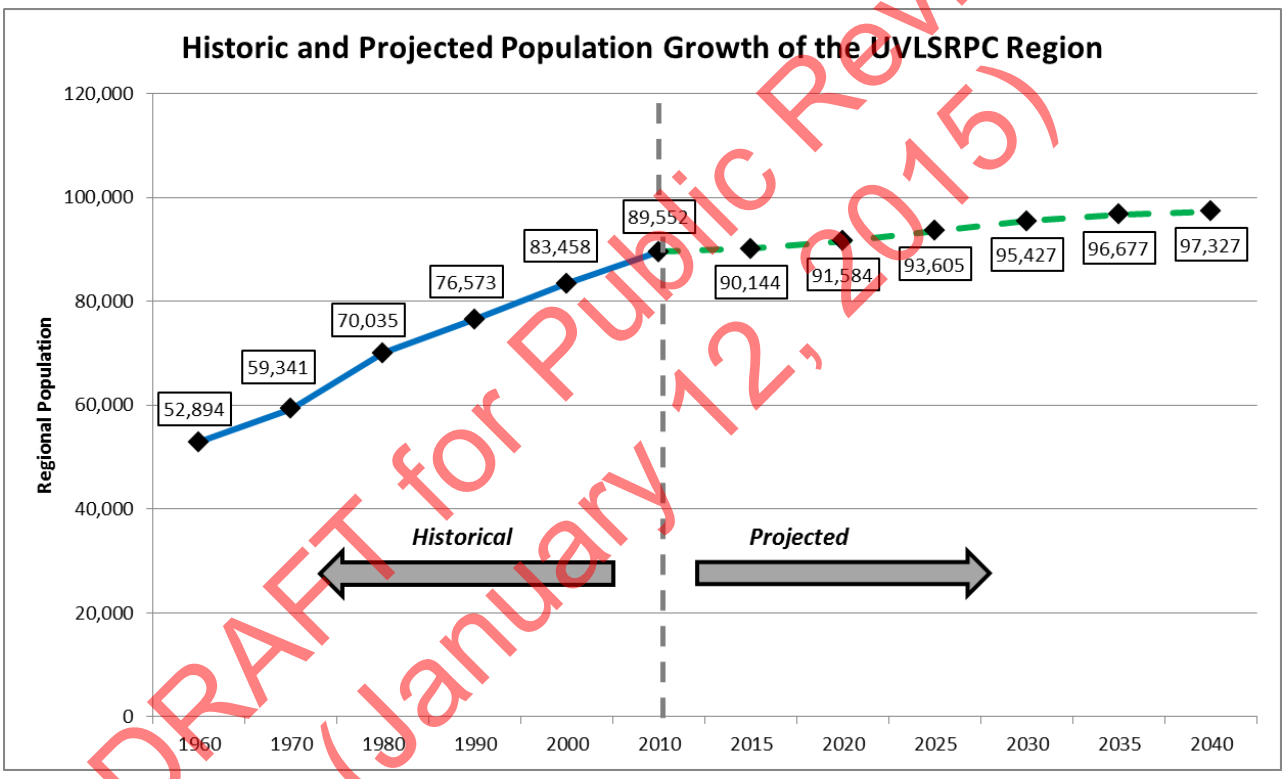
Preparing for Slower Population Growth

The population of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region, like the State of New Hampshire as a whole, is projected to grow much more slowly over the next twenty-five years than over the past fifty years. In 2013, the state's nine regional planning commissions pooled funds to commission RLS Demographics, Inc. to develop statewide, county-level, and town-level population projections based on a cohort-component analysis.

Looking just at the 27 communities of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region, the population of the region is projected to grow less than 9% between 2010 and 2040. The chart below shows historic and projected population growth in the UVLSRPC Region between 1960 and 2040.

Figure 1.3.1- Historic and Projected Population Growth of the UVLSRPC Region



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Serving an Aging Population

The aging of the baby boomer population, called a "Silver Tsunami" by the New Hampshire Center for Public Policy Studies, was a key theme heard in meetings with municipal leaders, special events, the NH Listens Forum in Claremont, and the online Forum on the Future.

In Grafton, Merrimack, and Sullivan County, the population of persons over the age of 65 is projected to nearly double over the next 20 years, ultimately representing approximately one-third of region's population.

Expanded non-emergency medical transportation and other services will be needed to serve the region's aging population.

With limited state investment in aging services, the region's senior citizens centers are underfunded and will soon be over capacity. While aging in place is a goal of many rural, elderly residents in the region, there are few public transportation options outside of the Lebanon-Hanover and Claremont-Newport employment centers. This makes non-emergency medical transportation a significant challenge in the region.

Additionally, many communities in the region rely on persons over 65 years of age to volunteer on town boards and committees, and provide volunteer rides for people in need of non-emergency medical transportation. Without an influx of new volunteers, many communities may face a "volunteer gap" in both the public and private sector.

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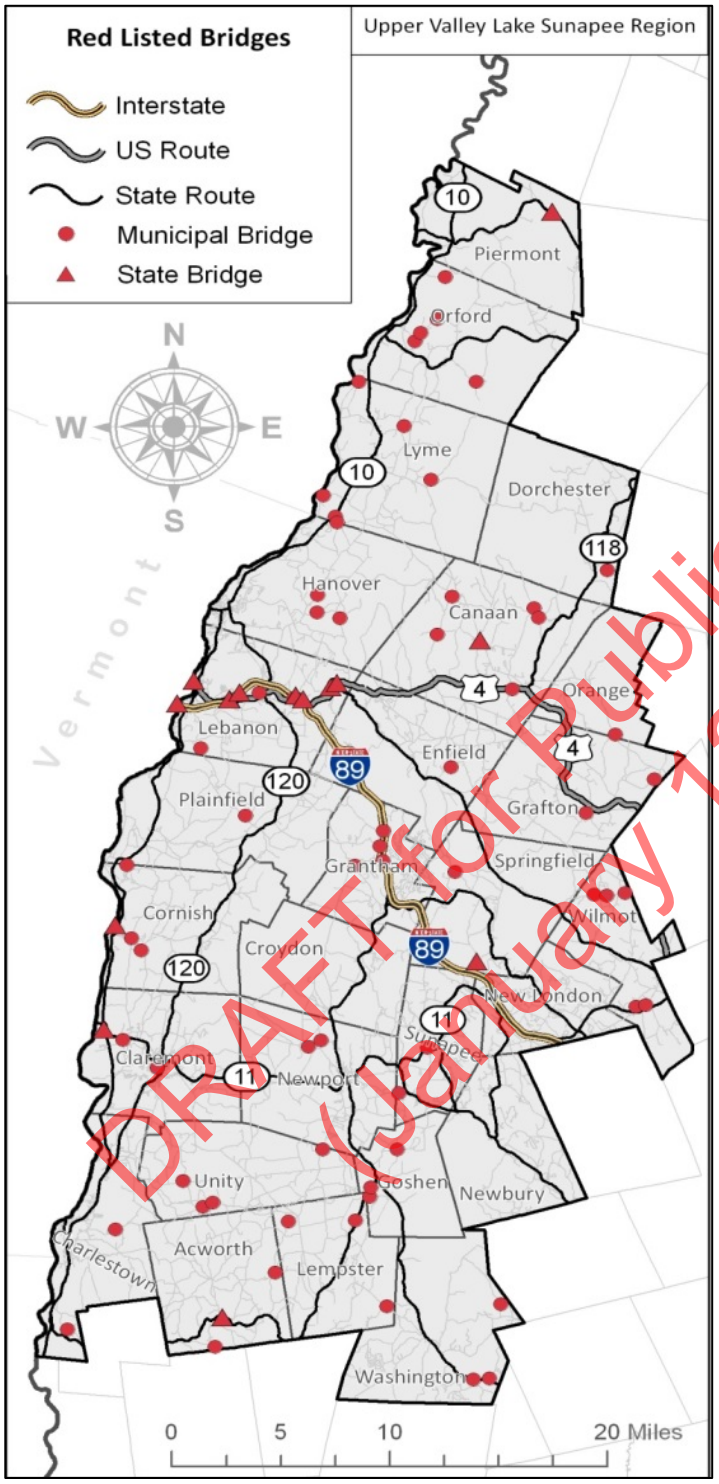
Addressing Deteriorating Infrastructure

Figure 1.3.2- Red Listed Bridges in the UVLSRPC Region



The condition of the region's infrastructure, particularly transportation infrastructure, was a key theme heard in meetings with municipal leaders, special events, the NH Listens Forum in Claremont, and the online Forum on the Future.

In many ways, the region faces more acute issues with infrastructure condition than the State of New Hampshire as a whole. Currently, there are 80 "red listed" bridges in the region (64 municipally-owned and 16 state-owned). Similarly, 46% of the region's road network is in poor pavement condition, compared to 37% statewide.

The condition of the region's transportation infrastructure is fundamental to the movement of people and goods throughout the region, and thus, the region's economic competitiveness.

Beyond transportation infrastructure, many public works directors who participated in the ten municipal leaders meetings also pointed out deterioration of the region's water and sewer infrastructure. Many of the region's water and sewer pipelines are more than 100 years old. In water lines, extensive seepage resulting from deteriorated infrastructure can affect water quality and cost municipalities substantial amounts of money.

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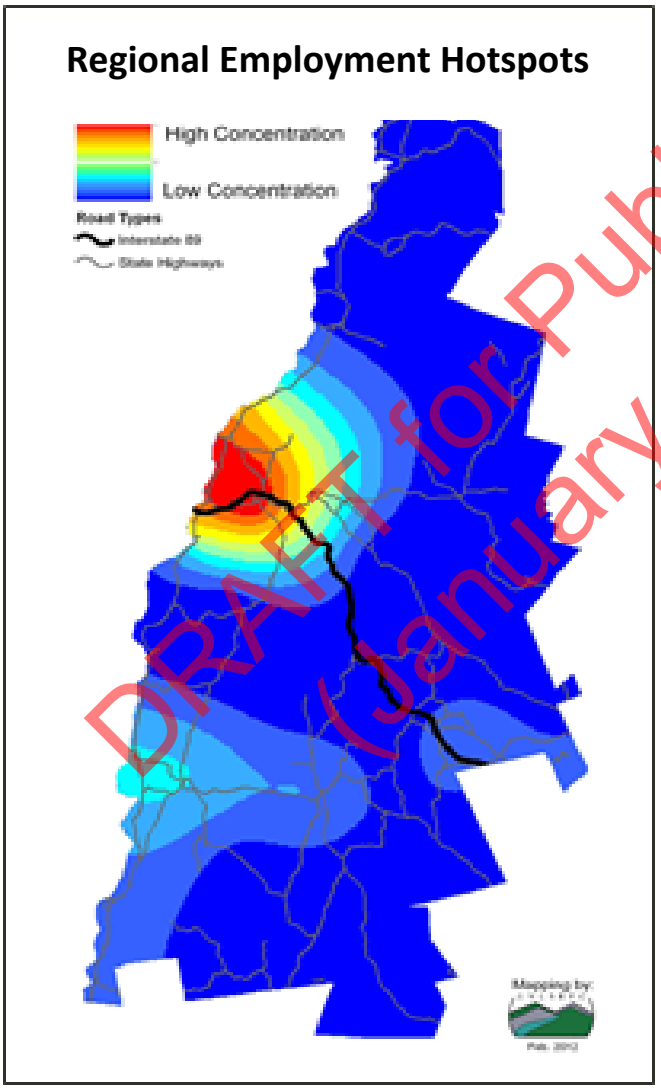
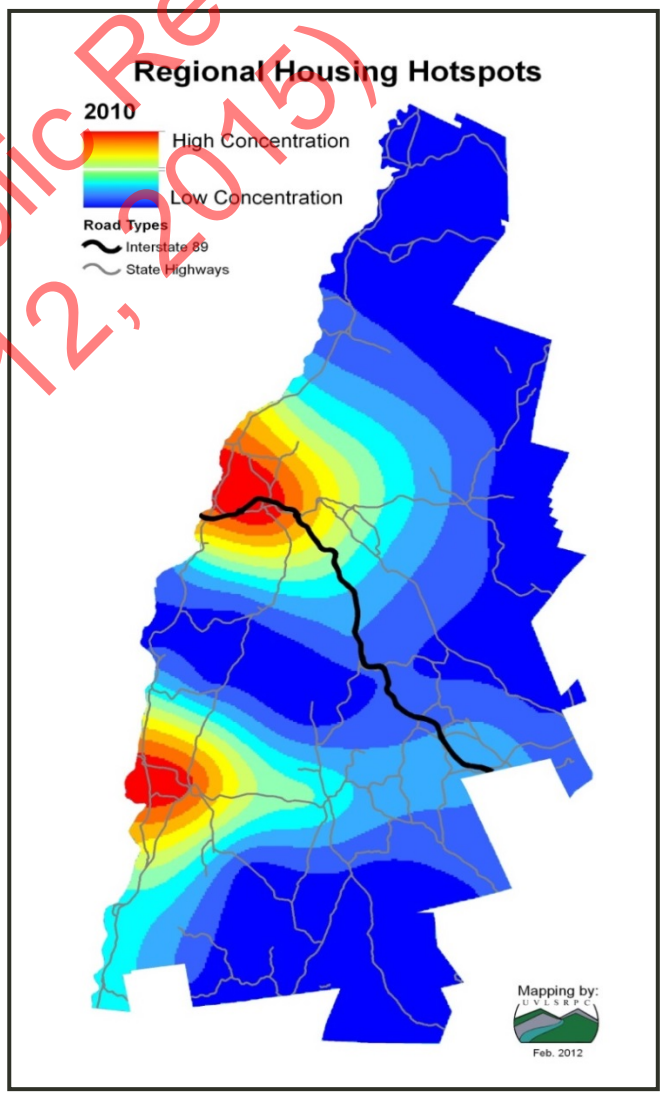
Encouraging Affordable and Accessible Housing

Encouraging affordable and accessible housing was a key theme heard in meetings with municipal leaders, special events, and the NH Listens Forum in Claremont. The region's four largest employment centers of Claremont, Lebanon, Hanover, and Newport have 80% of the region's jobs, but just 50% of the region's housing. For the past thirty years, the region's development pattern has largely been driven by the cost of housing in the Lebanon-Hanover employment center, with much of the new residential development occurring to the east in communities along the U.S. Route 4, Interstate 89, and NH Route 11 corridors. As a result, the average commute for a resident of the UVLSRPC region (one-way) is 15.8 miles, resulting in a substantial transportation cost burden.

The maps below were developed as part of the UVLSRPC Housing Needs Assessment and show employment and housing concentration in the region.

Figure 1.3.3 and 1.3.4- Regional Employment and Housing Hotspots





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In 2012, the UVLSRPC developed a Housing Needs Assessment, which included projections that considered housing demand, supply, cost and affordability, regional economic conditions and the distribution of affordable housing. The housing production model projected a need for the UVLSRPC region to add 3,800 to 4,600 total year-round housing units between 2010 and 2020, or approximately 380 to 460 new units per year. Approximately 41% of these units (up to 190 units per year) should ideally be affordable at income levels defined by New Hampshire Workforce Housing Statute (RSA 674:58, IV).While these production estimates would allow for housing supply to keep pace with regional employment and population growth, this remains a considerable challenge for the region.

Responding to Non-Residential Development Pressure

Encouraging affordable and accessible housing was a key theme heard from residents and municipal officials in both Lebanon and Hanover during municipal leaders meetings, special events, and the region's NH Listens Forum.

The City of Lebanon is home to the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC), which employs more than 7,000 people. DHMC's position as a national leader in medical research and cancer treatment has led to allied industries (e.g. medical R&D and pharmaceutical companies) wanting the synergy of locating as close to the medical center as possible. This has resulted in substantial non-residential development pressure in the City of Lebanon, as shown in the table below.

Figure 1.3.5- Non-Residential Development Permitted in the City of Lebanon

Non-Residential Development Permitted (Not Yet Built) in the City of Lebanon	
Development Name	**Square Footage (SF)**
Iron Horse Park	667,200 SF
River Park	714,020 SF
Altaria Industrial Planned Unit Development	217,970 SF
Altaria Business Park	**240,000 SF**
ICV Holdings Phase II	56,364 SF
DHMC- Williamson Center Expansion	162,000 SF
Chaloux Hotel and Conference Center	96,306 SF
TOTAL	**2,153,860 SF**

This unprecedented non-residential development pressure has raised concerns in Lebanon (and surrounding communities) about the City's job-housing balance, the potential degradation of high-quality wildlife habitat from additional development, capacity of water and sewer infrastructure, and congestion of key regional transportation corridors (e.g. NH Route 120).

Building Upon our Economic Strengths

While the City of Lebanon faces unprecedented non-residential development pressure, many of the

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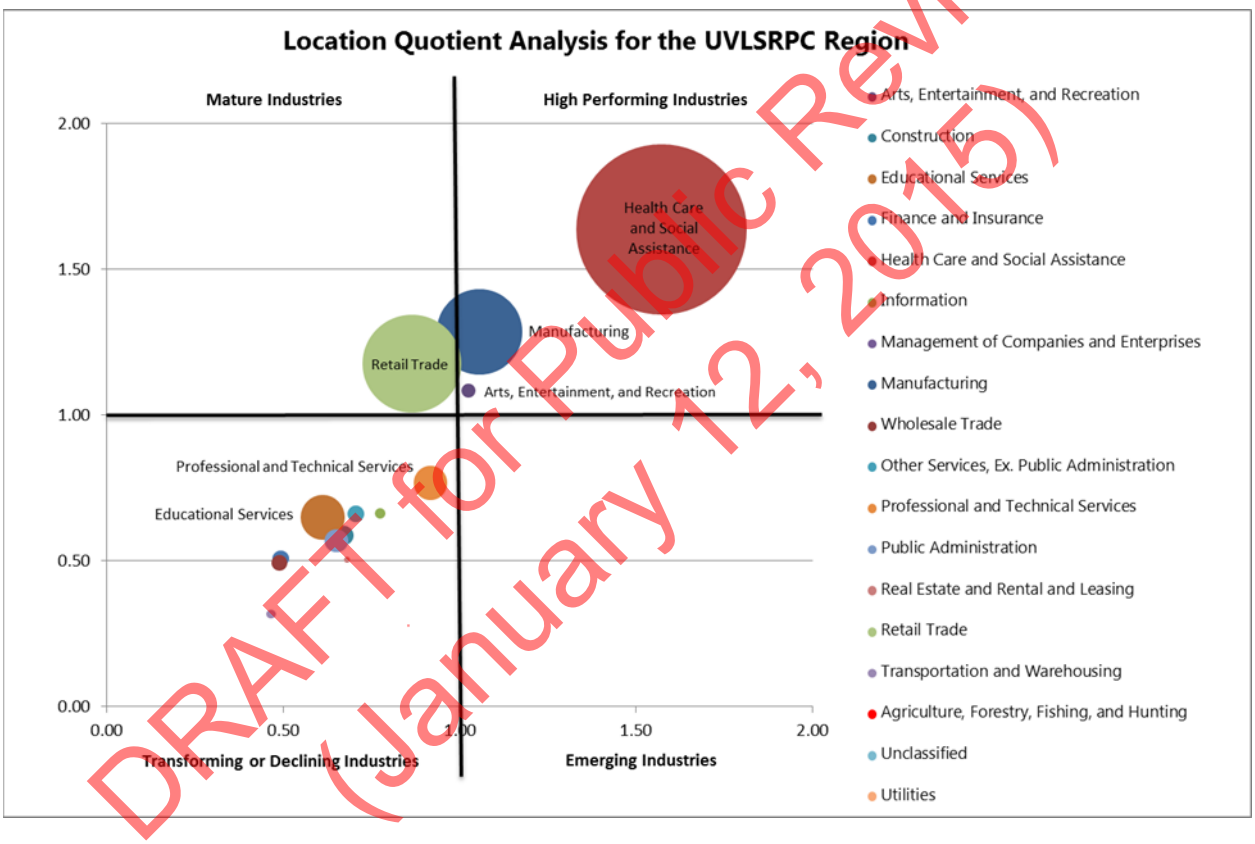
other communities in the region have been significantly impacted by the Great Recession, and have not yet seen an increase in development. Throughout meetings with municipal leaders and special events in Sullivan and Southern Grafton County, UVLSRPC staff heard of the need to spur new economic development by building upon the region's economic strengths.

To determine the region's economic strengths, UVLSRPC staff completed a location quotient analysis. The location quotient is a measure of an industry's concentration in an area relative to the rest of the state or nation. It compares an industry's share of local employment with its share of state or national employment. Although location quotients require several assumptions, including uniform local consumption patterns and labor productivity across the country, they are a quick and useful tool in determining a region's key industries.

Figure 1.3.6- Location Quotient Analysis for the UVLSRPC Region



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A location quotient greater than 1.0 means that the industry is producing more goods and services than are used locally. If a location quotient is less than 1.0, it may mean that residents and businesses have to purchase services and retail goods from outside the area. This analysis uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) in determining industry sectors. Industries that bring dollars into the area help the local economy grow. Those industries that show strength in the UVLSRPC region compared to the nation as a whole include the Health Care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sectors.

Fostering High-Quality Education and Workforce Training Opportunities

During the twelve special outreach events, when people were asked the open-ended question "What is most important to you in your community?" the top response was education. Feedback about education took many forms, including:

Dartmouth College, the region's most well-known educational institution, provides both educational and employment opportunities to the region's residents.

- Residents of the region value high-quality education and some residents chose their home community because of local school systems.
- Residents of the region value the employment opportunities provided by the grade schools, high schools, and colleges in the region. In some communities, the school system is the largest employer.
- Residents of the region are concerned with the tax burden associated with local school systems. In some schools, enrollments are declining due to broader demographic shifts in the region. There is also concern about the tax burden of school renovation projects, particularly in Claremont and the Mascoma Valley.
- Residents of the region recognize that schools are places of civic engagement, social gatherings, and key life events that build a sense of community.
- Residents of the region want to continue to develop targeted workforce training opportunities, and vocational training. This is an important economic development initiative, and many residents noted that large employers like Sturm Ruger in Newport would benefit from such programs.

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Preserving the Landscape and Natural Resources

A key theme heard in every form of public outreach was the importance of preserving the region's landscape and natural resources. In many ways, the region's identity is tied to its natural resources. Thus, feedback about the region's landscape and natural resources took many forms:

- Residents of the region value rural farms and agricultural opportunities. Having farms close by helps people understand where their food comes from, and also contributes to the pastoral setting and "rural character" that is highly valued.
- Residents of the region value the outdoor recreational opportunities offered by woods, water, and wildlife. In some cases, Commission staff heard feedback about cases where public access to

waterways was perceived to be inhibited or denied, and there was a strong sense of injustice among those residents.

- Residents of the region value the clean water and fishing opportunities provided by the Connecticut River and its tributaries, as well as the region's lakes.
- Residents of the region value forests and wildlife habitat for ecological health, recreation, and rural aesthetics.

The Connecticut River is a key part of the identity of the region.

The region's natural resources also contribute to a sense of community, as hunting, fishing, and hiking are important social activities in many communities.

Adapting our Built Environment for Severe Storm Events

Following the substantial impacts of both Tropical Storm Irene and the July 2013 rain storms in Lebanon, communities across the UVLSRPC region recognize the need to conduct adaptation planning for severe weather events. This was a key theme heard in meetings with municipal leaders, special events, and the NH Listens Forum in Claremont.

Above: Slayton Hill Road in the City of Lebanon following a flood event in July 2013.

As part of the Granite State Future statewide initiative, New Hampshire's nine regional planning commissions pooled funds to commission the Sustainability Institute at the University of New Hampshire to conduct an assessment of climate change in both northern and southern New Hampshire. The UVLSRPC region is included in the report on southern New Hampshire.

The report found that over the past four decades:

- The climate in southern New Hampshire has warmed between 1.1 and 2.6 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Annual precipitation has increased between 12 and 20 percent.
- The average number of snow covered days in Hanover has decreased by twelve.
- The length of the growing season has increased by two to four weeks.
- Extreme precipitation events have increased across southern New Hampshire.

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1.4 REGIONAL VISION

The Regional Plan, *Your Regional Future*, has been prepared as a guide for regional land use and community development through 2035. *Your Regional Future* incorporates thirty-two individual vision statements among ten major Plan Components. The Vision for the Region assimilates the common visionary themes among these Plan Components and articulates the desires for the region shared by residents, community leaders, and business leaders.

The capacity of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region to meet the challenges and take advantage of opportunities over the next 20 years relies on many hands committed to making the vision a reality. Common among these themes and critically important to the successful implementation of this Regional Plan is collaboration among individuals, groups, communities, governments, and institutions.

Regardless of the respective Plan Component focus areas three common themes arose that are the basis for the Vision for the Region. These themes address individual, community, and regional levels of activity.

Opportunity
The region's future success will rely on access to, and choice of, services and resources. Personal and community opportunity can be in the form of physical access via transportation systems and networks; the ability to satisfy basic personal needs like housing, health, or education; or encouraging economic development.

Resiliency
A key to the region's future is resiliency among many facets of life at all geographic levels. A resilient region is prepared to proactively respond to a broad range of events to mitigate negative impacts on residents, economic vitality, and community cohesion. Resiliency requires diverse interests to take advantage of, and expand upon, the region's inherent strengths. Recognizing and celebrating the region's strengths will enhance individual and community sense of identity and encourage development of new strengths to benefit the region.

Resources
The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region is rich in natural, economic, and cultural resources. Stewardship of these resources for present and future generations will ensure the most highly valued regional assets will continue to contribute to local and regional vitality. Retaining and utilizing these resources for the next 20 years will be based on traditional and innovative management techniques.

Vision for the Region
The communities of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region will use their unique strengths and available resources in a collaborative manner to benefit the region's residents, businesses, and institutions. The region's natural, economic, and cultural resources will continue to grow, diversify, and will be readily accessible by all.

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Land Use

- **Vision**: The region will build upon its historic, traditional settlement patterns by focusing new residential and non-residential development in village and city centers. The region's rural landscape will support traditional uses like housing, farming, forestry, and recreation that strengthen the region's highly valued rural character. The most valued natural resources and habitats will be conserved for future generations.

Housing Needs Assessment

- **Vision:** All residents of the region will have access to a variety of diverse and affordable housing options with the opportunity to live in the communities in which they work.

Fair Housing Equity Assessment

- **Vision:** The region will have equal and unrestricted access to housing regardless of factors such as race, color, religion, gender, familial status, disability, economic status, and national origin.

Transportation

- *Highways and Bridges*
  Vision: The region will have no structurally-deficient bridges and all roads will be maintained at good or fair condition.

- *Highway Safety*
  Vision: Eliminate highway fatalities and improve safety for all roadway users in the UVLSRPC Region per the "Toward Zero Deaths" vision detailed in New Hampshire's Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

- *Public Transportation*
  Vision: The region will have affordable transportation options through a coordinated, connected network using a variety of mobility services including local bus, intercity bus, and higher-speed rail systems that accommodate and are accessible to individuals with special needs. The region's system has eliminated duplicative services, filled gaps in service and unmet needs, and makes full use of underutilized capacity.

- *Human Service and Volunteer Transportation*
  Vision: All residents with special needs and mobility challenges will have access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation options that allow them to remain independent, active, and involved in the life of our communities.

- *Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation*
  Vision: A safe bicycle transportation network connects all the communities in the region and every community center can be accessed by a safe and appropriate pedestrian transportation network.

- *Rail Transportation*
  Vision: The region's two largest employment and population centers have viable, efficient

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freight and passenger rail access to major markets in the eastern United States and Canada.

- *Air Transportation*
  Vision: The region will have strong, viable passenger air connections to major airports in the eastern United States and Canada, and easy access to general aviation opportunities.

- *Transportation Demand Management*
  Vision: All residents, businesses, and visitors in the UVLSRPC Region can access viable, efficient, and affordable alternatives to single occupant vehicle travel.

Economic Development

Vision: The region will maintain a resilient economy with new employment opportunities, building upon existing strengths in the health care, manufacturing, tourism, and creative sectors. All residents and businesses in the region will have access to viable and effective vocational education opportunities to retain and attract a talented workforce. The region's downtown areas will be prosperous and economically vibrant, anchored by strong locally-owned businesses and access to local agriculture.

Natural Resources

- *Air Resources*
  Vision: The region will have a high quality of air protecting public health, clear skies, and our natural environment.

- *Agriculture*
  Vision: The region will have abundant local agricultural opportunities to promote local food production for area markets, preserve rural community character, and foster a sense of community through agricultural events.

- *Forest Resources*
  Vision: The region's forests will be effectively managed to ensure unfragmented wildlife habitat, a healthy environment, economic opportunity, recreation, and aesthetic identity.

- *Mining and Extraction*
  Vision: The region will utilize its geologic resources responsibly, with all mining and extraction sites operating according to best management practices and being appropriately reclaimed and restored upon closure.

- *Water Resources*
  Vision: All of the region's water resources will be maintained, restored, and/or protected to ensure the quantity and high quality of drinking water and aquatic habitat.

- *Flora and Fauna Resources*
  Vision: The region will protect and enhance our natural communities of flora and fauna by minimizing high value habitat loss and effectively controlling invasive species.

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Cultural Resources

- *Historic Resources*
  Vision: The region will respond to growth and change while maintaining its most valued historical and cultural assets through preservation, protection, and adaptive reuse.

- *Arts/Culture*
  Vision: All residents of the region will have access to social and cultural opportunities and community events. The arts will play an important role in the educational, social, and economic life of the region's communities.

- *Recreation*
  Vision: The region will have access to abundant, four-season recreational opportunities anchored by our public lands and waters. Each community in the region will be connected by trail networks that accommodate both motorized and non-motorized recreational travel. Public access to the region's freshwater resources and public lands will be preserved and enhanced where appropriate to support the health of the region's residents, environment, economy, and unique identity and sense of place.

Utilities, Infrastructure, and Public Service

- *Water, Sewer and Stormwater Infrastructure*
  Vision: The region's water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure will be resilient and maintained in a state of good repair to support existing development centers and local economic development initiatives.

- *Broadband Infrastructure*
  Vision: All residents and businesses in the region will have access to fast, reliable, and affordable broadband service through a competitive marketplace.

- *Public Utilities (Electric and Gas)*
  Vision: The region will have access to safe, adequate, and reliable electric and gas service at reasonable rates via resilient infrastructure.

- *Waste Management*
  Vision: All residents and businesses in the region will have access to efficient, environmentally responsible, and affordable waste management. The region's waste generation will be reduced through increased recycling, composting, and purchase of products containing recycled materials, and utilization of products with lower toxicity.

Public Facilities and Energy Efficiency

- *Energy Production and Use*
  Vision: The region will become more energy independent through the use of renewable energy systems by residential, commercial and institutional property owners. Regional energy demand will be reduced through energy conservation and purchase of energy efficient products.

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- *Energy Efficient Construction & Green Building*
  Vision: The region's built environment will become increasingly energy efficient through existing building retrofits, energy efficient new construction, and energy-conscious site development practices. Local governments will be leaders in energy efficient building construction practices.

- *Public Facilities*
  Vision: The region's municipalities will provide for current and future needs through well-maintained, safe, accessible facilities that serve as community centers. There will be increasing cooperation among communities to reduce municipal costs and respond to increasing cost burdens from state and federal mandates by sharing facilities and services.

Hazards and Adaptation

- *Hazards*
  Vision: The region's communities will proactively identify and implement hazard mitigation measures to protect health, safety, and property by eliminating or reducing damages from natural and human-made hazards.

- *Climate Change & Adaptation*
  Vision: The region will anticipate, prepare for, respond to and recover from climate change impacts in a way that minimizes significant disruption to communities including health, safety, built environments, food availability, natural resources, wildlife and financial strength.

- *Emergency Management*
  Vision: The region's communities will be prepared to act effectively and cooperatively when emergencies occur. Residents and businesses will be educated to adequately prepare for and properly respond to public emergencies.

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