

Bedford

New Hampshire

Master Plan Update 2010

Prepared for the Bedford

Planning Board by

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in association with

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October 2010

EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY



Executive Summary

Planning Process

- ▶ University of New Hampshire conducted a phone survey in April 2009
- ▶ Public Forums in May 2009 and March 2010
- ▶ Monthly meetings with Steering Committee
- ▶ Project website established (www.vhb.com/bedfordmasterplan)
- ▶ Town has recently updated both its open space plan and hazard mitigation plans. These will be incorporated into master plan.
- ▶ Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission prepared a build-out study. The build-out study analyzes current land use, future conditions with no changes to zoning, future conditions after applying additional environmental constraints, and a community alternative that tests an alternative growth pattern.
- ▶ Celebration Associates prepared conceptual plans for mixed-use developments along the River Corridor that will be referenced and appended to the Plan.

Land Use and Community Design

Key Findings

- ▶ Over 89% of the Town is zoned for residential use. Just under 8% is zoned for commercial use (mostly along the River Corridor). Less than 1% is zoned for office or industrial uses.
- ▶ Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC) data shows that over 7,500 residential dwelling units have been built and almost 5.1 million sq. ft. of commercial space.
- ▶ 15,700 acres of open space currently exists according to SNHPC, although this number

includes undeveloped areas in addition to conserved lands and parks.

- ▶ Approximately 6.6% of the Town's land is covered by impervious surfaces, according to SNHPC.
- ▶ Current development trends include:
 - ▷ **An increase in childless and empty nester households seeking walkable living in close proximity to shopping and transportation options; and**
 - ▷ **Communities and developers are looking at compact development and mixed use particularly in response to a rising demand for live/work/play proximity, but also as a means to balance demand with open space preservation.**
- ▶ Much of the rural residential character of the landscape has been maintained and reinforced with stone walls, natural fences and narrow, uncurbed, country roadways. It is differentiated by:
 - ▷ **Open and closed views**
 - ▷ **Roads in character with the landscape**
 - ▷ **Development that does not overpower the landscape**
 - ▷ **Rural details...stone walls, low fencing, natural materials, steep pitched rooflines**
 - ▷ **Low density or pockets of development**
- ▶ The Route 101 corridor:
 - ▷ **Provides a contrast – rural patterns and commercial needs**
 - ▷ **Knits together the past, present and future Bedford**
 - ▷ **Provides east-west linkage**

- ▷ **Should balance the need for services/tax revenues with the value of the rural tradition of the town**
- ▶ The combination of sign control and land development regulations serves to reduce the potential negative visual impacts of the pockets of commercial development along Route 101. Town efforts to shape the design of development have had a positive effect on the overall character of the River Road commercial corridor. This, in combination with an interesting mix of old and new, of

building typologies and of uses, has resulted in a character that is not typical of such corridors. This area is characterized by:

- ▷ **Minimal single story, flat roofed buildings**
- ▷ **Varied rooflines-village scale**
- ▷ **“Buildings in the woods”**
- ▷ **Softened edges**
- ▷ **Multi-generational buildings**

The Town has an opportunity to build on its strengths in this area.

Recommendations

Encourage future development along the Route 101 Corridor into nodes at key intersections, preserving natural areas between these nodes using tools such as transfer of development rights (TDR).

Review locations along Route 101 where zoning could be revised to allow for increased lot depth to provide space for additional development and required parking.

Create an overlay district in the River Corridor and other suitable areas, which will permit higher density mixed use development and redevelopment. This would include the areas around the proposed transit station and Manchester Airport Access Road for transit oriented development (TOD). The Overlay District Ordinance should be a smart code based ordinance.

Develop architectural/design standards for the River Corridor.

Amend the Cluster Residential Development to reduce or eliminate the minimum size threshold (currently 15 acres). Consider requiring a conservation subdivision plan for lots greater than 15 acres.

Modify parking standards to establish a mechanism for reducing impervious coverage for new development.

Provide for shared parking arrangements where appropriate by allocating parking spaces on a prorated basis based on the uses that share the parking area.

Recodify the ordinance to make the ordinance easier to use by developers and for Town administration. Consider the following:

- ▷ Consolidate the definitions from all sections into a single Article.
- ▷ Add illustrations to the definitions.
- ▷ Incorporate Table of Uses and Dimensional Regulations into the relevant Article rather than as an appendix.
- ▷ Add a purpose section for each zoning district to explain how they differ from one another.
- ▷ Incorporate the parking regulations into the zoning ordinance.

Population and Housing

Key Findings

- ▶ Bedford's population growth has been substantial between 1970 and 2000, increasing from 5,859 to 18,274. The 2007 estimate is 21,550.
- ▶ The Town's population is projected to grow in the next ten years but at a much slower rate (8–10%) than the past.
- ▶ The Town's age characteristics will show increases in the 20-34, 55-64, 65 and over year old age groups, while the population aged 19 and under in decline.
- ▶ Bedford's per capita and household income levels are consistently higher than those for both the county and the state.
- ▶ Bedford's housing stock is predominately single family homes, although multi-family housing has been developed over the last decade.
- ▶ New housing construction has decreased in the last decade from an average of about 250 per year to 150.
- ▶ Bedford's housing prices are 30–40% higher than the region and state (\$395,000 median home sales price and an average rent of \$1,560 for a two-bedroom unit).

Recommendations

Develop a strategy to retain seniors and younger residents in the community.

Revise the zoning regulations for accessory apartments and duplexes to make them more viable housing options for seniors or starter households.

Allow combined elderly and workforce housing developments in the River Corridor, or other districts that have access to municipal sewer, as part of new mixed-use developments.

Establish a specific goal of affordable units to minimize the amount of land used for residential purposes in this district. Establish a threshold of additional workforce units and once that level is achieved, the ordinance would expire.

Allow some existing age-restricted housing developments to partially transition to affordable, workforce housing units.

Examine the potential for rezoning the General Residential (GR) district in the northeast section of the town for higher density apartment uses and infill development (this pertains to the area bounded by Route 114, Boynton Street, and the Manchester/Goffstown town lines).

Monitor the effectiveness of the recently enacted workforce housing ordinance.

Economic Conditions

Key Findings

- ▶ Over the past 20 years Bedford has experienced a significant expansion of its private sector employment base (increase of 4,700 jobs to 13,360).
- ▶ Bedford’s economy has outperformed that of the county and the state between 2000 and 2007.
- ▶ The largest employment sectors in Town are Health Care, Retail Trade, and Professional and Technical Services. Finance and Insurance showed the largest decrease during this time.
- ▶ New Hampshire is expected to fare better than other New England states in employment forecasts for 2008–2012.
- ▶ The Town’s economy has performed well over the past two decades...with steady employment growth and a sustained expansion of the nonresidential tax base.
- ▶ The majority of new nonresidential construction over the last ten years was categorized as Commercial which includes retail/service stores, restaurants, and banks. Bedford had approximately 4.5 million square feet of nonresidential (commercial and industrial) building space in 1998. Since that time, an additional 1.12 million square feet has been constructed bringing the 2008 total to 5.6 million square feet. Most of this has been in the PZ district.
- ▶ The total undeveloped land area remaining in the nonresidential zoning districts presently stands at approximately 200 acres. One factor that could increase the amount of nonresidential building space is the potential development, or redevelopment, of properties with existing commercial buildings (such as the Bedford Mall site) or residential structures. However, since many of these properties are smaller lots, redevelopment would necessitate aggregation of numerous parcels making their potential redevelopment more complex and thus, less certain to occur.

Recommendations

- Establish a regular outreach and support system for existing businesses.
- Evaluate potential for providing dedicated full- or part-time staffing for economic outreach and marketing.
- Maintain a database of Bedford businesses with up-to-date contact information.
- Maintain regular communications with existing businesses through site visits, group forums, e-mail updates, etc.
- Conduct a business survey to determine issues, needs, and growth plans of existing businesses.
- Establish a local business advocacy group (e.g. local chamber of commerce) or ensure that the Manchester Chamber provides dedicated advocacy for the Town.
- Advocate with secondary and post-secondary education institutions for a well-educated workforce that serves the needs of area businesses.

Recommendations (continued)

Ensure that there is an adequate supply of workforce housing.

Ensure that adequate infrastructure, such as high speed internet, exists to support employees working out of their home.

Support and encourage small business development.

Establish Bedford Economic Development Commission as a nonprofit organization and apply for a startup grant to do a specific project.

Establish local Economic Development "ambassadors" (local residents, business owners, BEDC members) to work with prospective new firms looking to relocate to the community.

Develop marketing materials that highlight the products, skills, and labor force of local businesses.

Establish a website with commercial site selection capabilities (showing available properties in town).

Focus marketing efforts on attracting businesses in the industry sectors where Bedford was underperforming in comparison to the county and/or the state.

Evaluate the permitted uses in the River Corridor to determine if they represent the highest and best uses for the remaining developable land.

Evaluate development regulations to encourage flexibility for redevelopment of retail sites that may transition to other uses, including mixed use development housing in the River Corridor. (See recommendations in the Population and Housing chapter).

Ensure that an adequate bus, shuttle, or other comparable transit service is available throughout the town to adequately move commuters who may access the proposed rail station and/or airport access road.

Redevelopment of Route 101 corridor could allow higher densities through potential extension of the municipal sewer system. Funding for such utility extension might be financed through Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or through public/private partnership.

Examine potential for hotel/conference center in the River Corridor. Consider conducting a feasibility study to support marketing efforts to attract such a facility to this location.

Consider preparation of a conceptual "master design plan" for the River Corridor that could illustrate the potential for a mixed use development to property owners, potential users of the site and investors. (See Appendix 2 for the Celebration Associates conceptual plans)

Ensure that adequate sewer and roadway capacity is available along the River Corridor to accommodate potential future development in this area.

Historic & Cultural Resources

Key Findings

- ▶ Bedford has a rich history represented by its historic and archaeological resources, which include buildings, structures, objects, burial grounds, landscapes, and archaeological sites. These resources define the Town's character and identity.
- ▶ The Bedford Historic District Commission, which oversees the Bedford Historic District, and the Bedford Historical Society are the two primary historic preservation organizations in the town.
- ▶ Two properties are on the National Register of Historic Places – Bedford Town Hall and the Bedford Presbyterian Church.
- ▶ Currently, the Town of Bedford has one local historic district, the Bedford Historic District, which was established in 1970. The district is roughly bounded by Wallace Road, Church Road, Ministerial Road, and Liberty Hill Road.

Recommendations

Adopt a Demolition Delay Ordinance s which provides time for both developers and the town to find alternatives to demolition.

Adopt new Local Historic Districts, adopted through local initiative in other areas that may need protection.

Investigate funding sources. Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing preservation strategies. The NHDHR and New Hampshire Preservation Alliance have programs to assist communities in preservation-related issues.

Encourage the use of historic tax credits by providing more information on federal and state rehabilitation tax credits to the general public.

Continue to create, coordinate, and enhance cultural opportunities with local cultural organizations, the schools, and neighboring communities.

Transportation

Key findings

- ▶ Many of the recommended actions from the 2000 Plan have been initiated or completed.
- ▶ The 91% of the Town's residents utilize the automobile to travel to work (86% in single occupancy vehicles) and 6% work from home.
- ▶ The lack of safe, accessible, and attractive pedestrian and bicycle facilities prevents people from using other modes of transportation. Route 101 creates a physical barrier within the community.

- ▶ The three areas of particular concern for traffic congestion are NH Route 101 within and west of Bedford, US Route 3 south of Back River Road, and NH Route 114.
- ▶ No official bike routes in Town.
- ▶ The Town has little to no pedestrian infrastructure.

Municipal Services & Facilities

Key Findings

- ▶ Town buildings appear to all need major repairs. To that end, the Town Council

Recommendations

The Town should continue to support the Roads Program which has proven to be an effective means of transitioning the Town's roads from rehabilitation to maintenance.

Actively promote the US Route 3 Improvement Plan and exaction procedure.

Improvement Plan and the Exaction Procedure. Through the Bedford Economic Development Commission, the Town should actively promote development opportunities along the corridor to developers and/or tenants that bring land uses to the area consistent with the Town's vision and that will enhance the Town's tax base.

Integrate plans for the southern part of the River Corridor with planned transportation improvements. The combination of the proposed commuter rail extension project and the completion of the Manchester Airport Access Road (MAAR) provides opportunities to increase potential tax base development, as well as provide multi-modal transportation facilities and Transit Oriented Development. The Town should evaluate the required transportation infrastructure to facilitate these development opportunities.

Revisit the NH Route 101 Corridor Plan and continue to seek state support. The following items should be reinvestigated:

- ▷ The "connector" road running behind the NH Route 101 businesses could likely be scaled back.
- ▷ The feasibility and necessity of a pedestrian bridge over NH Route 101 should be re-evaluated.
- ▷ Identify and pursue a contextually-sensitive improvement plan for the Meetinghouse Road intersection.

Recommendations (continued)

Develop a town-wide pedestrian and bicycle plan. Strategically placed pedestrian connectivity throughout the community would aid in the reduction of vehicle dependency for trips internal to Bedford. Implementation of portions of the plan could also be considered as part of the Town's Roads Program.

Support the NH Rail Transit Authority, which is overseeing the development of commuter rail in New Hampshire. The location for the Merrimack station is on land abutting the Bedford town line, immediately to the south of the airport access road. If funding can be obtained for the rail project, the Town should then begin to investigate what (if any) type of bus service should be extended into Bedford to serve the residents and support potential new development along the River Corridor.

Continue to require formal traffic impact assessments for development projects. The Planning Board should continue to seek reasonable and clear mitigation commitments from development projects on surrounding roadways.

Continue to implement access management strategies. The Town should continue to pursue access management strategies in the high-traffic corridors of US Route 3 and NH Route 101, requiring interconnection of commercial developments.

Develop a long-range plan to widen NH Route 114. The Town should work with the State to develop a long-term improvement plan that addresses capacity issues and employs access management measures. Having a long-term plan in place will help the Town identify and take advantage of improvement opportunities associated with future development projects.

Continue transportation planning efforts consisting of: the collection and dissemination of traffic information; analysis of traffic problems; and coordination of transportation planning with other disciplines, most notably land use and environmental planning.

Continue to evaluate and adjust the operations of the highway network to promote its efficient use and safe function.

Promote a user-friendly roadway network for motorists by improving traffic control devices (such as signage, pavement markings, and lighting) in specific areas where deficiencies currently contribute toward public safety concerns.

Endeavor to maintain acceptable levels of service (LOS D or better) for peak hour conditions, recognizing that lower levels of service may occur at certain locations.

Use the Town's land use regulations to address the number, design and location of access points; the provision for median islands to control access; the provision for left and right-turning lanes; internal circulation patterns; and the provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Endeavor to preserve and/or acquire right-of-way for new or expanded streets in advance of need through purchase, official mapping, and developer dedications.

Recommendations (continued)

Continually evaluate and designate emergency response routes.

Continue to require that new development bear a proportionate share of the costs of highway capital improvements and site-related improvements needed to provide safe and adequate access to/from the site.

Continue to update and administer a system of traffic exaction fees to address off-site related impacts of new development.

Promote connectivity through the requirement of local street connections between neighborhoods and new residential development.

Implement traffic calming measures in residential neighborhoods to direct traffic to arterial and collector streets in order to protect residential neighborhoods from adverse impacts associated with increased traffic volumes and speeds.

Promote the inclusion of sidewalks in appropriate highway improvement projects, ensure the proposed provision for pedestrian access within developments, and provide for the proper integration of public and private pedestrian ways.

Ensure that pedestrian ways are designed to serve the needs of people with disabilities.

Give priority to the designation and improvement of walking routes to all schools in the Town.

Incorporate provisions for bicycle lanes and/or paths in road construction and resurfacing projects where appropriate.

Continue to require landscaping as part of site development projects that do not hinder sight lines along the roadways and intersections as a result of growth and improper maintenance.

Promote the development of effective and aesthetically pleasing signage directing the traveling public to parks, recreational areas, and other attractions in Town.

Provide for visual and noise buffers along arterial and collector streets within and adjacent to residential neighborhoods.

established a Building Committee, which is expected to release a report later in 2010. The Committee will conduct an inventory of all Town buildings and will review the space needs for all Town departments. The potential cost of building replacement, renovation, or repairs will be ascertained.

- ▶ Similarly, the Town has established an Infrastructure Committee that will look at road, water, sewer, recreation, and related issues to create a plan that determine project cost estimates and how the Town should prioritize capital improvements needed to maintain and expand the Town's infrastructure.
- ▶ Major capital needs are summarized in the Town Manager's FY 2010 budget message. Among the long-term capital needs are the following:
 - ▷ **The local roads program is two years behind in implementation, including improvements to Routes 3 and 101.**
 - ▷ **The Nashua Road Parks and Recreation building needs to be replaced**
 - ▷ **Recreation fields, many of which are in fair to poor condition, require upgrades**
 - ▷ **Recommendations made by a consultant to the Town regarding public safety staff-**

ing levels, as well as facility and equipment needs, have not been fully implemented

- ▷ **Decisions still need to be made regarding new fire substations**
- ▷ **Public Works Department equipment needs to be upgraded**
- ▷ **The Town Offices need substantial renovation and/or expansion**
- ▷ **The library needs expanded parking**
- ▶ School facilities are generally in good shape.
- ▶ Generally demand outstrips supply of ball fields for use by Bedford residents and organized leagues.
- ▶ The police department is not staffed as recommended in the MRI study.
- ▶ Fire protection and ambulatory services are adequate at the moment but will need to grow in the future. Some staffing increases have been recommended.

Energy and Utilities

Key Findings

- ▶ Energy use by the Town's municipal buildings has remained relatively steady from 2006–2008.

Recommendations

Continually seek ways to collaborate with non-government agencies and other towns to provide government, utility, cultural, and human services.

Develop long-term strategic visions for each department, board, and commission, possibly through external staff or consulting support.

Establish a Sustainability Task Force to carry out the specific recommendations set out in this Plan. Working with the Sustainability Task Force, make sustainability initiatives and practices part of standard municipal procedures.

Recommendations (continued)

Consider adopting regulations that recommend or incentivize the use of LEED standards for new construction, particularly for municipal buildings.

Continually evaluate the potential for new technology to improve service delivery and efficiency, and provide information on technology options to the public as part of budgeting and planning.

Continually evaluate the website's content and architecture with a focus on how the site and the information are providing customer service, public participation, and efficient service delivery.

Examine models such as community planning boards to assess and plan for changing resident needs.

Encourage the School District to offer adult education programs to meet the needs of all town residents regardless of age.

Working with the Town Council and the Energy Commission, develop a Sustainability Strategic Plan for Bedford. Include staff and officials from all departments in development of the plan and subsequent training on its recommendations.

Develop a set of sustainability principles, including but not limited to energy and water conservation, green building materials, use of alternative energy sources, and minimizing waste.

Review and evaluate the Town's current ordinances and policies for sustainability issues such as water, energy, materials, and waste, and identify steps to improve or amend these over time.

Seek grant funds to complete other innovative projects that increase public awareness and support municipal leadership on sustainability issues.

Continue to participate in the regional stormwater education collaborative and other regional efforts to meet the requirements of the US EPA MS4 program for stormwater.

Maintain records of stormwater-related and flooding incidents in order to assess whether additional resources or focused efforts are needed for stormwater management.

Consider developing local records and mapping of the public water systems operating within Bedford.

Provide mapping of public water and sewer districts as part of the Town's website resources.

The Water and Sewer Advisory Committee should continue to work with and closely monitor the City of Manchester's progress on the expansion of the municipal WWTF.

Discuss with property owners in the Route 101 Corridor the level of interest in, and potential co-financing for, providing sewer and water services to the corridor.

As the budget allows, continue to implement the increased staffing levels for both the Police and Fire Departments as recommended in the respective MRI studies.

Recommendations (continued)

The Town Building Committee should consider the building of a new fire substation in the South River Road area as a high priority and move forward with design plans to construct it as soon as possible. Consideration should also be given to the substation in the northwest section of town.

Upon completion and approval of the Building Committee’s report, the Town Council should identify specific projects to fund in order to improve the condition and functionality of town-owned buildings.

Upon completion of the Infrastructure Committee report, the Town Council should adopt a preliminary project schedule for prioritized improvements based upon a list of projects developed by Town staff and refined by the Town Manager, Planning Director, and the Planning Board.

Work with other neighboring communities to expand services for older residents.

Efforts should be undertaken to explore public/private partnerships to provide additional services and programs for all Bedford residents.

The Parks and Recreation Department should establish service and locational standards for the Town’s park and recreational facilities. The Town should adopt appropriate standards that can serve as a guide for future decision-making regarding new fields and maintenance of existing ones.

Additional staff is needed to keep up with the maintenance demands for park and recreational facilities, especially ball fields which are considered to be in short supply regardless of their condition.

As demand increases, sufficient staff time for administering and coordinating park and recreation programming should be examined.

More community meeting space is needed for both public and private purposes. The Town should work towards identifying where additional meeting space can be provided.

- ▶ Town-wide electric use from 2007–2009 has increased by approximately 6 percent while the customer base has remained steady.
- ▶ PSNH and National Grid both offer a number of programs to promote energy efficiency for homes and businesses.

Open Space

Key Findings

NOTE: This is a summary of the Open Space Plan already adopted by the Town in November 2009.

- ▶ The Open Space Plan defined a “green infrastructure” along open space corridors that have the following benefits:

Recommendations

Pursue funding sources for Town and School District Energy Improvements including grants, loans and private investment.

Provide financial information to residential and non-residential users regarding energy conservation, efficiency and sustainability including grants, loans, tax incentives and rebate programs.

Provide financial support for residential and non-residential energy improvements through revolving loan funds, pending PACE legislation and similar opportunities as they become available.

Provide software tools, instructional information and guidance to residential and non-residential energy users concerning energy conservation, efficiency and sustainability. Conduct education and outreach programs for the general public.

Employ energy conservation and efficiency policies and standards when practicable such as LEED building standards and Energy Star equipment and system purchases.

Employ renewable energy sources and CHP technology where and when practicable.

Make joint energy purchases with the School District.

Provide information on energy related educational opportunities for Bedford students and educators.

Increase and diversify underground utilities and fuel sources.

Increase diversity in available transportation fuels (e.g. natural gas or electrical charging stations) and heating fuels.

Increase the use of renewable and low CO2 heating and transportation fuels.

Encourage, support and facilitate multimodal and mass transportation, park and ride, car pooling.

Encourage, support and facilitate improved traffic flow.

Reduce vehicle idling through policies for Town and School District vehicles, and by providing information to the general public.

Encourage, support and facilitate pedestrian and bicycle travel. Pursue a town center Route 101 pedestrian tunnel or bridge.

Encourage, support and facilitate robust systems for high speed data and wireless communication, and "work-from-home" policies.

Encourage use of Energy Star, LEED and comparable industry standards in residential and non-residential new construction, renovation and maintenance project.

Reduce solid waste through increased recycling and reduction of food waste entering the solid waste stream.

- ▷ Maintains ground and surface water quality
- ▷ Improves air quality
- ▷ Provides animal and plant habitat
- ▷ Provides connected open spaces
- ▷ Creates a pleasant and scenic environment
- ▷ Establishes wildlife corridors
- ▶ As defined, this green infrastructure includes approximately 7,754 acres (36.7%) of the Town.
- ▶ The Open Space Task Force identified 45 undeveloped priority parcels to determine a protection strategy for each one. The strategies included high cost options, such as outright purchase or the purchase of an easement. Low or no cost options included regulatory protection, management agreements, and landowner education.
- ▶ Financing through Land Use Change Tax revenue can be a valuable tool to protect high priority parcels.

Adopted Recommendations in the Open Space Plan

1. The green infrastructure identified in this plan should be adopted as the town's goal for open space preservation.
2. The parcels identified should be pursued for protection using the regulatory, non-regulatory, and purchasing strategies indicated.
 - a. Regulatory options include conservation subdivisions as described under the Land Use section.

- b. Non-regulatory options include educating landowners about the benefits of open space (such as tax advantages); transfer of development rights (also described in the Land Use section); and voluntary conservation such as land donation or the sale of development rights.
 - c. Purchasing options include outright purchase at market value, a discounted sale to the Town, or a Town purchase of an easement.
3. The Town should work expeditiously and cooperatively with owners of developed parcels within the recommended green infrastructure to ensure their appropriate management.
4. The Town should re-examine the recommendations of the plan at no more than three year intervals and review the open space financing plan annually, as part of the Capital Improvement Plan process.

Natural Hazard Mitigation

Key Findings

NOTE: This is a summary of the Hazard Mitigation Plan already adopted by the Town Council in May 2009.

- ▶ Key natural hazards in Bedford include flooding wind, wildfire, ice and snow events, and earthquakes.
- ▶ Critical facilities at risk include Town Offices, Safety Complex, Emergency Operations Center, Emergency Fuel Facilities, emergency shelters, evacuation routes, bridges, hospitals, and communication facilities.

- ▶ Areas at risk include public water/sewer systems, dams, electrical power substations, highways/roadways, problem culverts, schools and day care centers, health care facilities, commercial areas, recreational and historic resources, and hazardous materials facilities.
- ▶ Hazard mitigation is defined by the federal government as “any action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from hazards”.
- ▶ Hazard mitigation works to save lives and property, reduce vulnerability to future hazards, facilitate post-disaster funding, and speed recovery.

Adopted Recommendations in the Hazard Mitigation Plan

1. Implement culvert and bridge inventory and analysis, reporting on the conditions of each.
2. Develop a culvert and bridge maintenance program to ensure the longevity of the infrastructure and minimize potential damage in the event of a disaster.
3. Develop a website for floodplain information, both general and town based information.
4. Coordinate between the School District and Emergency Services to determine further generation needs at emergency shelters.
5. Develop a maintenance program for detention/retention ponds and identify locations of existing and potential new facilities as required to lessen clogging and flooding.
6. Develop a transportation hazard identification system for major routes (Routes 101/114/I-293) for future hazardous spill

events and anticipate hazard contamination characteristics.

7. Develop a tree maintenance program, minimize risk of unhealthy trees being blown over in wind events or swept by floods or landslides.
8. Educate residents on flood mitigation by distributing information through mailings, local newspaper articles or local access television programming.
9. Develop a river stewardship program in coordination with other local communities in the Merrimack River Watershed area.
10. Purchase flood-prone properties and/or development rights, particularly in the Special Flood Hazard Areas where possible.

