



# Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

## *Regional Strategic Plan Visioning Session*

UMass Lowell Inn and Conference Center  
November 4, 2010  
6:00-8:00 P.M.

A Multi-Disciplinary

Regional Planning

Agency Serving:

Billerica  
Chelmsford  
Dracut  
Dunstable  
Lowell  
Pepperell  
Tewksbury  
Tyngsborough  
Westford

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Stephen C. Themelis  
Chair

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## AGENDA

1. **Welcoming Statement and Overview** – Jay Donovan, Assistant Director, NMCOG
2. **Background** – Jay Donovan
  - 2020 Vision: Planning For Growth in the Northern Middlesex Region
  - Land Use Partnership Act (LUPA)
  - EOHEd Regional Strategic Plan contract
3. **SWOT Analysis** - – Jay Donovan  
(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)
  - What are the strengths of the Greater Lowell region?
  - What are the weaknesses in the Greater Lowell region that need to be addressed?
  - What opportunities are available to grow the Greater Lowell economy and to balance this growth with the quality of life?
  - What future threats to the Greater Lowell region can you identify that will need to be addressed?
  - What do you see as the future for the Greater Lowell region? Where will the regional growth centers be? Where should the preservation areas be? Where should the housing growth occur?
4. **Next Meeting** – Tewksbury Police Station, 918 Main Street  
Thursday, November 18, 2010 (7-9 P.M.)
5. **Adjournment**

# 2020 VISION:

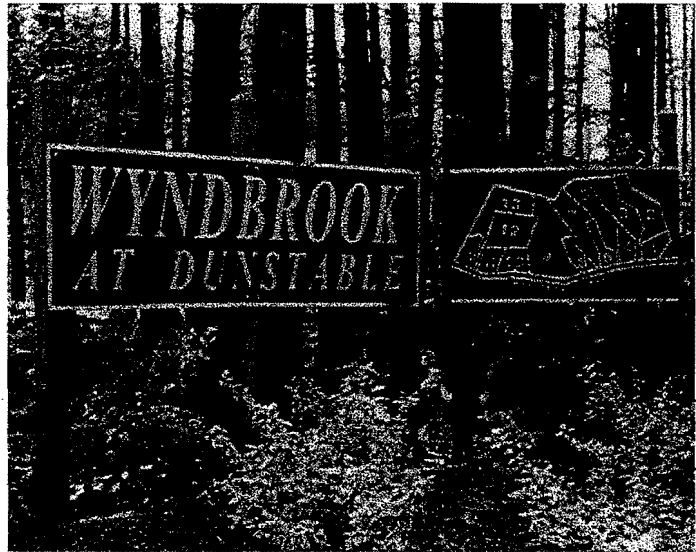
## PLANNING FOR GROWTH IN THE NORTHERN MIDDLESEX REGION

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A REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN

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FINAL REPORT - JUNE 1999



PREPARED BY THE  
NORTHERN MIDDLESEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
LOWELL, MASSACHUSETTS

FUNDED BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
AND MASS HIGHWAY  
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Spending too much time in the car driving from home to work to school to children's activities to shopping...? Does it seem like too many houses and businesses are being built on the open space that remains in your community? Or maybe you wonder — why do old industrial sites sit abandoned or underused year after year — while new factories and office parks pop up near interstates on former farmland?

Many of the issues that affect our quality of life in the Northern Middlesex area are regional in character or have regional impacts. Transportation investment decisions affect the location of new development and levels of traffic congestion. The loss of open space destroys the habitat networks wildlife need to survive. Decisions that may seem purely local, such as zoning patterns, can in fact have impacts far beyond local borders.

### **The 2020 Vision Charrette**

In early 1999, the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) invited members of the Northern Middlesex community — a diverse group of town and city officials, residents, business people, institutional and nonprofit organization representatives — to participate in a two-stage "charrette" or planning workshop in order to develop a strategy and plan for managing regional growth during the next twenty years. NMCOG staff prepared a briefing booklet to inform participants on trends in the region and growth management tools available.

At the first session, over fifty representatives from every municipality and a variety of regional organizations discussed strengths and weaknesses, current issues, and future possibilities in five thematic areas: Economic Development; Environmental Protection and Open Space; Infrastructure; Housing and Residential Development; and Community Character - History, Culture, and Landscape. Based on the results of this session, NMCOG staff developed a vision statement, a questionnaire on priority issues, and a preliminary action agenda for discussion during the second charrette session. At that gathering, participants exchanged views from the varying perspectives of urban, suburban, and rural communities. This report documents the results of the 2020 Vision Charrette.

### **The 2020 Vision**

Charrette participants' vision for our region in the next 20 years is one of diversity, environmental and economic balance, and greater regional cooperation:

- The region will retain a balance of urban, suburban and rural areas, each with its own character based in history, environment, and current uses.
- New economic development projects will be focused in areas already served by infrastructure.
- New residential development will be moderate and sited to preserve open space through clustering and other techniques.
- Mixed-use development will lessen the need for multiple vehicle trips to accomplish daily tasks and thereby improve traffic conditions.
- The region will have an interconnected open space network linked by waterways and regional pedestrian and bike routes.

- Improved management and maintenance of land and water resources will preserve wildlife habitat, water quality and quantity, and enhance quality of life.

## **The Plan**

The 2020 Vision Plan is both ambitious and pragmatic. There are no easy tasks in truly regional growth management, and there are often difficult choices and trade-offs to be made. The easier tasks, such as open space and historic preservation, are based on a theoretical consensus, but even then, specific situations can be highly controversial. These are the regional growth management challenges and tasks that emerged from the charrette discussions:

### ***The Hard Tasks***

- Preserve open space and develop an interconnected open space network
- Preserve historic resources

### ***The Harder Tasks***

- Implement a review system for developments of regional importance
- Revitalize town, village, and downtown commercial centers
- Direct economic development to underutilized urban and village sites
- Develop compact mixed-use business and commercial centers
- Improve design standards and developer incentives for open space residential subdivision design

### ***The Hardest Tasks***

- Decrease auto dependence
- Increase the use (not simply the availability) of public transportation
- Decrease traffic congestion
- Promote compact mixed-use centers that include residences
- Promote a more equitable distribution of affordable housing in the region

The potential projects that garnered the most widespread support from charrette participants included development of a regional open space plan, dissemination of model zoning bylaws on cluster development and mixed-use development, transportation planning for mixed-used centers, dissemination of design guidelines for town centers, and creation of an alliance of local land trusts.

## **Next Steps**

The 2020 Vision Plan will be NMCOG's baseline plan for many years to come. NMCOG will use this plan to measure progress towards the 2020 Vision. An annual Northern Middlesex Indicators report will publicize the state of the region in relation to the plan goals. NMCOG will encourage municipalities to sign memoranda of agreement on a handful of issues with broadest appeal. The memoranda will contain specific mechanisms for inter-municipal consultation. Finally, NMCOG will use this plan in developing new programs to assist member communities in coping with growth management dilemmas.

## XIII. A REGIONAL GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACTION AGENDA

There are no easy tasks in the development of an action agenda for regional growth management. Regional planning agencies and other regional entities have extremely limited powers. Isolated, local growth management can too easily become exclusionary or simply deflect unmanaged growth to other areas. In this way, local growth management can actually promote more sprawl. Yet regional planning, as previous efforts in earlier decades have shown, is extremely difficult because of the fragmented land-use decision-making system in our state.

Many reports and literature on growth management end with generalized exhortations to “promote” or “encourage” certain activities or changes. In our planning process and this report, we have tried to avoid this syndrome (admittedly, not entirely successfully) by acknowledging the difficulty of regional growth management tasks, grouping the tasks to be accomplished by relative difficulty, and proposing specific actions.

At the second charrette session, on 11 February, NMCOG staff presented for discussion a series of regional growth management tasks that emerged from the thematic discussions of the previous session. In order to provide a realistic context for these tasks, the constraints and opportunities associated with each task were also presented. Finally, possible actions to be taken were presented.

### THE HARD TASKS

- Preserve open space and develop a networked open space system
- Preserve historic resources

### THE HARDER TASKS

- Implement a review system for developments of regional importance
- Revitalize town, village, and downtown commercial centers
- Direct economic development to underutilized urban and village sites
- Develop compact mixed-use business and commercial centers
- Improve design standards and developer incentives for open space residential subdivision design

### THE HARDEST TASKS

- Decrease auto dependence
- Increase the use (not simply the availability) of public transportation
- Decrease traffic congestion
- Promote compact mixed-use centers including residences
- Promote a more equitable distribution of affordable housing in the region.

## A. THE HARD TASKS

### Open Space Preservation

#### **Opportunities**

- In principle, almost everybody is in favor of preserving open space.
- Every town has a local open space plan.

#### **Constraints**

- Funding for fee-simple acquisition of open space is limited.
- Preservation through easements and sale of development rights requires an effective information and

outreach campaign to property owners.

- Support for more open space masks contending interests and needs - open space for what? There are many uses for open space: individual property ownership, preservation of community character, active recreation, passive recreation, wildlife habitat, water resource preservation, flood control, etc.

**Actions:**

- Create an effective Regional Open Space Plan based on criteria agreed to by municipalities in a Memorandum of Agreement.
- Create an alliance of local land trusts with the possible goal of uniting as a regional land trust.
- Promote passage of the Community Preservation Act in the state legislature to permit towns to build up funds for the purchase of open space.
- Create a public information and assistance campaign on conservation easements and other ways that private landowners can preserve open space.

**Historic Resources Preservation**

***Opportunities***

- The region has a strong sense of its historic roots and identity.
- Lowell is a national example of how to give importance to the industrial history of the region.
- Historic preservation is a strong component of community character.

***Constraints***

- All of our communities have historic structures and sites, but there are relatively few historic districts or preservation ordinances.
- Historic resources in many of our communities are dispersed and surrounded by newer development.
- Property owners often resist historic district ordinances because of the perceived intrusiveness of regulation and requirements. Historic restoration can be costly.

**Actions:**

- Create a forum for exchange of ideas and joint activities by local historic commissions and societies
- Create a regional historic preservation plan, building on the plan prepared in the 1970s.
- Explore the creation of regional routes of historic landmarks for colonial and revolutionary history, mill development, and so on, perhaps using the Essex County or Blackstone River models for ideas.

**B. THE HARDER TASKS**

**Review system for developments of regional importance**

***Opportunities***

- Inter-municipal conflicts arise in any case over developments on borders or large projects that affect wide areas.
- A review process could focus discussions for the resolution of conflict.

***Constraints***

- Local governments resist additional review processes.
- Additional review may be perceived as adding to the time cost of the permitting process.

**Actions:**

- Develop threshold criteria for developments of regional importance
- Draft a memorandum of agreement for regional municipalities designating NMCOG staff to perform a review and present results for approval by the Council and transmittal to the appropriate municipal officials and boards
- Publish the results of the review process

### **Revitalization of town center, village, and downtown commercial areas**

#### ***Opportunities***

- There are already efforts in this direction in some towns.
- There are examples outside our region of towns that have decided to create or recreate town centers where old ones have been destroyed by sprawl or never existed.

#### ***Constraints***

- Resistance often exists to the higher density residential development or above-store apartments that create a neighborhood market for village/town centers.
- Design guidelines for development in centers must be applied both to new development and to redevelopment projects.

#### **Actions:**

- Take advantage of state technical assistance programs for downtown revitalization
- Include revitalization of town and village centers in master planning processes
- Create design guidelines for revitalization
- Provide zoning or other incentives for development in centers

### **Direct economic development to underutilized urban sites**

#### ***Opportunities***

- State and federal brownfields legislation now provides incentives for clean-up and redevelopment of contaminated sites.
- Urban buildings often can offer lower-cost space for start-up businesses.
- Urban residents have large aggregate purchasing power that is often not captured locally.
- Concentration on retaining existing businesses and helping them expand can be an effective strategy.

#### ***Constraints***

- The property tax system encourages municipalities to compete against one another for non-residential business development.
- Almost all large businesses now expect some kind of incentive or benefit from municipalities when they decide to locate there.
- Corporate location decisions are often based on the residence of the CEO or proximity to the existing or desired educated work force, which works against many urban areas
- Urban areas can lack the communications infrastructure needed by technology firms.
- Poor image and stereotyping of urban areas and populations deters businesses.

#### **Actions:**

- Create a regional economic development council or authority (requires state approval)
- Market underutilized sites and provide incentives for redevelopment
- Provide modern telecommunications infrastructure to serve older sites
- Update, beautify, and maintain the public realm around older sites

### **Develop Concentrated Mixed-Use Centers**

#### ***Opportunities***

- Mixed-use development clustered in nodes around corporate developments provides employees with opportunities to complete shopping errands and go to lunch without having to use their cars, thus mitigating traffic congestion and limiting the number of curb cuts.
- Mixed-use can help balance development concentration and traffic congestion with accessibility, making up for lower traffic speeds.
- Mixed-use centers permit more preservation of community character along local roads.

**Constraints**

- Some towns have zoned for commercial or industrial development along local arterials in the belief that this will contain development and traffic congestion.
- Some large companies prefer to build self-contained facilities with internal eating areas and other amenities, in order to keep employees from leaving the work site during the day.

**Actions:**

- Create and circulate model zoning by-laws and incentive programs for mixed-use development
- Plan transportation improvements to promote mixed-use development
- Encourage Planning Boards to promote mixed-use development

**Improve design standards and developer incentives for residential cluster development**

**Opportunities**

- Examples of effective and attractive cluster development can be coupled with arguments for the environmental and open space benefits of cluster
- Cluster development with recreational open space and access to commercial and entertainment areas has proven attractive to the over-55 population
- Change "cluster" to "open space residential development"

**Constraints**

- Town fears of housing unlike standard single-family housing has created large regulatory hurdles for cluster development, such as approval by Town Meeting.
- Poorly done existing developments have given cluster development a bad image.
- Belief by some that large-lot zoning preserves open space.

**Actions:**

- Create and circulate model cluster zoning regulations
- Create and circulate visual representations and guidelines for cluster development site design and home design
- Seek co-sponsorship by the development industry of a regional conference on cluster development to develop workable regulatory and design review systems

**B. THE HARDEST TASKS**

**Decrease auto dependence and increase the use (not just the availability) of public transportation**

**Opportunities**

- Public frustration with traffic congestion is growing
- Businesses can take advantage of incentives for participation in Transportation Management Associations for their employees
- TEA-21 provides additional funds and opportunities for transit projects

**Constraints**

- Existing residential, employment, and commercial patterns require dependence on the auto for the majority of regional residents
- Public transportation must be perceived to be more convenient and comfortable than private autos to attract significant use

**Actions:**

- Encourage transit-friendly and transit-dependent mixed-used development rather than conventional suburban development
- Market the Greater Lowell TMA (Transportation Management Association ) to more businesses in the region to widen participation in this state-supported program (50% state

*2020 Vision: Planning for Growth in the Northern Middlesex Region*  
funds, 50% private)

- Form additional TMAs in areas not currently served by the Greater Lowell TMA
- Coordinate DEP approval of Transportation Management Plans with regional growth management planning for employers with 250+ employees
- Promote employer-based transportation management techniques such as telecommuting, flex time, guaranteed ride home, transit pass subsidies for employees, and ride-sharing
- Encourage the LRTA to pursue new funding programs, including "New Starts" to initiate transit service where practical and cost-effective

### **Decrease traffic congestion**

#### ***Opportunities***

- Levels of traffic congestion have steadily increased over the years, affecting quality of life for area residents and employees.

#### ***Constraints***

- Our region cannot control the traffic burden coming from and going to other regions, particularly New Hampshire  
- Limitations on transportation improvement funding during Big Dig construction  
- Lack of a state transportation policy guided by growth management principles  
- Lack of local political will to examine traffic improvements requiring construction as well as those that do not

#### **Actions:**

- Promote the use of measures to control traffic demand such as increased transit use, ride-sharing, bicycling and walking where practical
- Plan physical improvements for areas targeted for growth in regional plans, preserving local character in other areas
- Promote implementation of the regional transportation plan's project to wide Route 3 as a means to remove traffic from parallel routes and town centers
- Promote implementation of the regional transportation plan's projects for additional river crossing capacity in order to improve local and regional travel.

### **Promote mixed-use development, including residential development, breaking down the segregation of land uses.**

#### ***Opportunities***

- Revitalization of town and village centers can attract residential interest as people wish to be within walking distance of attractive commercial districts  
- Employees in new business and commercial mixed use centers may wish to live nearby  
- The dispersed patterns of residence, schools, recreational facilities, shopping, services, and employment are creating a tiring life style of constant driving for many regional residents  
- As populations age, housing within walking distance of commercial centers, recreational areas and libraries, and entertainment becomes more attractive

#### ***Constraints***

- In suburban areas, existing forms of auto-dependent commercial development are often unappealing to potential residents because of the perceived proximity to high-traffic corridors  
- Segregation of land uses is perceived to guarantee the protection of housing values  
- It is much more difficult to reverse existing sprawl development than to prevent new sprawl

#### **Actions:**

- Create and distribute model regulations and examples of best practices to encourage zoning and permitting for multiple mixed uses

**More equitable distribution of affordable housing in the region**

***Opportunities***

- High housing costs in many towns are pricing native sons and daughters, as well as the elderly, out of the market, providing a local incentive for creation of affordable housing
- New proposed federal initiatives will increase funding for affordable housing development
- Scattered site housing, first time homebuyer programs, and inclusionary affordable housing measures reduce the perceived effects of concentrated affordable housing development

***Constraints***

- Towns are reluctant to accept affordable housing except for the elderly and disabled
- Affordable housing is believed to have an adverse effect on nearby property values
- The common image of affordable housing as a concentration of dense and unattractive multifamily buildings contributes to a reluctance to accept it
- Current funding for affordable housing is very limited.

**Actions:**

- Advocate for affordable housing to be one of the permitted uses for funds collected under the proposed Community Preservation Act bill
- Promote a wider view of "affordability" so that it is not viewed as synonymous with "subsidized"
- Research and publish a review of regional affordable housing trends, focusing particularly on the location and distribution of housing.

**Fact Sheet: Land Use Partnership Act**  
**Lead Sponsors: Senator Harriette Chandler and Representative Kevin Honan**  
**Docket Number:**

## **I. Need for Zoning Reform**

The Commonwealth's outdated zoning and planning statutes discourage sustainable development, affordable housing, and the protection of natural resources. As a result, Massachusetts is losing land to development at a rate seven times its population growth. Zoning and planning reform is a necessary first step to help cities and towns spend infrastructure dollars efficiently, create fair housing opportunities, and address climate change.

## **II. Background on Zoning Reform Task Force**

Secretary Greg Bialecki led an 18-month process to explore zoning and planning reform with representatives from the environmental community, planners, development interests, business associations, and smart growth, housing, and municipal groups. Senator Chandler and Representative Honan filed the Task Force's current draft of the Land Use Partnership Act (LUPA) at the start of the new legislative session. Going forward, Secretary Bialecki has expressed his intention to continue working with the Task Force and legislators to refine the bill and broaden its support.

## **III. Land Use Partnership Act Summary**

The Land Use Partnership Act modernizes a number of zoning and planning statutes in Chapters 40A and 41 that will affect the entire state. In addition, the proposal allows municipalities to opt-in to a higher performance standard and thereby receive new tools for directing development. The higher standard is based on the state's goals for housing, economic development, renewable energy, open space, and water resources. Regional Planning Agencies are responsible for certifying that the goals are met.

The bill seeks to fairly balance the interests of municipalities, developers, and the general public. This compromise includes many tradeoffs, but on a whole, it significantly advances sustainable planning and development in Massachusetts.

## **IV. Updates to State Zoning and Planning Statute that Affect All Municipalities**

1. Allows cities and towns to regulate maximum residential floor area and curb "McMansions."
2. Establishes the clear authority for cities and towns to create new "form-based" zoning codes, which are used around the country to promote a consistent town character.
3. Allows a majority vote for adopting a zoning bylaw or ordinance, with the local option of maintaining it at 2/3.
4. Limits "zoning freezes" to project plans, and not the underlying land itself. This will help protect municipalities from developers filing unrealistic plans.
5. Establishes for the first time a framework for site plan review, with a transparent and predictable process to facilitate development.
6. Authorizes cities and towns to institute the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) within a municipality and among municipalities. This can help cities and towns protect important landscapes

facing intense development pressure by exchanging the right to develop more densely in other, more appropriate locations.

7. Clarifies and expands the use of “cluster development” to protect open space within residential developments.
8. Empowers municipalities to charge impact fees to offset the costs of increased public services and protects developers from unrelated requests.
9. Clarifies the rules for subdivision review in a similar way to site plan review as noted above.

#### **V. The Performance Standard for Opt-In Municipalities**

1. Creation of a certified land-use plan and enactment of local zoning consistent with the plan.
2. Prompt and predictable permitting of commercial and/or industrial development within one or more districts unless waived by the RPA.
3. Prompt and predictable permitting of reasonably compact residential development within one or more districts that can accommodate a number of new housing units equal to 5% of existing housing units over 10 years (.5% per year).
4. Mandatory open space residential design to protect open space in developments five units or larger in all zoning districts with minimum one acre lot size.
5. Mandatory low impact development techniques to help replenish groundwater in all developments greater than one acre.
6. Prompt and predictable permitting of (i) renewable or alternative energy generating facilities, (ii) renewable or alternative energy research and development facilities, or (iii) renewable or alternative energy manufacturing facilities, within one or more zoning districts that are eligible locations.

#### **IV. New Tools for Opt-In Communities that Meet State Goals**

1. Permission to eliminate the approval not required (ANR) exemption for residential projects.
2. Reduction of the subdivision zoning freeze from eight to three years (five years if the developer has invested substantially in infrastructure).
3. Ability to impose reasonable rate-of-growth programs within growth areas.
4. Permits natural resource protection zoning (very large lot conservation zoning) in areas of environmental resource value.
5. Priority for discretionary state funding for infrastructure.
6. Technical assistance grant funding from the state to municipalities to prepare their land-use plans and implement the necessary zoning changes.

For more information, please contact:

- André Leroux, Massachusetts Smart Growth Alliance (617-263-1257 or [andre@ma-smartgrowth.org](mailto:andre@ma-smartgrowth.org))
- Nancy Goodman, Environmental League of Massachusetts (617-742-2553 or [ngoodman@environmentalleague.org](mailto:ngoodman@environmentalleague.org))
- Sean Caron, CHAPA (617-742-0820 or [scaron@chapa.org](mailto:scaron@chapa.org))

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

### **Section I – Introduction and Plan Purpose**

### **Section II – Existing Conditions**

1. Identification of already adopted actions by municipality (i.e. 43D, 40R, TOD, growth districts) that would meet proposed LUPA “opt-in” benchmarks
2. A matrix of adopted zoning and land use tools and practices
3. An assessment of each community’s status relative to the proposed “opt-in” benchmarks under LUPA
4. An assessment of already adopted actions to determine if such actions are likely to be considered “eligible locations” under LUPA, as currently proposed
5. RPA and municipal identification of actions that would be required in order to meet LUPA “opt-in” benchmarks
6. Housing Overview
7. Natural and Environmental Systems, Open Space, Cultural and Historic Resources  
*(Much of the above information will be compiled and displayed in a set of maps.)*

### **Section III- Regional Goals and Objectives for Housing, Economic Development and Open Space/Natural Resource Protection**

### **Section IV-Key Assumptions including Forecasts of Regional Growth and Preservation**

### **Section V- Land Use Element, including Identification of Priority Housing and Economic Development Districts at the local and regional levels**

1. Identification of regional growth centers
2. Map of Priority Development Areas for Housing and Economic Development

### **Section VI-Identification and assessment of Priority Preservation Areas (PPAs) at the local and regional level (including a map of the PPAs)**

### **Section VII—Recommendations and Guidance on LUPA, and Plan Review and Certification**

1. Guidance to local communities on eligible locations under the proposed LUPA “opt-in” benchmarks
2. Guidance to local communities on the criteria used for granting waivers under the proposed LUPA “opt-in” benchmarks
3. A Regional Review Process that meets the intent of LUPA will be outlined, and guidance will be provided to local communities regarding development reviews and certifications that are compliant with LUPA, as currently proposed.

### **Section VIII-Identification of alternative energy sites/green energy initiatives (this element will not be funded by EOHED)**

### **Section IX-Public Involvement Process**

The Regional Strategic Plan will include an initial public involvement event that will help provide the foundation for development of the plan’s goals and objectives. NMCOG staff will facilitate a series of two visioning workshops that will be held in a convenient public place with general assembly space.

The first Visioning Workshop will focus on the planning process, and on identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) of the region. During the first Visioning

Workshop, a breakout session will be held during which participants will be asked to generate ideas regarding the future of the region.

The second Visioning Workshop will focus on the identification of priority development areas and priority preservation areas. NMCOG staff will provide participants with a summary of the input received during the first Visioning Workshop (categorized by plan element), an overview of the themes and ideas generated, and a draft goal statement for each element, as a starting point for the conversation.

Much of the data and analysis contained within the plan will be compiled from GIS sources, local Master Plans, Open Space and Recreation Plans, Economic Development Plans, Housing Production Plans, the region's CEDS and other documents prepared by NMCOG, the Commonwealth and the local communities. When necessary, updated data will be compiled. Among the many stakeholders that will participate in the development of the plan are: the nine NMCOG municipalities, the regional business community, Merrimack River Watershed Council, Nashua River Watershed Association, Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust, Coalition for a Better Acre, Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce, the regional legislative delegation, Merrimack Valley Economic Development Council, the Greater Lowell Regional CEDS Committee, Community Teamwork, Inc., the National Park Service, the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, the Greater Lowell Workforce Investment Board, Middlesex Community College, and UMass Lowell.

The plan will also be discussed at the monthly meetings of the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, which are open to the public. Bordering RPAs will also be consulted to resolve any potential conflicts across regional boundaries.

The draft plan will be presented in a public meeting of the Chief Elected Officials in each of the nine NMCOG communities. In addition, information will be available and documents will be posted on the NMCOG website: [www.nmcog.org](http://www.nmcog.org). The public will also be able to submit comments through the website. Many of the public meetings will be televised on local cable TV channels.

#### **Section X- Finding of Consistency with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles**

The plan will be reviewed to ensure consistency with the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles.

#### **Section XI- Plan Implementation and Performance Measuring Programs**

An Implementation Plan will be developed outlining the plan's recommendations, policies and strategies. An implementation matrix will be presented outlining implementation responsibilities for each recommendation, establishing a timeframe, estimating the cost of implementation, and identifying potential funding sources. NMCOG will provide technical assistance to its member communities in implementing the plan and will produce an annual report of indicators based on performance measures that address the region's progress in the areas of land use, housing, alternative energy and economic development. Such indicators will include the following:

- New development projects initiated (commercial, industrial and residential)
- Investments in infrastructure
- Jobs created
- Acres of land preserved through acquisition or easement
- Brownfield sites remediated and/or redeveloped
- Preserved or protected historic properties and sites
- Implementation of green building initiatives
- Renewable energy projects permitted and/or completed
- Number of new housing units permitted

- Number of affordable housing units added to the subsidized housing inventory
- Growth districts, 40R districts, 43D districts created

**Section XII- Regional Plan Adoption Process and Documentation**

The plan will be adopted by the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments. In addition, each of its nine member communities will be asked to endorse the document by majority vote of its chief elected officials.

**BUDGET**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Estimated Person Hours**</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Task 1-Draft Introduction and Plan Purpose	\$2,000	23.5	7/1/10 -7/15/10
Task 2- Existing Conditions	4,000	47	7/15/10-7/30/10
Task 3- Develop Regional Goals and Objectives	2,500	29	7/16/10-8/15/10
Task 4 –Outline key assumptions/forecast regional growth and preservation	2,000	25.5	8/1/10-8/31/10
Task 5 – Prepare Land Use element and Identify Priority development districts	6,500	76.5	9/1/10-10/15/10
Task 6 – Identify Priority Preservation Area	3,500	41	9/1/10-10/15/10
Task 7-Outline recommendations on LUPA, Plan Review and certification	4,000	47	10/1/10-11/01/10
Task 8 –Identify alternative energy sites/green energy initiatives	3,000*	35	9/16/10-10/15/10
Task 9 –Implement public involvement process	\$6,000	70.5	7/1/10-12/15/10 Visioning sessions in June and August 2010.  Public Meeting on Draft Plan in November 2010, and Plan Adoption in December 2010.
Task 10 –Sustainable Development Principles Consistency Review	2,000	23.5	11/1/10-11/15/10
Task 11 –Prepare Implementation Plan/ Outline Performance Measures	3,000	35	11/01/-11/15/10
Task 12 – Plan Adoption and Documentation	4,500	53	11/15/10-12/15/10
Total	\$40,000 by EOHED/ \$3,000 by others	506.5	

\* To be funded by others