



Northern New England Planning Conference
Wednesday October 21 – Friday October 23, 2026
Doubletree by Hilton Manchester New Hampshire



Wednesday, October 21, 2026

- 12:00 p.m. **Registration Opens** ~ Assembly
- 2:00 – 4:15 p.m. **Meet Ups** Join us for some networking and peer-to-peer learning conversations
- 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Did you attend the **media training** in September and want to keep the conversation going? Did you miss the training but want to hear a bit about working with the media? Come to an informal meetup to talk with NNECAPA President Jeff Levine, FAICP about the dos and don'ts of planner public relations. Jeff has worked as a journalist and writer and is the author of **Leadership in Planning**, which talks about how to keep planning issues in a positive light in the public eye. (1 cm) ~ Pemigewasset
Jeff Levine, Owner & Principal, Levine Planning Strategies
- 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Thinking about taking the **AICP exam** or just curious what it is about? Come hang out with fellow planners to demystify the exam and swap tips and study strategies. Bring your questions and leave with a better sense of how to get started! (1 cm) Cont/Merrimack
Dayea Shim, HHF Planners
- 3:15 – 4:15 p.m. This session will focus on **common issues that planners**, especially in rural areas, run into and some ways that decades of experience have taught me to avoid them or overcome them. If you have had a public meeting (or a dozen) that just went sideways, this will help. If you are so new that has not happened yet, this should be mandatory. This session will be most appropriate for those that work in rural areas with stronger anti-planning views. *Kevin Geiger, Chief Planner, TRORC* (1 cm) ~ Pemigewasset
- 3:15 – 4:15 p.m. **Short Term Rentals** present some unique challenges and planning issues, with impacts to housing availability, economy, and land use regulation. Join us for a roundtable discussion on STRs, what issues they bring up with the public and with private property owners, how towns are managing or regulating them, and what challenges or opportunities they present to planners. This roundtable is for anyone - new planners and seasoned planners alike, folks new to STRs and those familiar with them but curious about how others are managing. *Scott Gustin, City of Burlington; Alexandra Galanis, NH Housing; Jeremy Martin, Town of Camden; Ben Smith, North-Star Planning* (1 cm) Cont/Merrimack
- Mobile Sessions (3) Must Pre-Register for Mobile Sessions- Off-Site**
- 2:00 – 5:30 p.m. The Factory on Willow Experience: Reimagining Industrial Space (3.5 cm)
- 2:00 – 5:30 p.m. Learning from Tuscan Village: From Racetrack to Mixed-Use Destination (3.5 cm)
- 2:00 – 5:30 p.m. Manchester Cedar Swamp Preserve Access Granted (3.5 cm)
- 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. **Exhibitor Set Up** ~ Armory
- 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. **NNECAPA Reception with Exhibitors ~Light Appetizers & Beverages** ~ Armory

Dinner on Your Own

Thursday, October 22, 2026

6:30 – 7:30 a.m. Barre Class at Barre Life. Must register, \$5 fee and limited to 18 people. Off-Site

7:00 – 7:45 a.m. Run/Walk on the Riverwalk – meet in the hotel lobby. Hosted by Ravi Venkataraman & Sarah Wrightsman

7:00 - 8:30 a.m. **Breakfast Buffet** ~ Armory

8:30 – 9:30 a.m. **Welcome & Keynote Speaker** ~ Armory

One Region, Many Realities: Planning Across a Fractured Northern New England

Northern New England is often viewed as a single region, yet the realities shaping communities across Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont have become increasingly distinct. From 2014 to 2024, communities throughout the region experienced markedly different trends in population growth, demographics, income, employment, and housing development. Coastal towns, mill cities, rural service centers, and mountain communities are evolving along different paths, creating unique planning challenges and opportunities. This keynote session brings together three planning firms, VHB, CommunityScale, and BerryDunn, for a comparative exploration of the forces reshaping Northern New England. The presentation will begin with a regional perspective, using maps, data visualizations, and analysis to examine four key themes: demographic change, employment trends, market conditions, and housing production. By comparing these trends across all three states, the session will highlight how communities are changing and how those shifts influence local planning priorities. The discussion will then move to the local level, with case studies from communities across the region illustrating how broader trends manifest differently depending on local context. Together, these examples demonstrate why effective local planning requires a strong understanding of regional change. (1 cm)

Luke Mitchell, VHB

Alison Tobey, BerryDunn

Kate Burch & Jeff Sauser, CommunityScale

9:30 – 10:00 a.m. **Coffee with Exhibitors**

10:00 – 11:00 a.m. **4 Concurrent Workshops (60 Minutes)**

1. Presentation Skills for Planners (It Matters More Than You Think!) ~ Frost/Hawthorne

Many planners underestimate the importance of good presentation skills in public meetings, workshops, or conference presentations. Don't let your message get lost because of your "delivery", learn the most important things to avoid and tactics to employ to capture your audience! From speaking tips, to slides, to handouts, how you put together your presentation can help persuade decision makers, "sell" a recommendation or plan, or effectively engage your audience in considering important planning issues. This session will go over essential skills for a successful public presentation - it's not about bells & whistles or technology, it's about knowing what makes people listen to your content and not get distracted by a bad presentation. (1 cm)

Amanda Bunker, Retired

2. Maine Winter Storm Damage Community Resilience Partnership Program ~ Cont/Merrimack

After the Winter of 2023-2024 storms, communities in Maine lost power and saw significant damage to residences, businesses, and infrastructure. As these storms occurred, the Lincoln County communities of Alna and Newcastle began enrolling in the State of Maine's Community Resilience Partnership. Throughout the enrollment process, town staff, volunteers, and community members in Alna and Newcastle identified energy efficiency and improving community resilience during storm events as climate priorities. To address this, both towns took on their own projects through the Community Action Grant program to implement energy efficiency improvements at their respective Fire Stations. The second action involved creating a municipal Battery Lending Program, which offers residents Bluetti AC180 portable battery stations for emergency backup power for indoor electrical necessities. Both towns are in the early stages of launching their Battery Lending Programs, and Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission staff have worked closely with the towns to scope out and implement these projects. Newcastle and Alna, as well as all Lincoln County communities, have also recently worked on the Lincoln County Social Resilience Project, which sought to strengthen social infrastructure, the connections between community members and partners in key sectors involved in preparing for, responding to, and recovering

from emergencies. All of this work ties into the County's newly updated 2026 Hazard Mitigation Plan and is helping to guide next steps for resilience throughout Lincoln County. (1 cm)

Laura Graziano, Lincoln County Region

3. Housing: Creative Approaches to Supporting ADUs ~ Pemigewasset

Over the years as legislation has changed around accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and interest has grown, advocates and planning professionals have taken on creative and engaging approaches to supporting homeowners interested in becoming home creators. These initiatives include a comprehensive guide for homeowners, a design challenge in the Monadnock region, a series of home creator expos, webinars, and other forums, and a monthly ADU "huddle"! In this session, attendees will have an opportunity to learn how the ADU landscape has shifted in NH, challenges that homeowners face, and the impact of these various initiatives. (1 cm)

Sarah Wrightsman, New Hampshire Housing

James Vayo, Southern NH Planning Commission

Renee Theall, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission

Chloe Gross, Southwest Region Planning Commission

4. Natural Resources Assessment and Inventory ~ Piscatquog

Peterborough staff will introduce participants to their innovative virtual Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) application, demonstrating how it improves planning and conservation decision making through mapping critical resources and applying them to real-life Planning Board reviews. Attendees leave with a clearer understanding of how to create an NRI, integrate it into board processes, and use it to guide proactive, resource-based planning in their own communities. (1 cm)

Julie Elwell & Danica Miller, Town of Peterborough

11:15 – 12:30 p.m. **Mobile Session Off-Site** Must Pre-Register (1.25 cm)

Walk the Block: Community Investment, Neighborhood Voice, and Change in Manchester's Center City Beech Street Neighborhood

11:15 – 12:30 p.m. **4 Concurrent Workshops (75 Minutes)**

1. Connecting Planning and Practice: Outdoor Recreation, Business, and Community Development

Pemigewasset

This session explores how outdoor recreation planning tools and public-private partnerships can help communities advance economic development, strengthen local businesses, and support long-term community planning efforts. The session will begin with an overview of RecReady NH and the Vermont CORE Toolkit, two planning toolkits designed to help municipalities, nonprofits, and local stakeholders leverage outdoor recreation assets to support tourism, economic vitality, and community planning efforts through stakeholder engagement, implementation strategies, and economic impact analysis. Presenters will share how these tools can assist organizations, communities, and outdoor recreation businesses in taking action on shared community planning priorities and regional economic goals. Communities and organizations can leverage planning toolkits for work on housing, trail and recreation infrastructure, climate adaptation investments, workforce development, and downtown vitality. This session will highlight case studies from outdoor recreation businesses, community partnerships, and regional initiatives as practical examples of how planning frameworks can move strategy into implementation. (1.25 cm)

Mistaya Smith, CRO Planning & Design

Alex Belensz, SE Group

Janel Lawton & Heather Shank, NH Dept of Business and Economic Affairs

Lydia Jankowski, SE Group

Joshua Schwartz, Mad River Valley Planning District

2. Brownfields Programs & Supporting Studies: What You Need to Know ~ Piscatquog

This session will provide planners and community leaders with a short Brownfields basics overview followed by information and discussion about Brownfield assessment and redevelopment planning strategies, funding options, and case studies to aid in positioning contaminated or underutilized properties for revitalization. Adaapta will provide an overview of assessment and redevelopment studies commonly used to support brownfields projects, including site reuse plans, market studies, and resource roadmaps. BETA Group will provide an overview of

funding options and benefits of working with regional planning commissions. Southwest Region Planning Commission will share case studies to highlight how utilizing EPA Assessment grants with support from NHDES have helped communities investigate contamination, estimate redevelopment costs, and advance redevelopment opportunities at sites that may otherwise have remained stagnant. Participants will gain an understanding of how Brownfield studies and assessment programs help communities identify redevelopment opportunities, prioritize investments, and move projects toward beneficial re-use. (1.25 cm)

J.B. Mack, Southwest Region Planning Commission

Joseph McLoughlin, BETA Group, Inc.

Michelle Spohnheimer, Adaapta

3. Strengthening Communities Through Data-Driven Housing Policy: Lessons from Maine and Vermont ~ Cont/Merrimack

Vibrant year-round communities and a strong regional economy depend on housing, yet across Northern New England, communities are facing a growing disconnect between housing availability and affordability. Rising home prices, limited housing supply, and competition from short-term rental and second-home markets are making it difficult for young professionals, families, and older residents to remain in their communities. In this session, panelists from The Midcoast Council of Governments in Maine and the Town of Stowe, Vermont, will discuss how communities are using data to inform municipal policy and regional collaboration to better align housing efforts with local needs to preserve vibrant, year-round communities. (1.25 cm)

Jeff Sauser, CommunityScale

Sharon McShane, Town of Stowe

Charlotte Nutt & Alexis Mann, Midcoast Council of Governments

4. Engagement: Community Zoning Discussions Using 2 and 3 Dimensional Tools: Plan NH Community Design Charrette Program ~ Frost/Hawthorne

This presentation will examine the Plan NH Community Design Charrette Program as a proven model for advancing thoughtful planning in communities across New Hampshire. Over the past 30 years, the program has brought multidisciplinary volunteer teams together with local officials, stakeholders, and residents to address complex challenges including housing opportunities, economic development, village center revitalization, etc. The session will outline the structure of the charrette process, from pre-planning to community engagement to intensive design work and final recommendations. It will demonstrate how the process is grounded in bringing together local knowledge with a strong multidisciplinary team of planning and development professionals, resulting in clear, actionable strategies. Participants will gain insight into best practices for managing collaborative planning efforts, fostering inclusive engagement, and turning conceptual ideas into implementable next steps. The presentation will also highlight how the charrette model incorporates current priorities such as housing choice, sustainability, and economic development while utilizing visualization tools to support informed decision-making. Attendees will leave with practical lessons learned, replicable strategies, and a clearer understanding of how a structured, design-driven process can help communities move from vision to action. (1.25 cm)

Tiffany Tononi McNamara, Plan NH

Emily Innes, Innes Land Strategies

12:30 – 1:45 p.m. **Awards Luncheon** ~ Armory

Enjoy lunch with colleagues before celebrating this year's NNECAPA award recipients.

1:45 – 2:15 p.m. **Dessert with Exhibitors** ~ Armory

2:30 – 4:30 p.m. **Mobile Session Off-Site** Must Pre-Register

How Recent Zoning and Development Is Re-Shaping the Center of the Queen City; What's Happening Just Around the Corner? (2 cm)

2:30 – 3:30 p.m. **4 Concurrent Workshops (60 Minutes)**

- 1. Building the Bones for Active Transportation Infrastructure in Communities Without It** ~ Piscatquog
Many New England communities have ambitious goals for active transportation infrastructure, but many face the daunting reality of having little to no existing infrastructure. This session explores how to assess your active transportation infrastructure, how and where to build first, and strategic steps to incrementally grow your town's active transportation network. We'll cover prioritization matrices that identify where infrastructure will have the greatest impact, methods for integrating public engagement, and creative (or aggressive?) approaches to developing the network. Drawing from Maine case studies, we'll discuss how to build political support for these investments, address common objections, and create momentum that carries beyond a single project. (1 cm)
Nikki Conant & Matt Panfil, Sebago Technics, Inc.
- 2. Broadening the Lens on Projects: Bringing Stakeholders Together and Funding Projects Across Disciplines** ~ Frost/Hawthorne
Large scale projects that span multiple landowners can be complicated on many fronts. From identifying the overall problem, pulling together stakeholders and finding ways to fund multiple projects with large price tags, we'll talk about the successes and challenges of stakeholder engagement and creative fund stacking through the lens of our experience with a stormwater project in Southern Vermont. (1 cm)
Margo Ghia, Windham Regional Commission
- 3. Transportation, Housing and Resilience in Southern Maine- The Game Show!** ~ Pemigewasset
Can YOU guess the numbers that create a livable community? Join this session to find out! Just like "The Price Is Right", this session challenges audience members to guess the statistics coming out of the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) in Kittery, Maine, which are being used to enhance coastal resilience, housing affordability, and mobility. JLUS is a long-running series of projects conducted as a partnership between the Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and the Town of Kittery, funded by the U.S. Department of Defense Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation. Through this game format, participants will learn about the process, findings, and lessons learned from JLUS across a series of topics. Join the session and see if you can get closest to the right number – but don't go over! (Sustainability & Resilience: 1 cm)
Price Armstrong & Ellen Douglas, AECOM
Jason Garnham, Town of Kittery
Thomas Morley, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard
Jamel Torres, Southern Maine Planning & Development Commission
- 4. Navigating Pre-Development for Historic Reuse Projects** ~ Cont/Merrimack
Ground Truthing Before Breaking Ground: A Step-by-Step Pathway for Navigating Pre-development in Historic Reuse Projects Historic redevelopment projects using federal funding navigate a tricky development pathway that can be effectively managed with informed, proactive planning. This session will examine a redevelopment project in Snowsville, a village in Braintree, VT, as a case example to walk participants from a great idea to the release from the Environmental Review – highlighting a pathway that can be applied to other historic redevelopment efforts. The presentation will emphasize sequencing and informed decision-making early in project planning including what to do first, what can wait, and who typically needs to be involved. At the end of the session, participants will leave with a clear, repeatable roadmap for all the groundwork needed before a shovel hits the ground. (1 cm)
Annemarie Fortune, Stone Environmental, Inc.
Nicole Gratton, Preservation Trust of Vermont
Kaziah Haviland, Vermont Council on Rural Development
Jackson Evans, Snowsville Community Trust

3:45 – 4:30 p.m. **4 Concurrent Workshops (45 Minutes)**

- 1. Opportunities & Challenges of Student & Volunteer Engagement in Projects** ~ Frost/Hawthorne
Peer, service and applied learning: the opportunities and challenges of student & volunteer engagement: So many planning offices, especially in small towns or villages, lack the resources to conduct proactive planning efforts. One option for these places is to find graduate student groups looking to do a project. Similarly, a group of volunteers may offer to take on a project. However, student and volunteer work should be used carefully, as most students lack the experience to provide subtle answers to complex problems, and volunteers may have their own agendas or also lack expertise. In this session, two faculty members with experience working with students and volunteer groups will discuss how best to tap into this low-cost option for getting projects done. How much work is it to “manage” a student or volunteer group? How much should you expect in return? What kinds of projects are best suited for this kind of assistance? Presenters will speak briefly and then engage the audience about their interests and experiences, to get a good conversation going. (.75 cm)

Jeff Levine, MIT

David Gamble, Gamble Associates

- 2. Turning Your Data Dinosaur into an AI RAPTOR** ~ Cont/Merrimack
RAPTOR is a scalable transportation planning solution that transforms agencies' own data for clear, objective investment decisions. By combining safety, mobility, asset, freight, and socioeconomic insights with AI-assisted querying, RAPTOR enables transportation agencies to conduct needs assessments, test assumptions against historical evidence, and align limited funding with transportation investments priorities. RAPTOR gives clients a transparent, data-driven, and performance-based platform for faster, smarter, and more strategic planning, reducing reliance on anecdotal judgment and repetitive manual processes. (.75 cm)

Eric Burkman & Daria Ivina, Jacobs

- 3. Merrimack River Watershed** – Community Centered Approach to Watershed Conservation & Climate Planning ~ Pemigewasset

The Merrimack River Watershed, spanning New Hampshire and Massachusetts, supports over two million residents and critical ecosystems but faces growing climate challenges, including flooding, urban heat, and inequitable access to nature, especially in historic mill cities. The Merrimack Conservation Partnership, a coalition of more than 30 organizations, has guided investments in under-resourced areas using its 2014 conservation plan. In 2025, The Nature Conservancy expanded this plan to include urban and developed areas along the river, using a community-centered approach focused on climate resilience and nature-based solutions. The project team cultivated relationships with local partners and engaged residents deeply, collecting more than 800 community data points in six languages, including input from elementary school students, to identify shared priorities. In this session we will review the planning methodology and participate in a modified novel data collection activity with community partners, while offering participants tools to strengthen cross-sector conservation partnerships. (.75 cm)

Rain Bates, City of Manchester

Ally Snell, The Nature Conservancy

Amber Nicole Cannan, Unchartered Tutoring

- 4. Making Space for Culture: Planning for Cultural Infrastructure** ~ Piscataquog
How can the planning and design of our built environment support a vibrant cultural ecosystem and a stronger creative economy? A look at cultural planning approaches & resources, drawing from both New England and international examples. This session will cover cultural infrastructure assessment, space typologies, opportunities for integration into master planning or individual schemes, common challenges and areas for increased collaboration across planning specialisms. (.75 cm)

Lars Hasselblad Torres, AVA Gallery and Arts Center

Amanda Kidd-Kestler, New Hampshire Art Association

4:30 – 6:00 p.m. **Mobile Session Off-Site** Must Pre-Register (1.5 cm)

Manchester Art Walk

Dinner on Your Own

Friday, October 23, 2026

7:00 – 8:00 a.m. Yoga at Barre Life. Must register, \$5 fee and limit to 18 people. Off-Site

7:00 – 8:30 a.m. **Breakfast Buffet** ~ Armory

8:00 – 8:50 a.m. **NNECAPA Annual Meeting** ~ Armory

9:00 – 10:00 a.m. **3 Concurrent Workshops (60 Minutes)**

1. From Legal to Buildable: Turning Zoning Reform into Real Homes ~ Pemigewasset

Across the country, planners have modernized zoning codes and legalized missing-middle housing. Yet in many communities, legalization has not translated into production. This session explores how Vermont is moving beyond zoning reform to actually deliver missing-middle housing through 802 Homes, a statewide catalog of pre-approved home designs paired with developer training, off-site construction methods, and streamlined permitting pathways. State planners, designers, and municipal partners will share how Vermont is aligning home design, codes, permitting processes, and manufacturing to unlock incremental infill, create predictability, and aggregate demand through bulk purchasing. Panelists will share lessons learned from pilot communities and how they can inform other efforts to build scalable housing delivery systems in areas facing declining workforces and short construction seasons. Ultimately, the session reframes the planner's role from regulator to system designer—moving from simply to allowing more housing, to transforming the means of production. (Law: 1 cm)

Jeff Dube, VT Dept of Housing and Community Development

Zoë Taft Mueller, Utile Architects and Planners

Christopher Yuen, City of Essex Junction

2. Regulating Expression: Murals, Signs and Constitutional Limits for Municipal Planners ~

Cont/Merrimack

This session will explore the evolving intersection of zoning signage regulations and the First Amendment. A licensed attorney will present their recent experience with a case involving signage regulations in Conway, NH and the Federal District Court of NH's analysis and decision. The case involved the question of whether a mural created by local high school students, highlighting many items sold by a local bakery, was a mural or a commercial sign. Around the same time, the Town of Conway also reviewed murals featuring white mountain scenery located at a local outlet shopping plaza and determined that the scenic murals were commercial signs. Municipal zoning and sign ordinances are often used as tools to promote aesthetics, traffic safety, and community character, yet they frequently regulate who can speak, where speech can occur, and how messages are conveyed. The session will examine the details of the Conway ordinance and subsequent case, as well as other recent legal developments and practical challenges local governments face in drafting signage ordinances. Attendees will gain insight into best practices for municipal professionals drafting signage regulations and navigating this developing legal area. The session is designed to foster discussion on how communities can regulate signs and murals responsibly while respecting the fundamental constitutional principles that govern expression in shared spaces. (1 cm)

Tiffany Tononi McNamara, Plan NH

Derek Lick, Orr & Reno

Jodie Nazaka, City of Manchester

3. GIS-Based Engagement Tools for Community Participation ~ Piscatquog

This session will explore how GIS-based engagement tools can expand community participation and strengthen data-informed planning. Attendees will learn how combining digital and in-person engagement methods can capture lived experiences, improve planning processes, and provide planners with actionable insights. (1 cm)

Aqsa Butt, BSC Group

10:15 – 11:15 a.m. **3 Concurrent Workshops (60 Minutes)**

1. Transportation Reimagining Route 1, The Greater Portland Great Corridor Study ~ Piscatquog

Learn about GPCOG's effort to reimagine 40 miles of Route 1 across 9 municipalities in Greater Portland, Maine, balancing safety, mobility, housing, and climate resilience. Presenters will share how a values-driven vision and data-driven prioritization informed more than 50 project recommendations and 15 concept designs. Participants

will then engage in a hands-on street design exercise to explore tradeoffs and build their own Route 1 cross-sections. (1 cm)

Catrina Meyer & Jen Ladd, Toole Design

Chris Chop, GPCOG

Matt Drost, MaineDOT

Erin Zwirko, Town of Yarmouth

2. Community and Regional Public Transportation Success Stories ~ Cont/Merrimack

With growth in regional public transportation services; local planning initiatives integrating multimodal transportation opportunities; and the successful expansion of travel training and volunteer driver programs, there are many public transportation success stories to celebrate in our region. This session will take the form of a panel discussion examining how these initiatives are planned and implemented, their impacts on the communities they serve, and the lessons they offer as we look forward to future opportunities. (1 cm)

Joseph Perez, Town of Plymouth

Ben Herbert & Liliana Vornehm, Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

Sam Durfee, City of Nashua

Colin Lentz, Strafford Regional Planning Commission

3. Let's Play Ethics Jeopardy ~ Pemigewasset

Following a short introduction to the AICP Code of Ethics – including data on current topics – the presentation will describe ethics scenarios based on real-life cases brought before the Ethics Officer and the Ethics Committee in 2025. That will be followed by a Jeopardy-style game to recap the material covered. The AICP Code of Ethics sets certified planners apart by focusing on integrity, appearance of fairness, and a commitment to supporting fair and just communities. Learn firsthand how the AICP Code of Ethics is readily accessible to guide ethical behavior in your everyday planning practice. The Code emphasizes a commitment to equity and inclusion, and to preventing misuse of the credential. Attendees will then have a chance to participate in a Jeopardy-style game to test their knowledge based on the presentation. (Ethics: 1 cm)

Ralph Willmer, American Planning Association

11:30 – 12:30 p.m. 3 Concurrent Workshops (60 Minutes)

1. Hard Choices, Real Outcomes: TOD, Multimodal Investment, and Accountability in Transportation Planning ~ Piscataquog

Good transportation planning often requires difficult and bold decisions coupled with the need to demonstrate measurable results. Using case studies from Vermont and Maine, this session explores both how communities align land use, transit, and street design to enable multimodal mobility, and how agencies assess whether investments produce equitable outcomes. The first half draws on the Connect the Junction TOD Master Plan in Essex Junction, Vermont, showing how coordinated zoning, density, and street design can make the case for ambitious change — and what it looks like when those plans move from vision to implementation. The second half uses a 2025 Title VI and equity analysis of Greater Portland (Maine)'s Transportation Improvement Program to show how one MPO built a methodology for evaluating the distribution of benefits and burdens. Together, the discussion highlights the dual pressure to act boldly while proving accountability in a shifting regulatory and political landscape. (Equity: 1 cm)

Christopher Yuen, City of Essex Junction

Cathy LaFata, HDR Engineering, Inc.

2. From Policy to Pavement: Translating Vermont State Housing Reform into Local Action

~Pemigewasset

How can Vermont create more housing while conserving the working lands, natural resources, and community character that define the state? This three-part presentation follows the path from state policy to local implementation, showing how Vermont is aligning housing, conservation, and infrastructure planning across multiple levels of government. At the state level, learn how Act 181, the HOME Act, and related initiatives are helping communities address multiple goals. At the state level, regional plan

confirmations establish new tiered areas for permit exemptions, as well as center & neighborhood designations for community investment and new homes. At the regional level, hear how regional planning commissions help translate state policy into local action through planning support, mapping, project management, and coordination among municipalities. At the local level, learn how Jericho has used state guidance to update zoning regulations to support housing, leveraged state and regional programs to plan for community wastewater infrastructure, and worked to balance housing growth with the preservation of land for agriculture, forestry, conservation, recreation, and other rural uses. Together, these perspectives illustrate how policy becomes planning and how planning becomes place. (1 cm)

Jacob Hemmerick, VT Dept of Housing & Economic Development

Kate McCarthy, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

Chris Shaheen, Town of Jericho

3. Stormwater Infrastructure Analysis & Planning ~ Cont/Merrimack

Rochester, New Hampshire is advancing long term stormwater performance by updating local codes and ordinances to require annual inspection and maintenance reports for stormwater control measures (SCMs) on private development. The City conducted a desktop review to identify existing private SCMs, developed an online portal to streamline annual report submittals, and implemented a targeted education and outreach campaign to improve compliance. Building on early implementation, Rochester is expanding outreach to better understand barriers to maintaining privately owned stormwater infrastructure. This session highlights practical lessons learned and strategies other municipalities can apply to strengthen private stormwater accountability. (1 cm)

Renee Bourdeau & Katie Lamoureaux, Geosyntec Consultant

Renee McIsaac, City of Rochester

12:30 – 2:00 p.m. Luncheon, Plenary Session & Conference Wrap-Up

Funding the Future – Downtown & Village Revitalization in Northern New England ~ Amory

Historic downtowns and village centers remain the economic and cultural heart of communities across Northern New England, but they face increasing pressure from rising infrastructure costs, shifting retail patterns, and competition from lifestyle centers. This plenary session will feature three speakers—one from each state in the Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association—who will discuss how communities are revitalizing their downtowns using state and federal funding programs, along with other strategic development tools. Panelists will explore tools such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts and developer incentives to support redevelopment and infrastructure improvements and consider how these strategies can drive investment while maintaining fairness for residential taxpayers. The discussion will also examine the role of commercial development in strengthening municipal tax bases while balancing impacts on residents. Attendees will gain practical insights into how communities across the region are navigating the intersection of land-use planning, community development, tax policy, and downtown revitalization. (1.5 cm)

New Hampshire: Matthew Walsh, City of Concord, NH

Vermont: Chip Sawyer, City of St. Albans, VT

Maine: Monique Cornett, Town of Westbrook, ME

Conclusion: Raffle State Baskets

You could earn more than 11 AICP credits:

<https://www.planning.org/events/eventmulti/9333624/>

Thank You for Attending & Safe Travels

Please Remember to Complete Online Survey

See you Next Year: DoubleTree, South Burlington, VT 10/24-10/27/27