

# LIVE

Workshop participants discussed what they value about living in the Nashua Region, what could use improvement, and what some of the region's needs are.

<u>What Works</u>	<u>What Needs Improvement</u>	<u>Regional Needs</u>
Region is close to mountains, lakes, Boston, and seacoast (3)	Lack of affordable housing choices (3)	Regional Public Transit System (3)
Great schools and educational opportunities (2)	Lack of transportation options aside from car travel (3)	Commuter rail service to Boston area (3)
Great place to raise a family (2)	Region is not pedestrian/bicycle friendly (2)	Promote development in downtowns and town centers (2)
Lower cost of living than Boston area (2)	Lack of quality housing options near downtowns (2)	More community events (2)
Region is safe (2)	Limited bike availability and education programs for safe biking (2)	Region needs to attract businesses that interest and employ young people (2)
Recreational areas, parks, interconnected trail systems across towns (2)	Housing costs, lack of transportation options deter young people from living here (2)	More promotion of cultural and arts events (2)
Affordable market-rate housing market	Lack of transportation connections to Manchester Airport (2)	Preserve open space and natural areas (2)
Region is diverse in terms of land use and housing	It's easier for developers to build new than to renovate existing buildings	Investments in water and sewer infrastructure (2)
Family is here	Lack of new urbanist development in region	More quality affordable housing options (2)
Public transit in City of Nashua	Lack of utility options in region	Pocket parks in downtown neighborhoods
Major universities are nearby	Lack of cultural and ethnic diversity outside of Nashua	Lack of sewer infrastructure outside cities limits housing and commercial growth
Andres Sculpture Garden and Nashua Sculpture Symposium	Limited performing and visual arts in region	A regional bicycle/pedestrian master plan
Agricultural resources - fresh produce and dairy	Regional arts scene is fractured due to lack of funding	Need more funding
Cooperative atmosphere	Limited east-west travel options	Need to strengthen quality of education in region
Easily accessible health care	High rate of prescription drug addiction	More Wi-fi in downtowns
Strong arts community	High property taxes limit housing options for low income people	Promote development in downtowns and
Innovative downtown redevelopment in Nashua and Milford	Lack of regional master plan for bicycle and pedestrian	Transition surface parking lots into more mixed-use/vertical development
Small community setting	Lack of sewer infrastructure outside cities limits housing and commercial growth	State needs to ensure quality public education is available in all communities through more equitable funding.
Good economics compared to rest of state	Lack of affordable childcare and daycare	A northern Merrimack River bridge crossing
Resources are plentiful in region	Limited information flow - people aren't aware of all our assets	Better east-west travel options, including 101A and in Hudson/Litchfield
Good variety of restaurants	There are more infrastructure needs than revenue available	Promote regional dining scene
Shopping is easy and accessible	Some schools in region are failing	Promote regional dining scene
Region places premium on open space and conservation	Many residents are resistant to new development in town centers and downtowns	Leverage regional waterways, embrace them as assets, economic development tools
Attractive natural environment	Lack of social opportunities	Public transit system needs to be accomodating of bicyclists (bike racks)
Souhegan Valley and Amato Performing Arts Center in Milford	Need better connectivity in bicycle lanes	Need to better promote regional destinations - 'staycations'
	Access to Route 3/Everett Turnpike is difficult from smaller towns	Continue to work to reduce crime
	Renovate old mills	
	Region is too reliant on property taxes for revenue	A regional performing arts center
		Need to build commuter rail and offer housing choices along corridor

# WORK

Workshop participants discussed what they value about working in the Nashua Region, what could use improvement and what some regional needs are.

<u>What Works</u>	<u>What Needs Improvement</u>	<u>Regional Needs</u>
Significant concentration of high tech companies in region (2)	Lack of transportation options to employment centers (3)	Business incubators, low cost offices for start-up businesses (3)
Region enjoys strong retail base (2)	Lack of low cost places for start ups, small businesses (2)	Regional Public transit system (3)
Tax advantages, no state sales tax (2)	State universities are not affordable (2)	Commuter rail to Boston area (3)
Community colleges are focusing on science and technology programs, orienting programs to employer needs	Younger people are not interested in driving. We need facilities and incentives to walk or bike to work	Build regional internship and job training programs to aid business (2)
Region has a highly educated population	Insurance and food safety requirements make community events difficult, hurt small businesses	Incentives for green commuting (transit users and bicycle or walking commuters)
Lots of small start-ups are located in Nashua	More coordination needed in talent searches	Improved transportation between towns
Significant industrial park opportunities	Lack of a major business incubator in region	Regional zoning
Region has excellent business networking opportunities including rotaries and business chambers	State universities and community colleges do not focus enough on engineering, scientific and technical fields	Conversion of single-family homes to inlaw apartments or rental units
Merrimack Premium Outlets	Region needs more diversified economic base (if BAE Systems leaves the area, we are vulnerable)	An integrated job search coordination system for job seekers
Region is willing to cooperate for sake of economic development	Lack of openings for entry level positions	More accessible education programs for residents
Lots of home based/niche businesses	Towns need more incentives to attract businesses, including water/sewer discounts	Need to attract more companies to the region
Strong business diversity in region	A region-wide internship and educational campaign would help businesses meet some needs without hiring	NH Dept. of Resources and Economic Development needs more staff
Many opportunities to establish home based business due to strong internet connectivity	Need more investment in talent pool and infrastructure to attract businesses	Advertise region's reverse commute advantage
Manchester Airport is regional asset	Lack of employment opportunities for those with mental illnesses	Easy to use, internet-based carpooling-rideshare program with active involvement from private companies
Overall good broadband accessibility, cellular phone reception	Lack of affordable housing	Region needs more bike trails/bike ways, like the Minuteman Bikeway in Boston area
Good educational programs available	Regional communication is lacking, there's no way to easily reach everyone	Require or Incentivize refurbishing buildings to meet green trends (including LEED certification)
Region's population is work-oriented	Limited housing choices and diversity	Intermodal forms of transportation for business
Cooperative oriented business, shared office space for small business, incubators	Zoning regulation stymie growth	Vertical mixed-use live/work spaces, including artist lofts
Lots of volunteer opportunities	Lack of public transit service to Manchester Airport	Capitalize on local farms
Community revitalization tax incentives	Lack of job opportunities for veterans, the homeless	New buildings should be adaptable to future conditions, accommodate a variety of possible uses
Businesses like Make-It Labs in Nashua which offer shared work space for entrepreneurs		Internet-based car-pooling, rideshare resource
Existing state incentives for entrepreneurs		

# PLAY

Workshop participants discussed what they value about playing in the Nashua Region, what could use improvement and what some regional needs are.

What Works	What Needs Improvement	Regional Needs
Region has great, easily accessible parks and trail systems (3)	Region does not promote destinations and arts and cultural events well (3)	More community events (3)
Great dining options in Downtown Nashua, Milford (2)	Lack of transportation options, lack of commuter rail to Boston area (2)	Marketing/ promotion of regional destinations and arts and cultural offerings (3)
Nashua Sculpture Symposium (2)	Residents leave the region for fun activities (2)	Redevelop riverfronts/ focus development there (2)
Region has thriving downtowns (2)	Region doesn't market or tie in our historic areas very well for visitors (Lowell National Historic Park is a good model)	More funding for cultural events, and staffing (2)
Skiing is really close	Region doesn't capitalize on very important historic sites, assets	Better transportation options for visitors
Destination for shopping, outlets and mall	Region doesn't promote arts well	A discussion regarding viability of a casino in the region
Kayaking and tubing on the Nashua and Souhegan Rivers	Region does not tie in parks and downtown areas well	More entertainment venues
Nashua and surrounding towns have great community-building events	Lack of safe areas to bicycle	Water focused venue to rent a boat, and row
Lots of performing arts organizations in region - Amato Center, Andy's Summer Theater	Region does not sell itself well - Why should people come here?	A boathouse on the Merrimack River
Chunky's (Nashua/Pelham) ability to have dinner and see movie at same location	People drive through here to go to other destinations	A major museum
Established interconnected trails systems across towns	Lack of entertainment venues -small theatres for entertainment	Need better non-motorized transportation connections
Plentiful youth programming activities (Boys and Girls Clubs)	Many businesses shut down early, limited after work options	Region needs a big draw like the Lowell Folk Festival, something to attract visitors
Youth sports	Downtown Milford has no coffeeshop open past 2 p.m.	Why should people visit region? Region needs to focus on a simple persuasive message to visitors
Easy access to green space	No overnight tourism	More flexibility with regulation, especially food safety regulation for community events
Region has hidden gems like Monson Village, Baboosic Lake, Kids Cove	Assets like Merrimack Outlets are only accessible by car	
No state sales tax	Region is disconnected - you have to drive everywhere	
Lakes and rivers for water-sports, fishing	Lack of awareness of theatre groups	
Region supports the arts	No casino	
Music venues, art galleries	State does not understand that we are a cohesive region	
	Lack of activities for non-shoppers/men	

# How can NRPC Help?

**Serve as a regional communications hub for region, facilitate stronger communication among towns (3)**

**Develop a regional economic development plan (2)**

Bring towns together to develop land use/ transportation/development plans for major regional corridors (i.e. 101A)

Bring people together to talk to discuss regional issues and stimulate ideas

Assemble a regional economic development advisory committee

Hire an events planner to support community event planning (2)

More workshops and seminars on strategies and trends in planning/zoning and economic development

Promote shopping local campaigns

Develop a regionwide bicycle and pedestrian master plan

Coordination with farmers markets to market them more appealing with music

Publish a regional newsletter

Facilitation among the towns, same problems town to town and piggy backing on solutions

Bring people together to talk to each other and stimulate ideas

Serve as a regional economic development resource the same way the commission is seen as a land use and transportation resource

# Key Destinations

## Downtown Nashua (3)

Mine Falls Park (2)

Downtown Milford (2)

Nashua Sculpture Symposium (2)

Wilton Town Hall Theater (2)

Souhegan River (2)

Merrimack Premium Outlets (2)

Monson Village (on Milford/Hollis town line)

Baboosic Lake

Nashua River

Lull Farm, Hollis

Greeley Park

Frye's Measure Mill, Wilton

Keyes Park, Milford

Chunky's Cinema Pub, Pelham/Nashua

Taste of Nashua

Andres Sculpture Park

Watson Park, Merrimack

Ribfest

Hollis Car Show, Flea Market

Pheasant Lane Mall

Amherst Village

Mel's Funway Park, Litchfield