

I. Regional Concerns



NH Route 101 traveling through the Town of Raymond

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The Town of Raymond is a part of a larger regional marketplace and network of social and community service providers that can directly impact the health, safety, economic and social well being of the community. It is crucial that the town monitor the growth of its neighbors and its region and seek opportunities to participate in dialogue through local, regional and state affiliations.

Through its membership in local watershed and conservation organizations and regional planning commissions, and by participating in other economic development associations as well as the New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning (NH OEP) and the Local Government Center activities and training, Raymond can stay informed, have a voice in influencing the future of the region, and better serve its citizens.

In addition, all New Hampshire communities are required, on a timely basis, to notify hear input from, and consider the interests of abutting or affected communities with regard to Developments of Regional Impact (DRI). The Raymond Planning Board is responsible for notifying the regional planning commission (per RSA 36:54-58) of all designated Developments of Regional Impact occurring within the Town of Raymond. Therefore, it is important that the Town of Raymond have in place appropriate DRI guidelines.

A. Housing Growth

Raymond (28.8 square miles; est. pop. 10,786) was ranked in 2008 as the 28th most populous town in New Hampshire, with 374.5 persons per square mile. Raymond's most populous direct neighbor, Epping (26.1 square miles; est. pop. 6,053) was ranked 56th with just 231.9 persons per square mile. Between 2000 - 2005, the Town of Raymond's housing unit growth rate (13.8 percent) was exceeded by its neighbors, Deerfield (18.5 percent) and Chester (17.2 percent). However, regionally, Raymond's housing unit growth rate was comparable to Hooksett (12.3 percent) and Weare (13.8 percent) as was its population growth rate.⁹ Surrounded by smaller, more rural towns, and strategically located between the two large cities of Portsmouth and Manchester, each about half an hour away, Raymond can expect considerable pressure on its housing demand in the future.

To adjust to growth management pressure and address future capacity of the town's public facilities, Raymond may need to adopt interim growth management ordinances or innovative land use controls such as timed incentives and phased development. Currently forty towns within New Hampshire have adopted growth management ordinances, and six more have interim growth management ordinances.¹⁰ Maintaining an open dialogue can allow Raymond to coordinate such ordinances with its neighbors and conduct the

⁹ See Table 39 in the Housing chapter, Housing Unit Growth 1990-2005.

¹⁰ OEP, 2008

necessary growth management study that would be required in order to adopt these controls.

B. Affordable Housing

The lack of a diverse housing supply with opportunities for all households is a chronic problem in the State of New Hampshire, and is not unique to a specific region. As a key component of economic and community development, affordable housing needs must be addressed.¹¹ Based on the federal guideline that no more than 30 percent of a family income should go toward housing, in Raymond in 2007, 82 percent of residents fell short of the annual salary required to purchase the median priced single family home. Thirty-three percent could not afford the median priced apartment.¹² Raymond's prime location to both Manchester and seacoast towns, its schools and fire and police protection, as well as decreased supply due to the 2008-2009 building slow down will continue to put pressure on Raymond's housing prices. Staying aware of regional housing trends can insure that the town does its best to provide housing needs for both the offspring of current residents and those moving into the community.

To keep Raymond's fair share equitable, the Town of Raymond needs to maintain dialogue with its neighbors and closely monitor the regional growth of workforce housing. Regional forums can assist.

C. Economic Growth

In 2000, Raymond was home to 13 different types of business/industrial classifications. The largest industrial category was manufacturing, employing 1,347 people, accounting for 25 percent of Raymond's total employment. Retail accounted for about 15 percent, while education, health and social services accounted for 12 percent.¹³ In March of 2009, the largest private employer in Raymond continued to be the Wal-Mart Distribution Center with about 600 employees.¹⁴ During 2008, a new restaurant, car wash, drugstore, auto parts store, and an automobile/motorcycle wholesale dealer opened in Raymond in the area of Exit 5 off State Highway 101. However, one manufacturing plant with 30 employees shut its doors.

As Raymond continues to attract new business and industry, awareness of economic growth trends in neighboring towns and in the region is vital. Raymond must take every opportunity to participate and work with regional organizations to locate niche markets and court developers to expand its economy and stabilize its tax base. Metro Center-NH, through a collaborative effort of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC), and the NH Department of

¹¹ *Communities and Consequences: The Unbalancing of New Hampshire's Human Ecology*, 2008.

¹² NH Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau, see Housing Table 38 and Table 44.

¹³ See Table 26 in the Economic Development chapter.

¹⁴ See Table 27 in the Economic Development chapter.

Resources and Economic Development (NH DRED), unites 13 communities surrounding the City of Manchester, including Raymond, to promote regional economic development.¹⁵

D. Transportation

Traffic volumes in Raymond continue to grow. By 2025, NH State Highway 101 is expected to increase in average daily trips by 26.6 percent between Exit 3 and 4 and by 27 percent between Exit 4 and 5. Traffic is expected to increase by 38 percent at NH Route 27 and 107 east of Harriman Hill Road.¹⁶ To sustain Raymond's and the region's economic competitive edge, and to maintain quality of life for its residents and commuters, Raymond must remain active in regional dialogue about transportation project development, funding, and cost effective solutions for alternative modes of transportation.

The Town of Raymond, like its regional neighbors of Bedford, Goffstown and Londonderry, through its representatives to the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission, could become involved in the Manchester Transit Authority (MTA) region wide service feasibility study and investigate the potential for the extension of public bus service to Raymond. In addition, the SNHPC's technical advisory committee (TAC) annually presents regional transportation projects and discusses their feasibility and impacts across the region, providing recommendations to both local communities and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation.¹⁷

E. Infrastructure

With the widening of I-93 and the construction of Exit 4A on I-93 planned for construction in 2011¹⁸, the Town of Raymond could anticipate secondary impacts in the form of increased population and housing growth, land use changes and environmental impacts.¹⁹ These road projects will increase efficiency and safety and reduce traffic congestion from the Massachusetts border to the I-293 split in Manchester. In addition, new park and ride facilities at Exits 2, 3 and 5, with expanded bus and ridership opportunities, and a reserved median space for possible future train or mass transit system, are expected to impact the immediate region as well as surrounding towns.

The Town of Raymond's continued participation in the Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP)²⁰, through the SNHPC, will insure that Raymond stays abreast of developments and participates fully in this important regional development.

¹⁵ See <http://www.manchester-chamber.org/metro-center/overview.asp>

¹⁶ See Table 66 and Map 13 & Map 14 in the Transportation chapter.

¹⁷ See discussion in the Transportation chapter.

¹⁸ See <http://www.rebuildingi93.com/>

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ For more information on CTAP see: <http://www.nhctap.com/>

The Town of Raymond has recognized the need for large scale infrastructure improvements, in particular, a waste water treatment plant to serve, initially, the Exit 4 area and eventually the downtown area. Infrastructure expansion of this extent is certainly a project with regional impact.

F. Environmental Concerns

Approximately one-third of the land within the Town of Raymond is located within the Lamprey River Watershed and the majority of the remaining land is located within the Exeter Watershed. Developments and actions taken within these watersheds can impact the water quality of the entire watershed region.

All the communities located within these two watersheds need to work together to protect water quality, maintain ecological balance, mitigate flood damage, and maintain and regulate the watersheds. The Town of Raymond can benefit from, and contribute to, the work of the Exeter River Local Advisory Committee, the Lamprey River Advisory Committee, and the Lamprey River Watershed Association as they seek to manage these watersheds. In addition, the Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD), formed in 1946 as a legal state subdivision, provides technical issues and facilitates regional cooperation on a variety of environmental issues.

G. Conclusion

As New Hampshire advances and the Town of Raymond grows, regional cooperation can assure that Raymond benefits from the experience of its neighbors and contributes to the overall economic, social and environmental health of both itself and the region.

