

# Volume I

REGIONAL GOALS & STRATEGIES

# INTRODUCTION

The Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA), the regional planning and development organization for the northeast region of Vermont, strives to assist and promote the interests of all municipalities in Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans Counties; and to support economic development initiatives that provide quality job opportunities in this region. The Association is enabled under the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act (24 V.S.A., 117, Section 4341). NVDA is the only combined Regional Planning Commission and Development Corporation in Vermont.

The mission of NVDA is to:

- Provide leadership and technical expertise to local communities, agencies, and organizations to facilitate cooperative planning within and among the Northeast Kingdom.
- Work to improve the quality of life for people in the Northeast Kingdom through planning and by promoting economic development while preserving the region's natural environment.

## Purpose

The previous version of the *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom* was adopted in 1995, and re-adopted in 2000. The 2005 Regional Plan has a significant amount of new information but also retains elements of the previous plan.

The purpose of the *Regional Plan for the Northeast Kingdom* is to provide a guide for managing change and an informational framework within which municipalities, businesses, individuals, and other organizations can make decisions regarding growth and development. In no particular order, there are three principal uses for this Plan:

1. Guidance in regional and local planning and decision making
2. General information
3. As a basis for state review processes

## Organization

The Regional Plan is composed of three volumes. Foremost among the three is Volume I Regional Goals & Strategies, which presents the goals, policies, and objectives for the region. Volume I should be considered a quick reference to regional goals and policies. Volume II, the Regional Analysis, is a presentation of existing conditions and background information intended to give readers a picture of life in the Northeast Kingdom. Maps, tables, and photographs have been inserted throughout the second volume. The third volume is titled *Regional Transportation Plan for the Northeast Kingdom*.

This summary and the supporting narrative document are each divided into chapters addressing distinct elements such as housing, land use, energy, etc. The transportation plan focuses solely on transportation issues. All three volumes constitute the NVDA regional plan.

## REGIONAL VISION

Vermont's rural traditions have been better preserved in the Northeast Kingdom than in other areas of the state. Respect for individual rights and a genuine neighborliness toward others are values that continue as part of the social fabric here. The physical landscape has essentially remained unchanged with compact village centers surrounded by working farms and productive forests. When one examines local town plans throughout the region, one quickly gets the sense that most people in this region prefer gradual change over rapid growth. Nevertheless, most Northeast Kingdom residents stand firmly behind development that promotes job creation and sustained economic development.

The natural beauty and wholesome quality of life experienced in the Kingdom are things no longer enjoyed exclusively by the region's residents. With the Northeast Kingdom within a day's drive of more than 70 million people, the region has become a recreational playground for many out-of-area visitors. Others are seeking to permanently escape the rigors of urban life elsewhere and relocate to the region. Such outside interest in the region presents both opportunities and problems. While towns appreciate the additional revenue associated with seasonal residents and visitors, a large influx of new, year-round residents can strain local infrastructures and services. New residents sometimes seem to have unreasonable expectations, but they often bring fresh perspectives and new ideas. With long-time and new residents alike, the communities of this region are encouraged to plan for their future, so that growth is expected and welcome rather than haphazard and problematic. Over time, the cumulative effects of unplanned or uncoordinated growth can be dramatic, and may negatively affect local economies and the quality of life Northeast Kingdom residents have come to enjoy.

In both regional and local planning processes, we need to retain and strengthen existing businesses while creating new economic and employment opportunities for residents from all walks of life. We must provide quality educational opportunities and skills training for all job seekers to make the region's workforce more attractive to employers. With an economy that is to a great extent linked to our natural resource base, the region and its municipalities should also embrace strategies to protect the environmental quality in the Northeast Kingdom.

The availability of quality, affordable housing is a regional goal also shared by every local community, and upgrading existing, substandard housing is a particularly urgent priority. Northeast Kingdom residents are also encouraged to work with their local, regional, and state agencies and officials to revitalize downtowns, village centers, and cultural institutions to preserve our cherished way of life.

Local communities and state agencies must continue to upgrade public infrastructure in a coordinated manner, in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of local residents. As a region, we must strive to provide a reliable and safe transportation system with improved access to destinations within and outside the region for a greater number of people. Achieving these broad goals will ensure that the residents of the Northeast Kingdom will prosper and live satisfying lives in communities of their own making.

**FORESTLAND GOALS**

- Sustainable forestry should remain an economically viable tool to preserve woodlands, open space for recreation, and local character.
- Mixed-use forests should allow for expanded economic benefits to forest owners while encouraging sound ecological practices and recreational access to the public.
- Value-added processing opportunities for wood resources in the region should increase.

**STRATEGIES**

- Provide management, financial, and technical assistance to local forest product industries, including wood product manufacturers, sawmills, paper mills, and wood-powered electrical generators (cogeneration).
  - Maintain enough forest land to support wood-related industries, retain the region's natural beauty, protect fragile areas, encourage wildlife, promote recreational usage, and maintain a healthy, sustainable forest based economy.
  - Support the development and marketing of distinctive wood products identifiable with Vermont and/or the Northeast Kingdom.
  - Support owners of forestland who implement sustainable forestry practices to market their wood and wood products.
  - Expand usage of existing rail infrastructure for shipping and interface with trucking. Explore the creation of forest-related industrial zones (i.e. rail sidings for sawmills)
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**AGRICULTURAL LAND USE GOALS**

- Farming and agriculture should remain an important and viable sector of the regional economy.
- Contiguous tracts of prime agricultural soils should be preserved.

**STRATEGIES**

- Provide support to farmers interested in diversification and/or product development. Assist with grants and low-interest loans for value-adding businesses and diversification.
  - Identify funding sources for and market existing and new food ventures in the region.
  - Support education efforts that teach sustainable agricultural practices.
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**FUTURE LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

- Traditional development patterns should be maintained and new development should be encouraged to follow these patterns.
- New development should be compatible with existing land uses, and agree with local plans.

- Historic structures, community facilities, and other buildings should be preserved and adapted for re-use.
- Brownfield sites should be reclaimed.
- Significant development proposals should consider the impact on adjacent regions.

## **STRATEGIES**

## **TOWN CENTERS**

- Encourage desired town center development through investment, maintenance, and expansion of appropriate infrastructure (sidewalks, water and sewer, parking, public spaces, etc.).
- Support beautification efforts in town centers and downtowns.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures through tax incentives, tax credits, grants, and loans, assistance in location of funding, etc.
- Assist communities applying for designation under the Vermont Downtown or Village Center Programs.
- Encourage mixed-use development (residential, commercial and appropriate light-industrial) in town centers.
- Direct public investment for new elderly and affordable housing towards town centers. Aside from promoting traditional settlement patterns, this will put seniors and low-moderate income residents closer to such amenities as transportation, shopping, and community activities.
- Encourage towns to plan for community recreational and social needs.
- Make reasonable accommodations for housing in town centers.

## **STRATEGIES**

## **RURAL AREAS**

- Support local conservation efforts.
- Encourage community open space plans and recreation infrastructure.

## **RECREATION LAND USE GOALS**

- Sufficient open space should be available for current and future outdoor recreational pursuits.
- A variety of year-round and seasonal, indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities should be available for residents and visitors.
- Public access to water bodies should be protected.

## **STRATEGIES**

- Assist towns to plan for future recreation needs.
- Assist with financing to develop additional facilities such as sports fields, playgrounds, trail systems, ice rinks, skateboard parks, and recreation/bike paths.
- Identify and protect public access to water bodies.
- Special attention should be given to providing recreation activities for youths and seniors.
- Support local and regional recreation events (e.g. fairs, festivals, etc.).
- Improve public information about existing recreational opportunities.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

This region recognizes its responsibility to provide for production, storage, and distribution to meet its local energy demand. Individuals, businesses, and organizations are encouraged to develop distributed generation that meets accepted environmental standards in order to satisfy their power demand and allow for net metering to the extent allowed in Vermont statute.

New industrial/commercial energy development shall meet the highest standards required by law. Permitting authorities shall first consider current and historical land use and the culture of the region as well as the land owner's rights. Any development shall to the extent possible be done so as to mitigate adverse impacts to the region.

Any project deemed acceptable shall carry with it a plan that distributes benefits to the towns in the region proportional to the adverse effects experienced by that town. Long term maintenance, safety issues and decommissioning procedures required at the end of the energy project's life must also be included in the project plan.

### **REGIONAL ENERGY GOALS**

- Provide an adequate, reliable, and secure energy supply to meet the region's needs.
- Support affordable energy to the region's users.
- Encourage a diversified energy portfolio.
- Maximize the net-metering capacity in the region.
- Promote energy generation that provides the best cost-benefit to the region.
- Minimize environmental impacts of energy generation and usage.
- Encourage conservation and efficiency as an integral part of the energy portfolio.
- Minimize energy safety risks.
- Limit the negative aesthetic impacts of power generation and distribution facilities.
- Provide for broad public participation in the decision-making process.
- Support documented local needs and values for new energy development.
- Ensure energy needs will be met in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

### **STRATEGIES**

- Support the re-establishment of energy contracts with Hydro Quebec and Yankee Nuclear.
- Investigate the potential for short-term contracts with generation from the Connecticut River Dams to minimize transmission losses due to other sources.
- Promote the upgrade of regional transmission systems to reduce gateway constraints.
- Encourage municipalities to reduce their energy costs through conservation and efficiency programs.
- Encourage ISO-New England to address the grid's dependence on natural gas.
- Support rail infrastructure as a cost-effective transportation resource for the energy industry.
- Sustain and upgrade the infrastructure of existing hydro-generation facilities.
- Promote wood-based energy generation as a complementary resource to the wood-related industries in the region.

- Assist in the development of businesses that support alternative energy use.
- Promote energy efficient building design and construction methods.
- Support the stabilization of energy costs through the use of supplemental sources (wood) and the development of small renewables, such as wind and solar.
- Encourage energy audits and weatherization programs.
- Encourage the development of energy facilities that assist local agriculture and forestry (i.e. grass/wood-pellets, small-wind, solar, farm-methane, wood-chip, biodiesel).
- Assist businesses to develop energy efficient production methods.
- Encourage the PSB to examine the long-term sustainability of proposed facilities.
- Ensure developments subject to Act 250 consider new energy requirements.
- Assist businesses/municipalities to develop cogeneration and other alternative energy strategies.
- Promote the coordination of Vermont Emergency Management and local responders to adequately provide energy resources during the event of a long-term disaster.

### **NORTHEAST KINGDOM PORTFOLIO**

The portfolio recommendations section of the 2011 Energy Strategy should also be considered as guiding language for regional energy policy. (See Vol. II Chapter Two – 2011 Energy Strategy)

## **CHAPTER THREE**

## **Utilities & Facilities**

### **EDUCATIONAL FACILITY GOALS**

- Schools should be closely integrated with the local communities they serve, including the business community.
- Educational facilities should have the capacity to benefit both students and local residents.
- Affordable educational and training opportunities should exist for all persons within the region.

### **STRATEGIES**

- Promote cooperation between institutions of higher learning and local businesses to create quality training and employment opportunities for local residents.
- Encourage public involvement in school board decisions.
- Increase involvement of school officials in the local planning processes. Investigate how towns and educational institutions can coordinate projects that would benefit the greatest number of persons.
- Investigate opportunities for shared facilities between municipalities and institutions.
- Support local and regional efforts for workforce development and adult education.
- Support the efforts of local and regional libraries to provide quality facilities and materials for independent learning and education.
- Promote combined public/private educational programs and shared resources. Eliminate boundaries that impede knowledge and resource sharing.

## **CHILD CARE GOALS**

- Child care entrepreneurs and child/family service centers should be supported.
- Additional site-based or community child care centers that offer high quality, affordable care should be developed.
- The efficiency and effectiveness of existing child care, early education, and family service programs should be improved.

## **STRATEGIES**

- Support efforts to improve the child care system in the Northeast Kingdom.
  - Provide assistance to towns, villages, and non-profits seeking to develop child care facilities and/or programs.
  - Assist eligible individuals to become licensed child care providers.
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## **TELECOMMUNICATIONS GOALS**

- Northeast Kingdom residents, business, organizations and public entities should be served by an up-to-date telecommunications infrastructure.
- Affordable fixed and wireless communications systems, as well as high-speed Internet broadband, should be available throughout the region.

## **STRATEGIES**

- Create incentives for appropriate telecommunication technologies, infrastructure and services to be implemented.
  - Support development efforts that reduce the cost of high-speed telecommunications throughout Vermont and the Northeast Kingdom.
  - Actively support the development of a wireless backbone along the region's interstate highway system corridors. This infrastructure should allow for co-location of carriers and platforms whenever possible, as well as virtual information technology for first responders, and wireless broadband.
  - Continue to work with state and regional agencies, as well as the private sector, to attain the coverage goals as set forth in the State Telecommunications Plan.
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## **SECURITY & EMERGENCY SERVICE GOALS**

- Emergency services should be provided to all residents of the Northeast Kingdom through Enhanced 9-1-1, local departments, and mutual aid districts.
- Towns should have up-to-date rapid response and emergency operations plans.
- All buildings should meet current state fire code and safety standards.
- Emergency services training should be available to keep all emergency service providers current with regard to service provision and certification.

## **STRATEGIES**

- Support regional approaches to disaster planning and mitigation, including partnerships between neighboring communities and states and Canada.
  - Support local efforts for disaster planning, response, recovery and mitigation.
  - Assist communities to apply for safety and emergency equipment grants by disseminating information on available funding programs.
  - Assist interested municipalities with the adoption of building and fire codes for non-public buildings and rental properties.
  - Ensure that adequate emergency services (personnel, facilities, and equipment) are available for new developments prior to placing additional demands on existing services.
  - Assist Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) and Towns to identify gaps in disaster planning, such as increased flood and drought protection, and work to eliminate gaps through an interagency, inter-jurisdictional approach.
  - Encourage all communities to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and to adopt the Vermont Transportation Highway Codes and Standards.
  - Discourage development in identified or known flood prone areas to avoid costly potential damage to life and property.
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## **WATER SUPPLY GOALS**

- Water supplies and water systems should not be contaminated, depleted, or degraded
- There should be sufficient quantities of water to meet existing and future residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial and recreational needs.
- Public investments should be made in utility facilities, services, and lands to support existing and future development within town centers, villages, or other designated and planned growth areas.
- Effective, efficient, and accessible public services should be promoted.

## **STRATEGIES**

- Support local proposals to upgrade existing water supply systems.
  - Support water conservation measures to reduce the demand for water and protect water supplies.
  - Discourage development in Source Protection Areas, identified groundwater recharge areas, or other areas where water supplies are likely to be adversely impacted.
  - Assist interested communities to identify, map, and plan for the protection of surface and groundwater resources.
  - Assist towns and communities with the preparation of capital improvement plans and budgets to complement local plans and this plan.
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## **WASTEWATER, SEWAGE & STORMWATER MANAGEMENT GOALS**

- The region's towns should have adequate wastewater treatment facilities with sufficient capacity to meet current needs and projected future development.
- Public investments in utility facilities and services should be in agreement with local plans and be directed toward town centers, villages, or other designated and planned growth areas.

### **STRATEGIES**

- Support proposals to upgrade and improve existing wastewater treatment facilities.
  - Encourage the proper disposal of hazardous materials, particularly household hazardous materials that are difficult to treat in secondary systems.
  - Provide advice and technical assistance to communities and groups interested in developing community wastewater systems.
  - Assist communities to interpret and abide by changes to state and federal laws regarding municipal and on-site wastewater systems and stormwater regulations.
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## **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT GOALS**

- Municipal and regional solid waste disposal systems should be cost-effective, environmentally sound, and promote reduction, reuse, and recycling.
- Hazardous wastes should be disposed of at secure, environmentally sound disposal sites.

### **STRATEGIES**

- Promote recycling, re-use, and waste reduction efforts throughout the region.
  - Support public education to promote proper waste disposal efforts.
  - Assist municipalities to adopt illegal dumping and burning ordinances.
  - Encourage communities to meet the waste management and recycling goals established by the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District and municipal waste management plans.
  - Encourage communities to create or expand local recycling facilities.
  - Encourage communities to eliminate or clean up illegal dump sites and brownfields in the region.
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# **CHAPTER FOUR    Historic, Cultural & Scenic Resources**

## **HISTORIC, CULTURAL & SCENIC RESOURCE GOALS**

- Future development should follow traditional development patterns, while providing for economic development opportunities and livable communities.
- Significant historic, cultural, and scenic resources within the region should be identified and preserved.

## STRATEGIES

- Promote local and regional tourism, since it an important part of our economic base.
- Assist communities to preserve and maintain historic downtowns, village centers, buildings, and rural and scenic landscapes.
- Rehabilitate and re-use significant cultural, architectural, and historic sites, and community facilities, whenever feasible.
- Promote local traditions, skills, crafts, and the performing arts within the region.
- Utilize federal, state, and local programs for developing or preserving local cultural and historic assets.
- Disseminate information about historic tax credits to businesses and property owners.
- Assist communities to designate downtowns and village centers under the Vermont Downtown Program.
- Support local cultural resource initiatives to revitalize communities and downtowns.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

## Housing

### HOUSING GOALS

- An adequate supply of affordable housing should be available to the region’s residents.
- The safety and quality of the existing housing stock in the region should improve.
- Partnerships with regional housing and human service providers should be strengthened, allowing for more effective service provision.

### STRATEGIES

- Work with regional housing and human service providers, including Gilman Housing, NEK Enterprise Collaborative, and NEK Community Action to identify housing needs.
- Assist towns to create housing policies that address the affordable housing needs of low-income residents.
- Assist communities interested in adopting local building codes.
- Provide incentives for developers to create more rental and ownership housing that is affordable to middle income people.

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## CHAPTER SIX

## Economic Development

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- The region’s unemployment rate should be reduced.
- The training/skills of the workforce should be improved.
- Higher-wage jobs should be created.
- Coordinate economic development functions in the Northeast Kingdom.
- Towns should receive assistance in their economic development efforts.

- The region's agricultural output should increase and diversify. Value should be added to local staple products and raw materials.
- The economic infrastructure capacity in the Northeast Kingdom should be improved to meet current and future needs.
- The region's telecommunications infrastructure should modernize and expand.
- Downtowns and village centers in the Northeast Kingdom should be maintained and revitalized.
- Quality, affordable child care should be available to workers with children in the Northeast Kingdom.

## **STRATEGIES**

- Provide technical assistance for new and expanding businesses, and recruit new businesses.
- Market the resources of NVDA.
- Assist existing manufacturing companies to grow by identifying new markets, products, and technology.
- Assess opportunities for coordination of economic development organizations.
- Provide greater access to revolving loan funds.
- Develop an annual forum for regional partners to participate in the economic development strategy for the Northeast Kingdom.
- Implement a comprehensive workforce development strategy for the region.
- Develop and implement strategies to revitalize distressed areas and specific employment sectors within the Northeast Kingdom.
- When possible, provide grant and technical assistance and project management to towns, organizations, and businesses throughout the Northeast Kingdom.
- Assist local planning commissions and development organizations in the Northeast Kingdom with economic development planning.
- Host economic development planning seminars in cooperation with SBDC and USDA Rural Development and other partners.
- Support and promote the specialty food industry.
- Research new methods of promoting sustainability in the agricultural field.
- Index and promote the traditional foods products of Vermont's small family farmers.
- Develop, maintain, and support local physical infrastructure projects such as water, sewer, industrial sites, and transportation projects.
- Continue to administer public works grants for towns in the region.
- Conduct a study to identify the region's brownfield sites.
- Encourage and identify new startups with business strategies and tools.
- Identify, prioritize and implement brownfield mitigation projects within the region.
- Develop a region-wide plan for water and sewer facilities.
- Support telecommunications infrastructure and knowledge capabilities by creating effective partnerships, and by advocating for increased infrastructure.
- Create a region-wide telecommunications strategy that will address wireless voice communication and high-speed Internet access, in order to halt the growing digital divide between rural and urban areas.
- Promote and advocate for economic development projects in downtown areas.
- Support Micro-enterprise programs for new business identification.
- Work through regional and community partnerships to expand training assistance and other support for childcare providers, and develop additional site-based child care centers.

- Work with local businesses, the Workforce Investment Board, schools, and community partnerships to assess childcare needs throughout the region.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

## Natural Resources

### NATURAL RESOURCE GOALS

- The overarching goal for the region is to balance local economic needs, while respecting the natural resources that we all enjoy. We fully support and encourage development that creates quality job opportunities for the citizens of the Northeast Kingdom. We feel any such development should consider the impact on:
  - The quality and quantity of the region's surface waters.
  - The quality and quantity of existing and potential groundwater resources.
  - Significant wetlands within the region.
  - Air quality.
  - Critical wildlife habitat.
  - The native biodiversity of the region.
- Adequate resource information for the region should be maintained to improve the region's ability to plan for protection of wildlife resources in the area.
- Private, public and community interests should be considered in matters affecting local recreation and open space.

### STRATEGIES

- Provide public education on state and local water quality issues as they relate to local planning and development.
- Discourage inappropriate development in flood hazard areas and floodplains. Support compatible land uses in flood areas, such as agriculture.
- Encourage and assist communities to identify and protect community water supplies. Education on water conservation and resource protection should accompany these efforts.
- Support education efforts about significant wetlands and watershed protection.
- Minimize the impacts of mineral and earth resource extraction and processing facilities.
- Support development of new markets and uses for local mineral resources. Encourage the use of locally obtained minerals for building construction and highway construction and maintenance.
- Support efforts to minimize air pollutants generated in the region from the residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation sectors.
- Support state and regional efforts to minimize pollutants entering the region from out of state.
- Support local and state efforts that inventory important habitats and wetlands.
- Support local efforts to maintain critical wildlife habitat and maintain habitat connectivity.
- When feasible, assist interested towns with planning and mapping for the protection of habitats and natural resources.
- Support state and local efforts to mitigate the impacts of the non-native species through ecologically sound methods (e.g. insect control, etc.).

- Support the use of the region's mineral and soil resources in a manner that will support economic growth and development in the region.
  - Support recreation and environmental education opportunities.
  - Support the protection and the acquisition of unique and irreplaceable recreational spaces open for the public to enjoy.
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# Regional Transportation Plan for the Northeast Kingdom

## Goals

### **Goal A: Maintain Adequate Road and Bridge Capacity and Mobility**

Country roads developed from trails and village byways, or those that serpentine along rivers, streams, and mountains, are typical to Vermont. The charm of these roads helps give the region its character and attract visitors to the Northeast Kingdom. The physical maintenance and upgrade of these roads and bridges to accommodate increased traffic volumes is always challenging. Given the limit on funds for continued investment in the transportation networks, it is vitally important that the surface network be adequately maintained to accommodate future growth and continued accessibility. The transportation infrastructure serves as the veins and arteries through which the region's residents, goods and services are transported to various local, regional and national destinations. It must be maintained to ensure continued accessibility to city, town and village centers, as well as other principal, secondary, and recreation activity centers.

### **Goal B: Guarantee a Regional Transportation System that Facilitates Economic Development**

Economic development is inextricably linked to the availability of transportation systems that provide adequate, sustainable levels of service and system capacity. Economic development is key to creating and stabilizing employment and for sustaining a good quality of life of our citizens. It is the foundation upon which the region's tax structure depends for financing the upkeep of the transportation infrastructure. In order to ensure an adequate source of funds for addressing the many deficiencies that afflict the primary and secondary modes of transportation, it is important that the tax base be strengthened through the creation of business and employment opportunities.

### **Goal C: Ensure Good Quality of Life**

"Quality of Life" implies different things to different people. In addition, the meaning of a "good" quality of life may change from time to time given evolving conditions or circumstances of a community. Generally, however, residents of the Northeast Kingdom today aspire to maintain a way of life consistent with those traditions discussed in the region's vision statement: wholesome living, efficient roadways, undeveloped rural and pastoral open lands, small town and village clusters that provide a sense of community and safety, an abundance of wildlife, readily available recreational activities, a variety of education options for human growth and development, and ample economic opportunities to enable residents to work and stay in the region.

### **Goal D: Ensure Availability of Alternative Transportation Modes to Address Residents' Needs**

To rely solely on one mode of transportation is rarely the preferred course of action, nor is it the recommended solution for the distribution of goods and services and for general public mobility and commuting needs. The greater the multimodal options (e.g., rail, air, truck, bus, bicycle/pedestrian), the greater the opportunities will be for access and connectivity between activity centers within the region, and to those outside the Northeast Kingdom. The region will benefit from a more diverse transportation network with the ability to effectively address the growing needs of communities with readily available modes of travel.

## **Objectives**

### **Objective 1: Develop Mechanisms for Effective Management and Maintenance of the Region's Transportation System**

- Slow the deterioration of individual modes, and assist in reducing/averting costly repairs.
- Increase efficiency and structural longevity of system.
- Encourage more effective modal linkages.
- Protect and enhance the regions development investments.
- Maintain a consistent level of service and safety.

### **Objective 2: Integrate Transportation Planning with Local Land Use and Activity Center Development**

- Facilitate a consistent and more effective planning process at the regional and local level.
- Insure that transportation concerns are addressed appropriately in light of land use impacts as well as community facility needs.
- Prevent waste of natural and financial resources.

### **Objective 3: Identify a Variety of Funding Mechanisms to Assist Towns in Maintaining Local Road Infrastructure**

- Reduce the dependency on state Capital Program and Project Development.
- Encourage local participation by individual municipalities with respect to project development, design, and scheduling.
- Assist in reducing negative impacts on local town budgets for transportation maintenance and construction.

### **Objective 4: Enhance Economic Development and the Efficient Movement of Goods and Services While Reducing the Impact of Commercial Traffic on Local Communities**

- Reduce time-in-transit for the driving public as well as commercial vehicles.
- Reduce energy consumption.
- Initiate projects that will increase the level of safety on local and state highways.
- Manage noise levels associated with transportation activities.
- Encourage and aid neighboring municipalities to work cooperatively on transportation projects of large scope, thus reducing the burden on any one municipality.