

2009-2010

Services Policy



Serving the people and governments
of Hancock County since 1970

DRAFT April 2009



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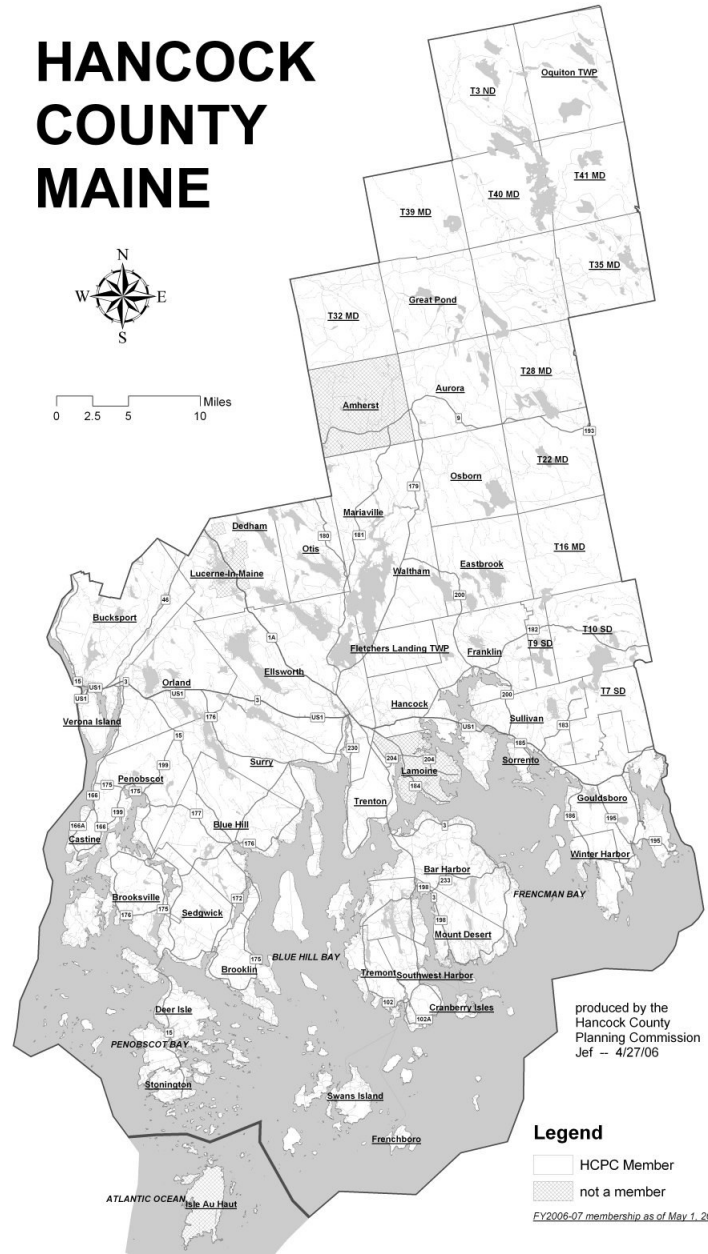
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Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM- 4:30 PM

After hours?

Leave a message on our answering machine.

Directions:

HCPC is located on Route 1A, 395 State Street in Ellsworth, opposite the Friends and Family Market. Look for our sign.

Discrimination Policy

The Hancock County Planning Commission prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status. The HCPC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Our Mission Statement:

The Hancock County Planning Commission advocates for and provides assistance to county and local governments by:

- Protecting our heritage and resources
- Planning for the future growth of Hancock County
- Promoting a viable and sound economy for Hancock County

What is the Hancock County Planning Commission?

The Hancock County Planning Commission (HCPC) is a non-profit organization that works with the 37 Hancock County municipalities, county government and Isle Au Haut in Knox County. Its mission is to provide member municipalities with advisory professional planning services. The HCPC executive board sets the overall direction of the agency. Board members are appointed by representatives (commissioners) from each town and the Hancock County Commission.

The HCPC:

- offers research, direction and advice to member municipalities.
- provides new and creative direction to meet our members' needs.
 - dedicates the time and effort necessary to deliver quality service customized to the specific needs of each community.

What Services Does the HCPC Provide?

There are two general types of service that we provide to our communities, basic and reimbursable. Basic services are those provided without charge to towns who are dues-paying members or those that are tied to a specific state grant. Reimbursable services

are those services provided for a fee. Such services are normally done on a contractual basis with a town. The key to all our services is that they can be tailored to the needs of the individual towns. This means that we offer advice as trained professionals and *suggest* courses of action. Towns use our services to help shape the future that *they* desire.

What Services Are Provided Without Charge?

The following services are expected to be available for the 2009-2010 fiscal year:

- Brownfields Assessment

We are working with an environmental consulting firm to prepare an assessment of key brownfields sites. The term brownfields refers to abandoned or underutilized commercial or industrial sites whose potential reuse may be jeopardized by actual or perceived contamination. Sites in Hancock County include abandoned mines, mills and service stations. The HCPC would work on identifying the extent of contamination and what, if any, clean up measures are needed.

- CDBG Technical Assistance

The HCPC normally receives a grant each year from the State of Maine to help municipalities apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) monies. This program has been used by many HCPC towns in creating or retaining jobs, improving substandard housing, upgrading community facilities and downtown revitalization.

- Code Enforcement Officer Assistance

We provide code enforcement officers (CEO's) with information on the latest state training requirements and help with related matters such as setting up fair permit fee structures and developing permit application forms. We can also help towns recruit CEO's.

Under 500	\$525
501-1,000	\$670
1,001-1,500	\$1,030
over 1,500	\$1,150

Non-Member Costs and Services

Non-member communities and other organizations may obtain the services offered, but at a higher cost (normally 50%) than members. Payment for all services must be made in advance. Apart from those services that are funded by state grants, whose terms require we serve all towns, there is a charge for all staff time devoted to non-members in excess of ten minutes. Priority service shall be given to member communities and to contracts with member towns.

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 2009

Our Staff

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Executive Board

Roderic Franzius, Chairman
 Dave Milan, Vice-Chair
 Raymond Jones, Treasurer
 Beverly Sanborn, Secretary

Dale Abernethy	Peter Colman	Charlie Wiggins
Joe Kitchen	Janet Michaud	Dale
Sprinkle		
Steve Walton	C.W. Comer	

For Further Information Contact:

Hancock County Planning Commission

substance abuse prevention ventures. The HCPC is exploring new ways to work on county-wide economic development planning by providing data and analysis to those involved in job creation and retention. For example, it is working with groups involved in marine products diversification. It is also involved in promoting healthy communities. The HCPC is exploring options to fund a county-wide housing needs assessment.

What Other Services Does HCPC Provide?

The HCPC is always looking for new ways for towns to work together. Our recent partnership with the Healthy Communities groups is one example of our versatility. We are presently exploring option to expand broadband services to area presently not served by high speed internet.

Cost of Membership

For the 2009-2010 year, membership dues are determined utilizing a sliding scale according to a town’s 2000 year-round population. Dues are used to cover the costs of the basic services described above and also serve as the required matching monies for state and federal grants. **To qualify for member services, towns must pay their full dues assessment.** (see table). As of May 1, 2009, 34 of the 38 towns are members.

2009-2010 DUES ASSESSMENT	
Year-round population (2000 Census)	Dues

- Community Health Assessment and Planning
We assist towns in identifying their current health assets and needs based upon information compiled by various state agencies, the Bureau of Census and studies conducted in the communities. We assist towns in identifying projects to encourage physical activity, better nutrition, safer roads and other environmental improvements. We assist in identifying long-range strategies for healthier communities. In recent years, funding has been provided through a variety of state, federal and private foundation sources permitting us to provide health-related services at no charge to the towns.
- Economic Development Planning
We are involved in a variety of economic development planning activities, including sustainable agriculture, a commercial kitchen incubator, and entrepreneurial training activities. We have received a national award for our endeavors. We coordinate our efforts with the Eastern Maine Development Corporation and other business assistance groups.
- Floodplain Management
We help towns with all aspects of floodplain management including interpreting current maps and regulations and serving as a liaison with the appropriate state officials. We can also help towns join the National Flood Insurance Program and adopt appropriate ordinances. The flood management maps are now on our web site.
- Hazard Mitigation and Emergency Management Planning
We advise towns on how to develop hazard mitigation plans that meet the latest state requirements. We have examples of what other towns have done and serve as a liaison with the hazard mitigation personnel at the State Planning Office and also work with county emergency management staff.
- Information on State and Local Land Use Laws

The staff keeps abreast of changes in Maine land use law. The HCPC is the place to call with questions on the latest state requirements for subdivision review, comprehensive plans, shoreland zoning, mobile home park laws or any similar state law.

- Joint Purchasing of Supplies

The HCPC coordinates the joint purchase of road salt and other items for interested towns.

- Land Use Ordinance File

Our land use ordinances and regulations are available for towns to use as a guide in the development of their own ordinances. We have electronic copies of many ordinances. We have the latest state models for subdivision ordinances, wind power, ground water extraction, tele-communication facilities, site plan review and shoreland zoning.

- Low Impact Development

The HCPC is a source of information on Low Impact Development (LID), an approach to site planning, design and development that reduces stormwater impacts. LID aims to mimic pre-development hydrology, treat stormwater as close to its source as possible, preserve natural drainage systems and open space, and incorporate small-scale controls that replicate natural processes in detaining and filtering stormwater. We have information on our web site and are expanding our library resources.

- Newsletter

Our informative quarterly newsletter covers topics such as HCPC-sponsored events, recent court cases on land use law, available grant monies, the planning experiences of other towns and other items of interest to municipal officials. Our newsletter can also be found on our website, www.hcpcme.org.

- Regional Transportation Planning

The HCPC works with the Maine Department of Transportation

development committee, recommending appropriate zoning standards for an industrial park, and marketing an industrial site. We are experienced in preparing Tax Increment Financing (T.I.F.) packages.

- Land Use Drafting Assistance

Using our extensive library of zoning and subdivision ordinances from towns in Hancock County and the state of Maine as whole, we draft ordinances for a town and prepare revisions as requested. We also have access to the resources of Maine Municipal Association and the American Planning Association's Planning Advisory Service to keep in touch with the most current court cases and innovative zoning techniques that are used in Maine and across the country.

- Shared Planner Services

We can provide a professional planner on a part-time basis to a town that may need some planning services but does not need someone full-time.

How Are Billable Services Provided?

When a town requests billable services, the HCPC prepares a detailed scope of work, which describes the proposed product and the budget. Unless otherwise indicated, all work is done within an agreed-upon budget rather than at an hourly rate. When the HCPC and the town agree upon the final scope of work, a contract is developed. The HCPC staff will be pleased to help with the development of cost estimates.

County-Wide Projects Underway

Much of our transportation planning now occurs on a regional basis. We are also working on county-wide healthy communities and

community improvement efforts including rehabilitation of substandard housing, revitalization of a downtown area or public facilities improvements. We've also been active in waterfront improvement projects.

- Information Systems Assessment, Design and Implementation
We work with towns to design and implement information systems, such as public opinion surveys and municipal record systems. We tabulate opinion surveys and develop other databases.
- Fiscal, Environmental, and Traffic Impact Studies
We are equipped to prepare or review fiscal, environmental, and traffic impact studies. While the HCPC charges for such services, the town may require through its ordinances that the subdivision applicant reimburse the town.
- Grant Preparation and Administration
Our staff has experience in grant writing and can help towns in preparing grant applications. We are familiar with many state and federal programs and have a strong working relationship with most state agencies. We have administered many CDBG-funded projects and have staff with the required state certification.
- Graphics/Design
We produce sketches and drawings that can be used for public presentations as well as computer-generated graphs and site and building plans. We have developed many designs for use by towns in state and federal grant applications. These designs can also be used to formulate site layout options for transfer stations, parking areas and other public facilities.
- Market Research & Economic Development Strategies
The HCPC helps towns prepare and implement economic development strategies. Specific steps could include, but are not limited to, market research activities, creating a local economic

(MDOT) in supporting regional transportation planning initiatives. We have extensive information on traffic flow, highway conditions, and the potential for alternative modes of transit such as buses, vanpools and bicycles. We also can help towns with various MDOT grant applications and project request forms. We are presently active in several scenic byway and trails projects.

- Septic System Replacement Grants
Our staff administers the DEP's Small Community Grant Program for Hancock County. These programs provide a valuable service in eliminating sources of water pollution and restoring areas closed to shellfish harvesting due to contamination.
- Smart Growth Technical Assistance
The HCPC is an information resource for towns wishing to develop "smart growth" policies such as preserving and creating mixed use, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods and revitalizing service center communities. Our staff has undergone intensive smart growth training. It also involves helping towns grow in a way that respects local cultural and natural features. As with all our services, our role is merely to help towns choose the options they want rather than to dictate what they should do.
- Solid Waste Management and Recycling
The HCPC helps towns develop and implement cost-effective recycling strategies. We also help sponsor household hazardous waste and universal waste collection days and have been active in organizing and promoting home, farm-based and municipal composting. We've worked with towns in redesigning their transfer stations and preparing drafts of DEP-required operations manuals and can help with DEP licensing procedures. By using our services, towns can clarify their needs before hiring an engineer for actual site engineering. The HCPC has also helped towns obtain grant funds to make improvements to their solid waste facilities.

- Subdivision Review Assistance

We help towns with all aspects of subdivision review, including interpreting the state law and helping to review an actual application.

- Planning Advisory Service and Other Informational Resources

We are members of the Planning Advisory Service (PAS), a national organization providing support to professional planners. We use its informational services to supplement our own library and the resources of the Maine Municipal Association. Municipal officials are welcome to use our library.

- Web Site

The HCPC web site contains information on various agency projects, maps, comprehensive plans and upcoming events. It also has information on funding sources, an archive of our past newsletters, socio-economic data for each town and the county as a whole. It has links to other useful web sites on community planning, healthy communities, transportation and economic development.

- Workshops

The HCPC sponsors or co-sponsors numerous workshops on topics of current interest to planning boards, selectmen and other local officials.

- Other Services

Other services include providing the latest available U.S. Census data, related statistics and population projections. We are also available to attend hearings and meetings with local officials.

How Are Basic Services Provided?

Usually, a simple phone, e-mail or walk-in request initiates these services. In fairness to all our towns, requests are provided on a first-

come first-served basis. While there is no charge for professional staff time, we do charge for large volumes of photocopies and other supplies such as computer disks, maps and postage. Our services are primarily for town officials, including select boards, planning boards, conservation commissions, zoning boards of appeal, comprehensive planning committees, and other town boards and staff. Basic services may vary according to our funding in a given year.

What Billable Services Are Provided?

We take a flexible approach to providing billable services. Major services provided include, but are not limited, to:

- Capital Improvement Programs

We have been involved in the preparation of Capital Improvement Plans. We can assist in estimating future revenues and expenditures as well as the impact of a given expenditure on the tax rate. We employ computer-based analysis and forecasting to identify future opportunities and challenges.

- Comprehensive Plan Assistance

We have extensive experience in preparing comprehensive plans both within Hancock County and elsewhere in Maine and northern New England. Rather than consultants, we view ourselves as partners with the town in the preparation of a plan.

- Computer-Aided Drafting and Mapping

We have expanded our in-house GIS (Geographic Information Systems) capabilities and can produce color, computer-generated maps for overlay, tax analysis and more. We have a large file of base maps for towns in Hancock County. We also have a CAD program to produce preliminary floor plans for proposals.

- Community Revitalization Strategies

We help towns identify community needs and set priorities in community improvement efforts including rehabilitation of