



# HCPC NEWSLETTER

Hancock County Planning Commission

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## NEWSLETTER CHANGE

**A REMINDER:** HCPC is now sending only one printed copy of the Newsletter to each town office. Please share this copy with those town officials who do not have access to e-mail. An on-line copy of our newsletter can be found at: [www.hpcpcme.org/news](http://www.hpcpcme.org/news) . We will e-mail the link to all town officials for whom we have e-mail addresses.

## PLANNING BOARD NEWS

*By Tom Martin*

## RESULTS OF THE COASTAL ZONE PRIORITIES SURVEY

Thanks to those of you who responded to the Coastal Zone Priorities Survey. The results will help us and the Maine Coastal Program focus future technical assistance. Waterfront planning had the most responses (31) as a “very relevant” topic to be addressed, followed by water quality (28 responses), public access (26) and coastal hazards (25). Open space planning had the highest number of “not relevant” responses (7). Model ordinances and training and workshops were deemed the preferred form of technical assistance by most respondents.

Water quality and waterfront planning (33 and 32 responses respectively) were most common topics where there was a willingness to work together regionally. These were followed by public access

and assessing the impacts of development which both had 28 responses. Open space had the highest number of responses (22) not in favor of working together regionally. For complete survey results, see [www.hcpcme.org/landuse.html](http://www.hcpcme.org/landuse.html)

## CDBG NEWS

The 2012 Community Development Block Grant Program rules are now available. Copies were mailed to all town offices and are also available on line at: [www.meocd.org](http://www.meocd.org). Please note some changes from last year's program:

1. The maximum application amount for Public Facilities Activity 1 (Fire Stations) and Activity 2 (facilities such as communities centers, senior citizens, child care, and libraries) has been cut from \$350,000 to \$300,000. Only three applications will be funded.
2. Application amounts for Public Facilities Activity 3 (removal of architectural barriers) and Activity 4 (Historic Preservation) have been increased from \$150,000 to \$350,000.
3. The maximum amount for a Downtown Revitalization application has decreased from \$600,000 to \$500,000.
4. Activity 1 in the Economic Development Program (grants to municipalities associated for public infrastructure in support of an identified business) has been increased from \$300,000 to \$400,000. The CDBG maximum portion of the cost per job is now \$30,000.
5. There is presently no funding allocated for Community Planning

Grants, Urgent Need, or Non-Profit Development Grants. This is subject to change if the proposed cuts in the state's allocation from the federal government are less than expected.

### Hints on a Submitting a Successful CDBG Application.

Due to reduced funding, the CDBG program will be more competitive than last year. Here are some general hints to strengthen your application:

1. follow the application packaging requirements to the letter and answer all questions in the application;
2. if your project is aimed at a target area, be sure that you conduct a household income survey per the Maine Office of Community Development's instructions. Contact the HCPC for details (please note that as of December 2012, there are new income limits, they are shown below);
3. don't provide attachments not asked for;
4. Citizen Participation is worth 20 points. Be sure to have well attended informational meetings in addition to the required public hearing. Applications that do not comply with the public hearing notice and reporting requirements will lose points; and
5. contact the Hancock County Planning Commission. Our staff has worked with the program for over 30 years and has extensive grant preparation experience. *There is no charge for our CDBG technical assistance.*

## CDBG APPLICATION DEADLINES

Program	Letter of Intent Due Date (All dates are “on or before”)	Application Due Date
Public Facilities	January 20, 2012	March 10, 2012
Public Infrastructure	January 20, 2012	March 10, 2012
Economic Development	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday of Every Month	By Invitation Only
Downtown Revitalization	February 10, 2012	March 30, 2012
Community Enterprise	February 10, 2012	March 30, 2012
Housing Assistance	March 16, 2012	May 4, 2012
Public Service	April 13, 2012	June 8, 2012
Community Planning	N/A	N/A
Urgent Need	N/A	N/A
Special Projects Matching Fund	N/A	Open – by invitation only
Development Fund * **	1 <sup>st</sup> Friday of Every Month	Open

<b>Low to Moderate Income 2012-2013 CDBG Guidelines, Hancock County</b>	
Household Size	Maximum Income
1	\$35,700
2	\$40,800
3	\$45,900
4	\$50,950
5	\$55,050
6	\$59,150
7	\$63,200
8	\$67,300

## CDBG Well and Septic Program

There is still time for towns to join the multi-town well and septic replacement grant program. If there are failing or inadequate wells and septic systems in your town, feel free to contact Tom Martin ([tmartin@hpcme.org](mailto:tmartin@hpcme.org)) for details on what we need for the application. In brief, we need to present evidence of health and safety problems and collect anecdotes about conditions of individual households. It is also important that we show strong citizen support for the application. HCPC staff is available to attend public informational meetings in your town. We also plan a county-wide meeting and urge all towns to send people to attend.

## SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING NEWS

by Tom Martin

### Household Hazardous Waste Update

The August 2011 Ellsworth area household hazardous waste collection, organized by the HCPC, was very successful. In October, the Acadia Disposal District had a successful collection on Mount Desert Island. HCPC was able to pay for its staff time in 2011 through grant funds. Since there are no grant funds available for 2012, towns face the following options:

1. not have a collection;
2. organize a collection on their own. HCPC would be happy to provide information on organizational tips;
3. hire a private consultant to organize the event or
4. hire the HCPC on a contractual basis.

For more information about these options, contact Tom Martin ([tmartin@hpcme.org](mailto:tmartin@hpcme.org)). The HCPC cost for organizing the collection and the set up fee is estimated to be \$ 7,100 This cost would be divided amongst participating towns on a per capita year-round population basis. This cost

does **not** include disposal fees charged by the waste handler.

## WATER AND WASTEWATER TRAINING NEWS

HCPC's November 17 workshop on well and septic issues received positive evaluations from attendees. HCPC plans other workshops in the late winter and spring. *These sessions are expected to qualify for CEO/LPI education credits.* Here are some of the facts presented at the November 17 workshop:

1. Local jurisdictions have primary responsibility for enforcing rules adopted by the Department of Health and Human Services governing the installation and inspection of subsurface wastewater disposal systems. The adoption of rules by the Department does not preclude a town from adopting more restrictive ordinances. See 30-A MRSA § 4214.
2. Local plumbing inspectors (LPI's) may approve a permanent, first-time holding tank system only if the town has adopted the state's model holding tank ordinance.
3. LPI's must be consulted when there is a change of use or expansion of an existing use such as a home occupation.
4. While some people consider gray water benign, improper disposal has resulted in wells being contaminated.
5. The state minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet is frequently too small for lots in Hancock County to accommodate a septic system that meets state standards due to the nature of the soils.

For more information see our web site [www.hpcme.org/comdev.html](http://www.hpcme.org/comdev.html)

## COMPOST BINS

The HCPC still have 4 compost bins available. The bin is black and is made of 100% recycled plastic. It's approximately 35" high and 33" wide, or large enough for a family of five (80 gallon capacity). We have one tool to help you turn compost materials available for sale. The Bins sell for \$42.50 and the tool sells for \$17. If you or someone you know may be interested in purchasing one, please contact Sheri Walsh at 667-7131 or [swalsh@hpcme.org](mailto:swalsh@hpcme.org) .



## TRANSPORTATION NEWS

*by Jim Fisher*

### MaineDOT Municipal Solicitation Coming This Winter

Every two years the Maine Department of Transportation solicits towns to provide their priorities for future transportation projects. In February towns will be provided with a chance to formally request projects ranging from road reconstruction to small harbor improvements. Now is a good time to take stock of the roads, particularly before they are locked under ice and snow, and discuss priorities in select board/council meetings.

This year MaineDOT has formalized the prioritization process with some very clear guidelines. Roads are categorized in rank order from interstate highways and high volume arterials to collectors and last to local roads. Higher priority roads and bridges typically carry more traffic and play a very important role in the state's economy.

This process of prioritization will be extended to all modes of transportation.

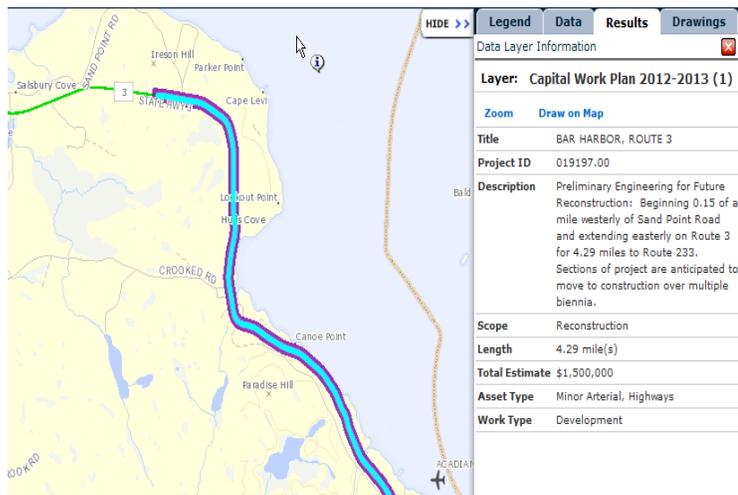
Transportation level of service will also be ranked according to objective criteria including safety, condition and surface. A safe road in good condition with no congestion and a smooth surface is likely to score an A, and unlikely to receive much funding for improvements. A road that is highly congested, rutted, with a high crash rate and broken surface is more likely to score an E or F, and is a good candidate for improvements.

This is all to say that towns should consider recommending roads that are high rank and low level of service if they want to get their projects funded. Towns that work together, even recommending improvements on roads in other towns that are important to your residents, will have a stronger application.

Our county has the disadvantage in this ranking and rating scheme in that many towns have only collector roads that dead-end at the southern end of a peninsula or island. It is still absolutely essential to make recommendations for work on these roads, but you will be asked to provide additional support for the request. Examples of support include 1) documenting the need in your comprehensive plans, transportation plans or other adopted town documents, 2) indicating changes on the corridor that have increased stress on the roads, such as new businesses, byway designation, rising traffic volumes or 3) particularly dangerous locations.

MaineDOT has created an online mapping tool that can help towns to set their priorities. Visit [www.maine.gov/mdot/mapviewer/](http://www.maine.gov/mdot/mapviewer/) to see which roads are highest priority, where service deficiencies are noted and what projects have been funded and which are already being implemented. You can also call up projects that have been approved in recent transportation work plans to see current project scope and status. This is a good way to coordinate local infrastructure improvements with MaineDOT projects.

Going beyond the roads, the two-year solicitation will also ask for recommendations for other projects, such as small harbor improvements, rail improvements, transit services, safe routes to schools, and scenic byways. Please contact Jim Fisher ([jfisher@hpcme.org](mailto:jfisher@hpcme.org)) at the HCPC if you have any questions or ideas for transportation projects.



## Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans Move Ahead

Hancock County is a good case study reflecting Maine's ascendancy to the second most bicycle-friendly state in America. Interested readers can learn more about the ranking in the [Bangor Daily News](#). Cyclists fall into several categories, including children, infrequent riders, weekend warriors, off-road mountain bikers and experienced long distance riders. We have heard from many years that our roads are too narrow and cars have a difficult time maneuvering around bicycles safely. Maine has risen to the challenge in several ways. The least cost initiative has been a public awareness campaign characterized by "Share the Road" bumper stickers and signs. Next up are the many minor improvements we have made to our roadways, including replacing drainage grates that eat bike wheels, painting fog lines to indicate paved shoulders and improving intersections. Adding road width with paved shoulders and narrowing vehicle lane widths from

12 to 11 feet can simultaneously increase space for bikes and calm traffic where cars were given to speeding. Finally, building dedicated trails provides riders with an alternative to our busy highways.

This autumn the Ellsworth Trail opened, connecting Ellsworth Falls with Main Street, and providing a perfect walking and biking corridor for Ellsworth High School students as it passed right through campus. This 10' paved trail is already seeing a lot of use and has reduced conflicts on Oak Street and State Street. Spring Street provides a big portion of this connection and will be a priority for repaving and striping to encourage a safe zone for bicycles and pedestrians.

A two-mile gap remains between Main Street and Washington Junction, the current gateway for the 85+ mile Down East Sunrise Trail. MaineDOT has approved funds and appointed a project manager to design and build this critical section. The design process will move ahead this winter and spring. Construction may begin in the spring of 2013 if the design team is successful. It won't be long before cyclists of all ages will be able to peddle right from Ellsworth all the way to Eastport on dedicated trails. This is a triple bottom line success, contributing to the economy, environment, and society.

HCPC is seeking bicycle and pedestrian advocates to form a county-wide task force that will recommendations addressing other critical gaps in our bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Please contact Jim Fisher at HCPC if you would be interested in participating or having your town represented.



# **HEALTH NEWS**

*by Jim Fisher*

This winter HCPC will be contacting all of the towns in Hancock County to assess our current policies and future opportunities to improve public health. Our immediate need is to work on reducing second-hand smoke in public spaces and to increase opportunities for walking and bicycling.

**Tobacco:** Everyone is well aware of the impacts that smoking tobacco is having on the health of smokers. Increased rates of chronic diseases such as cancer, emphysema and heart disease can be traced directly to smoking. An individual's decision to smoke in spite of the health consequences becomes a public health challenge when second-hand smoke affects people in the vicinity. The impacts of second-hand smoke can be immediate, precipitating onset of asthma or cardiac arrest, or long-term elevating risk of chronic diseases and increasing the odds of children becoming smokers.

HCPC is working with Healthy Acadia, Hancock County's Healthy Maine Partnership, to identify current town policies regulating tobacco use in public spaces and to work with towns to adopt policies that will reduce exposure of children and non-smoking adults to second-hand smoke. We are posting model ordinances and other related policy documents to our website, and will soon host an online and telephone survey of municipal policies. We hope to identify a small number of towns in Hancock County that are interested in moving ahead on educational, voluntary and legal policies, such as encouraging public sporting events, playgrounds, and beaches to be smoke-free.

## **Physical Activity**

Winter is never an easy time to get your measure of exercise. Towns in Hancock County have an important role to play in creating public places for their residents to walk, bicycle and in other ways avoid the mid-winter bulge. HCPC is interested in working with a few towns this winter and spring to

inventory opportunities for year-round physical activity and seek resources to create new venues. We can help your town to apply for grants to build trails, bikeways, and other relatively low-cost, low-maintenance venues.

## **Hancock County Plan of Action for Health**

In addition to our work on tobacco and physical activity, HCPC is working with Healthy Acadia to consolidate big goals expressed in four sub-regional health plans into one county-wide plan and then to turn these big goals into a series of specific objectives or milestones. The big goals include access to healthy food, programs and places to exercise and stay fit, improving our public health services, and increasing access to health services. We will be hosting a series of public meetings for public input in creating a plan of action. Some meetings will focus on a particular issue while others will look at how we can coordinate across issues. Please contact Jim Fisher at HCPC if you are interested in participating or hosting a meeting in your community.

## **New Landlord Smoking Policy**

Starting in September of 2011, all property owners and managers across Maine are required to provide tenants with a smoking policy - if and where smoking is prohibited or allowed on their rental property. To learn more please [www.smokefreeforme.org](http://www.smokefreeforme.org).

If you are a landlord and would like to receive more information about this law, would like support in developing a smoking policy, or would like to learn more about Healthy Acadia's initiatives on landlord education and training opportunities, please contact Kelly Corson at 288-5331 or by e-mail at [kelly@healthacadia.org](mailto:kelly@healthacadia.org) or Jim Fisher at HCPC.

Did you know HCPC now has a Facebook Page?



Click on the link below to visit our page. "Like" our page and receive updates on upcoming events and announcements on your Facebook News Feed.

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Hancock-County-Planning-Commission/348791130697>

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**Hancock County Planning Commission is a partner with local and county government to: protect our heritage and resources, plan for the future and promote a sound economy for the people of Hancock County.**

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**Change Service Requested**