

# City of Sanford



**From the Desk of  
Steven R. Buck  
City Manager**



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## Memorandum

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To: City Council  
Subject: Manager's Report for November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Date: November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014

### **Central York County Connector Study:**

The City Council reviewed administration's compiled review and substantive comments on the recently issued Final Draft of the Study. The Study contained multiple recommendations on the Route 109 corridor, Route 11/202 corridors, Routes 35 and 99, and other intersections and mobility related traffic details within the Region. The City's comments, 9 pages in length, were submitted to Gerry Audibert in the planning division of MDOT this past Friday. Mr. Audibert indicated that he will contact me for a phone conference to discuss the City's comments and later address in writing.

The date for final release of the Study is not yet known. I did inquire about the distribution of the Study once complete as there seems to be limited awareness within the Department at this time. Mr. Audibert indicated that he typically sends hard copies to the Regional Office as well as links to the Division Office heads, Regional Coordinator, Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Chief Engineer, and Federal Highway. It is also published as a notice in the Bureau of Planning's Weekly Highlights. Items of note are also forwarded to the Governor's office.

To coincide with the emphasis on Sanford's Transportation needs, the Planning Board has committed to a full review of the Transportation Section of Sanford's Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Board will working with the City's engineers on a full road inventory and assessment for Pavement Condition Indexing, setting of road standards, assessing High Accident Locations, pedestrian and bicycle safety, mobility of our major corridors, and increased planning actions to facilitate necessary improvements. A broad spectrum committee will be assembled to facilitate the work and a request within next year's budget for a level of financial support if deemed necessary.

### **Advocacy and the next Legislative Session:**

AS many are aware, I have not only been serving on Maine Municipal Association's (MMA) Legislative Policy Committee, LPC, but have also served on a subcommittee pertaining to the restoration and preservation of State Municipal Revenue Sharing. The Full LPC met last on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014 to discuss its legislative platform for the 127<sup>th</sup> Legislature. Highlights are as follows:

- MMA will sponsor a State-Municipal Summit to be held Thursday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 with the members of the 127<sup>th</sup> Legislature to engage in a forum of “Partnership Programs.” The purpose of the forum is to communicate the importance of State Municipal Revenue Sharing and what it means to all Maine Property Tax Payers. The forum will also be utilized to discuss and develop multiple means of propagating State-Municipal Partnerships towards the economic wellbeing of our State and to have the 127<sup>th</sup> Legislature work on these initiatives through legislation. Such a Summit has not been held since MMA hosted the last one in 1990 at the start of Governor McKernan’s second term.
- Given the emphasis of restoring State Municipal Revenue Sharing (see Title 30-A M.R.S.A. §5681), the LPC was very hesitant to forward any legislative agenda that contained any fiscal impacts upon the State’s already strained resources. Items under development will include:
  - Local Option to establish a Service Charge for Municipal Fire Districts – would allow a municipality, after enacting an Ordinance, to charge fire protections services on a cost per square foot of buildings, to include non-profits as well, as opposed to based upon property values, ad valorem taxation.
  - Restoration of Indexed gas tax based upon change in the average Corporate Average Fuel Economy or CAFÉ
  - General Fund Bond to Invest in Transportation Infrastructure
  - An Act to restore Local road Assistance Programs – URIP to be restored to 10% of Highway Fund allocation
  - An Act to Address Detrimental Impacts of Abandoned Property – would authorize municipalities, after adoption of an ordinance, to take corrective actions against such properties that are degrading neighborhoods
  - An Act to Require State Funding for Public Charter Schools outside of the EPS Funds and to preserve the local contribution for such students.
  - An Act to Require the State to Administer and Fund the General Assistance Program – transfers the responsibilities of providing and administering the current General Assistance Program from the municipality to the State offices of DHHS

The LPC will convene next on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 after the cloture date and a majority of Bills have been printed for the 127<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session. The LPC will then review any Bills having municipal consequences and develop positions upon each later advocated before the appropriate Committees.

**Mayor’s Coalition:**

The Mayor’s Coalition is an advocacy group comprised of the 11 largest municipalities Auburn, Augusta, Bangor, Biddeford, Lewiston, Portland, Saco, South Portland, Waterville, Westbrook, and Sanford. The City of Sanford joined the Coalition in 2013 shortly after the passage of its current Charter establishing Sanford as a City. The Coalition meets to advocate for the development of State policies that will grow Maine’s economy and to oppose policies that will shift costs to municipalities. To this end, the Coalition will meet on Wednesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in Augusta to work on this year’s legislative platform. Areas under development will include but are not limited to:

- Bonding for Transportation
- Clarifications towards the administration of General Assistance

- Restoration of State Municipal Revenue Sharing and or alternatives to provide property tax relief, especially within large Service Centers having disproportionate tax burdens
- Broad Band legislation to assist in build out
- Immigration and impacts within Cities
- Charter Schools
- BETE/BETR conversions for personnel property
- Others

**Negotiations:**

We have closed negotiations on both the Communications Unit and Fire Unit and are working through last of the reviews. The Council has authorized the Communications Contract pending signatures this week from the Unit. The Fire Agreement will be coming to the Personnel Committee and subsequently to the Council for consideration on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014.

**Metrocast:**

We have had a delay in returning to the table on the Franchise Agreement as the Maura Campbell has left Metrocast. Danny Jobe, her replacement, now has the Redline Draft Agreement and we are awaiting a date to resume work.

**Broadband:**

Administration recently met with Tilson to finalize the scope for the development of a RFP for the construction and operation of a Fiber Communications Network. The RFP will allow the City to identify the last of the costs as well as operational parameters necessary to identify the total funding necessary to complete and operate. The goal is to identify leverage funding opportunities, public and private investment, and the potential for revenue bonds to complete the envisioned Fiber Optic Network.

**Destination Tourism – York Pines:**

York Pines Co. has completed and shipped not less than 20 packages to known Tourism/Theme Park Developers across the Country introducing York Pines, information from the Destination Tourism Feasibility Study for Sanford, and the City of Sanford’s willingness to partner towards its future development. Economic Development Director James Nimon is also in Orlando Florida this week to follow up with meetings with these developers at the IAAPA Attractions Expo in the Orange County Convention Center. Members of York Pines will be reporting the progress from the Expo to the Council for the December 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. They will also be showing the promotional video that has been developed to market the Project in Sanford.

**Finances:**

Except for seasonal variances, i.e. summer labor, all Departments are well within parameters for the period ending October 31<sup>st</sup>. The City and School have also continued to reconcile this past month as the newly created administrative processes have proven to support the exceptional financial work by the City and School.