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| Agenda Item 1 – Sign-in and pre-forum exercise | | 8:00-8:30 a.m. | 30 min |
| PROCESS | <p>As participants arrive at the meeting, they would participate in a pre-forum exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idea 1: Give each person fake paper money and instruct them to allocate their money into different bins identified as potential areas the town could be prioritizing funding. Here are themes based off what was heard in the survey - 1. Schools, 2. Recreation/Programming, 3. Bow Lake (quality and access), 4. Incentivizing small business/restaurants, 5. Promoting farms and farm-based business 6. Land conservation 7. Town Services 8. Community Center or Town Gathering Space 9. Don't spend this money. | | |
| Agenda Item 2 – Introductions & Data Presentation | | 8:30-9:00 a.m. | 30 min |
| PROCESS | <p>A town volunteer will welcome participants, explain why the forum is taking place and then introduce SRPC, who will present on Strafford data and survey results.</p> | | |
| Agenda Item 3 – Concurrent Breakout Sessions | | 9:00-11:30 a.m. | 150 min |
| PROCESS | <p>A SRPC staff member will transition from the presentation. Participants will be instructed which session to start with, based on pre-registration. GENERAL POINT: Forum activities should focus on filling in gaps or seeking in-depth feedback that did not come from the survey (e.g. WHERE to implement survey priorities, finding the nuance or balance between trade-offs) and/or informing goals for the chosen topics. Participants will attend three out of the four sessions.</p> | | |
| THEME 1 – Housing | | | |
| WHAT WE HEARD | <p>People love the small-town, rural atmosphere of Strafford and most respondents want it to remain that way. There were over 33 mentions of affordable land and housing being a reason why people moved to Strafford. One of the greatest challenges people believe Strafford faces in the next 10-15 years is overdevelopment, in other words people want to maintain a rural atmosphere.</p> <p>Respondents do see need for growth but want to ensure it is done in a reasonable, smart, and sustainable way, such as no big developments and with respect for nature and open space. There were mentions of people being afraid of becoming like neighboring communities of Rochester or Barrington.</p> <p>Respondents worry a lot about taxes and affordability and being able to stay in their homes due to those factors as they age. When asked about housing affordability in</p> | | |

Strafford, 77% think it is very (41%) or somewhat (36%) affordable. 36% think it is not very affordable.

If and when residential development occurs, 39% of respondents want it to occur in varied manner of concentrated and spread out. Of those 39%, most favored, “Encouraging subdivisions that cluster units on smaller lots in exchange for conserving open space” and “making it easier to add accessory dwelling units to existing residential properties” the most. Then there are the 18% who think it should occur only in a concentrated manner, and 23% who think it should be only spread out. Of the 18% who wanted more concentrated development, most preferred denser development in existing village centers, or conservation subdivisions. Of the 23% who wanted more spread out residential development, the majority wanted the town to make it easier to add accessory dwelling units to existing residential properties.”

In terms of type of housing needed, 70% of respondents favored single family detached housing, followed by Accessory Dwelling Unit/In-law Apartments (37%). Workforce housing, manufactured housing, and apartment buildings (5+ units) were listed as least needed.

PROCESS

Part 1: Provide a map of the town to the group. The participants would identify where and what type of housing they would like to see. The base map will show conservation lands, community points of interest, and defined village centers. Stickers would be provided in colors signifying different types of housing (Single family detached housing, accessory dwelling units/in-law apartments, tiny homes, clusters of single family homes, housing for adults 55+, rental housing) for map placement.

Questions that should be discussed during exercise – why certain housing types are preferable over others, why those housing types are preferable in certain areas over others? How does density factor in? A note-taker should record discussion points related to these items.

Part 2: Considering the type of housing we need or don't need, what goals align with that? Use post it notes for people to write two or three goals each and stick up on a larger post it/easel. Then have the facilitator sort them with the group.

Questions that should be discussed during exercise -What consensus can we build around Strafford's housing goals? Is character most important or housing types? Sum this up into one statement What kind of people should Strafford seek to attract?. A note-taker should record discussion points related to these items.

Part 3: Break before next session

THEME 2 – Natural Resources

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| WHAT WE HEARD | <p>People in Strafford treasure Bow Lake. It was mentioned 60 times when people were asked why they chose Strafford, and 79 times when answering what they loved most about Strafford. The scenic and natural setting in town was also very important to survey respondents. One respondent noted shared that they loved, “All the undeveloped land with so many natural treasures: Blue Job, little Niagara, and all our forests, ponds, lake and rivers, and active people willing to protect large swaths of it.”</p> <p>When addressing biggest challenges the town would face in the next 10-15 years, many were concerned about Bow Lake in terms of water quality and congestion. One related response noted the challenge of, “protecting landmark natural areas and landscapes, reducing impact to natural resources, shrinking development footprint, and yet accommodating growth and protecting Bow Lake water quality.”</p> <p>Survey respondents also favored farms, farm stands/markets and agriculture in terms of supporting these types of businesses in town and protecting other related natural resources.</p> <p>Many residents and visitors utilized the natural resources available in town. There were over 115 mentions of the lake and the beach at the dam when respondents were asked where they go to socialize in Strafford. 97% of respondents think that natural resources are very important (74%) and important (23%) to achieving their visions for the future of Strafford.</p> <p>When asked about areas the town should focus on, 80% were in strong support of improving and maintaining water quality in lakes and ponds, followed by 66% for conserving land in its natural state and 65% promoting local farms and farm-based businesses.</p> <p>On average, about half of respondents have used the many outdoor sites in town, and 38% have at least heard of the sites.</p> |
| PROCESS | <p>Part 1: Bow Lake SWOT (25 min) Facilitated flipchart exercise for SWOT on Bow Lake, and pull out two or three goals.</p> <p>Part 2: Bullseye prioritization for ideals that came out of survey + additional goals (20 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserving additional land in town • Marketing/outreach on current sites natural resource sites in town • Support existing farms and encourage new ones • Maintaining water quality in lakes and ponds • + outcome of Bow Lake SWOT • + outcome of Bow Lake SWOT • + outcome of Bow Lake SWOT <p><u>Questions that should be discussed during exercise</u> – Any natural resource goals missing?</p> <p>Part 3 (5 min): Break before next session</p> |
| <p>THEME 3 – Community Services and Infrastructure</p> | |

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| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">WHAT WE HEARD</p> | <p>When asked “What do you love most about Strafford?”, there were 110 mentions of community. 94% of respondents consider community as very important (58%) or important (31%) when asked what topics are important to achieving individual visions for the town.</p> <p>93% of individuals think that “Quality of Town Services” is very important (48%) or important (45%) when asked what topics are important to achieving individual visions for the town. When reflecting on broadband, 88% saw quality of broadband/cell service as very important or important (32%).</p> <p>When asked to express support for the town taking actions on certain items respondents supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting safe places to walk or bike – 51% strongly support, 34% support • Maintaining the quality of existing town services – 58% strongly support, 35% support • Expand or add town facilities or services- – 20% strongly support, 32% support • Maintain roads, highways, and bridges in their current state – 42% strongly support, 47% support • Improve the quality of roads and bridges or building new ones – 23% strongly support, 33% support • Support options for senior and special needs transportation – 28% strongly support, 47% support <p>When asked about the greatest challenges facing the town in the next 10-15 years infrastructure concerns over the school building were noted, and there were also several comments about the need for increased/updated infrastructure and services. There was also mention of gaps in town services like recreation programming for children/seniors and internet/cell service.</p> <p>Recreation programming and community events and activities were often mentioned as an area people saw an opportunity for growth in. Respondents saw concern for children growing up in the area with not enough to do, and would like to see more community programming. This was a concern for those aging as well. Respondents noted that there aren’t enough activities for seniors or specific ways for them to stay engaged in the community.</p> <p>Recreation was the second most popular response to the question, “What additional services would you like to see more of in Strafford?”</p> <p>When respondents were asked about concerns with growing older in their community, access to medical services was a significant concern, along with lack of transportation, and access to services in general.</p> |
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">PROCESS</p> | <p>Part 1: Assessment – Situation Today & Opportunities for the Future (35 min) To start, think about one thing that Strafford does well, and one thing it could improve upon. We will be talking about the latter four themes (these will be explained to participants. Facilitated flipchart exercise for “Where could they use improvements, in terms of town services, civic involvement community culture, infrastructure?”</p> |

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| | <p><u>Questions that should be discussed during exercise</u> – Do you understand what is going on in town processes, like planning board?</p> <p>Part 2: Commonalities and Prioritization (10 min) Find commonalities and goals will begin to emerge. As a group prioritize the top five for the town.</p> <p>Part 3 (5 min): Break before next session</p> |
| <p>THEME 4 – Community Character and Land Use</p> | |

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| <p>WHAT WE HEARD</p> | <p>Community Character -</p> <p>When asked “What do you love most about Strafford?”, there were 110 mentions of community. 94% of respondents consider community as very important (58%) or important (31%) when asked what topics are important to achieving individual visions for the town.</p> <p>In most cases about half of respondents moved to Strafford or love Strafford for its small town, rural atmosphere and for its conserved land, scenic views, and abundant natural resources. People love these aspects of town so much that when addressing concerns about growth, they note that any growth should happen in a way that preserves these unique aspects of the town.</p> <p>Most people socialize in town at their home or with neighbors, and also at the Beach at the Dam and on the lake. Other gathering spaces include the Grange Hall, Library, and School. There were many mentions that Strafford could benefit from a central community gathering space, like a community or recreation center.</p> <p>There is significant community support for this additional programming, in addition to more recreation sites. There were mentions that town fields would be beneficial, and that people would like to see better lake access, and improvements to the town beach area.</p> <p>Land Use -</p> <p>When asked “Why do you choose Strafford?” there were 44 mentions of proximity to services, work, and the rest of Seacoast, NH.</p> <p>Respondents placed the following importance on the noted themes as it related to their ideal vision of Strafford:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unique Village Centers – 26% very important, 42% important• Strafford looks and feels rural - 69% very important, 25% important• Agriculture - 45% very important, 47% important• Commercial/light industrial development - 7% very important, 26% important, 30% not important at all• Access to music/arts/theater - 15% very important, 31% important, 40% not very important <p>Respondents think that one of the biggest concerns facing Strafford over the next 10-15 year is overdevelopment, Respondents do see need for growth but want to ensure it is done in a reasonable, smart, and sustainable way, such as no big developments and with respect for nature and open space. There were mentions of people being afraid of becoming like neighboring communities of Rochester or Barrington.</p> <p>As far as access to services, the most accessed in-town services were farms, farm stands, and related agriculture businesses (42%), quality schools (40%), and recreational facilities (31%). Services like medical offices and healthcare facilities, grocery stores, restaurants, small businesses and retail stores, job opportunities and arts and entertainment were more often accessed outside of town.</p> |
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| | <p>When asked, “What additional services, would you like to see more of in Strafford?” the most popular responses were restaurants, recreation opportunities, farmers markets/stands, none, and small business.</p> <p>The emphasis on small businesses was also highlighted when respondents were asked how they’d like to see Strafford approach future non-residential development. People noted that they were concerned with protecting rural character and maintaining open space in addition to any small business. They would prefer small businesses/cottage industries to “big industry.” This aligns with respondents who prefer that the town maintain or enhance policies that encourage farm and forestry uses (62%) and maintain or enhance policies that protect farm and forestry uses from the impacts of development (70%). As a note, there were respondents who preferred that Strafford maintain or enhance policies that allow home businesses (51%). 45% prefer that there be no additional commercial/industrial development in town.</p> <p>Tying in the idea of aging in town, the lack of services (especially medical/doctors/hospitals) was a significant concern,</p> | | |
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">PROCESS</p> | <p>Part 1: Visual Preference with Yes/Maybe/No (10 min) Each person has a set of all the pictures and a few blanks to write in other types of small business that aren’t covered. Then each person will sort into yes, no, maybe on a collective poster.</p> <p>Visual Preference.docx</p> <p>Part 2: Where? (25 min) Take the common yes and maybes, and as a group use a map and corresponding theme stickers to note where these places could exist in town.</p> <p>Part 3: Related prioritization (15 min) Based on the map exercise, have the group prioritize the items they placed.</p> <p>Part 4 (5 min): Break before next session</p> | | |
| <p>Agenda Item 4 – Large Group Wrap Up</p> | | <p>30 min</p> | <p>11:30-Noon</p> |
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">PROCESS</p> | <p>Participants will reconvene in the large group space. The facilitators/notetakers from each breakout will give a brief description of their activity and describe high-level things that they heard over their three sessions. A volunteer or SRPC staff member will thank participants for coming, give a brief overview of next steps in the planning process (compile forum feedback, begin to draft chapters, the PB will still have periodic work sessions, etc.).</p> | | |
| <p>Agenda Item 5– Exit Activity</p> | | <p>As participants leave</p> | |

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| PROCESS | <p>Optional: After the wrap-up SRPC staff/volunteers distribute comment cards to residents as they leave. Ideally something that can be completed in 5 minutes or less such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Please describe your experience at todays forum (pick from 1-5)<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. The input sessions addressed the issues I was hoping to discussb. The sessions I attended encouraged constructive dialogue about issues facing our town2. Did you learn anything that surprised you, either from a facilitator or fellow participant?3. Do you have any other feedback you wish to share? |
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