

NEMSN Profile: Portsmouth, NH

Community Profile¹

<i>Area (sq. Miles):</i>	15.6
<i>Population:</i>	21,426
<i>Population Density:</i>	1,370.40
<i>Households:</i>	10,262
<i>Median Age:</i>	41.2
<i>Median Household Income:</i>	\$71,392
<i>Poverty Rate:</i>	6.60%

City Department:

Title: Planning Department

Staff: Peter Britz: Environmental Planner/Sustainability Coordinator

Responsibilities: Oversee the implementation of programs and policies set fourth by the City's Master Plan.

Programs/Policies:

Interview:

What have been your biggest successes in the past 2-3 years?

- Have done a lot of work to assess coastal resilience.
<http://www.planportsmouth.com/cri/index.html>
- New Project starting looking at Historic District Coastal Vulnerability.
- Solar Panels on Drinking Water Plant and High School.
- Bike Share program. <http://www.cityofportsmouth.com/sustainability/index.html>

Given the range of your priorities, which do you consider to be your top priorities?

- Develop guidance and regulations to enhance protection in areas vulnerable to climate change.
- Identify vulnerable properties in the Historic district. Then come up with resilience strategies.
- City council is interested in reducing the use of man-made chemicals in the City. DPW has started tackling this with pesticides/fertilizer pilot programs.
- Developing a more formal open space stewardship program.
- Continue to replace streetlights with LEDs (currently have replace 1/2 of them so far.)
- Develop policy requiring/incentivizing for green buildings for new buildings.

Please explain why you have chosen these priorities?

- Main focus is coastal resilience because the city wants to be prepared for future impacts.
- Many of the projects are geared toward what funding is available.

How important are the metrics to identifying progress in the programs and policies?

- The city uses ICLEI software to report GHG emissions software.
- Completed GHG inventory 2006, 2012 and will continue on a 6 year interval.

What resources are needed to complete your strategies and priorities? Are they currently available to you? If not, do you know where/how to obtain them?

- Funding is the most important.
- Along with man power (total office capacity to get a project up and running).
- Political will. the community is interested in more sustainable initiatives.

How has the local community promoted its sustainability efforts to members in the community?

- The city has project-based outreach that notifies the community of progress.
- There is a sustainability committee that goes before the city council and suggests sustainable actions.
- There is a web page that is usually up to date on initiatives and project progress.

What are your top 3 barriers that you consider to be beyond the control of the municipality, which have limited your ability to implement sustainability initiatives?

- The town has done a lot of analysis around Sea-Level Rise, in the process have identified the need to also focus on ground water impacts.
- Attempted a plastic bag ban. Huge groundswell of public support. City attorney says there is no enabling leg at the state to allow that to happen.
- Biggest challenge we're facing is that everyone wants curbside composting but there is not an approved place to take compost and we cannot mix it with yard debris.
- It is easy to get the municipality to be sustainable but that only accounts for 2% of the city energy use and GHG emissions. The biggest challenge is getting the residential side to follow along and commit to being sustainable.

Sustainable Profile

Overview

- Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling
- Food & Agriculture
- Transportation
- Storm Water
- Energy
- Development
- Greenhouse Gas Reduction
- Climate Preparedness



- Equity & Economics
- Community Engagement

Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling

Top Priorities

- Promote efficient use and management of resources.

Strategies

- Develop an expanded recycling center to improve operational efficiencies and reduce the cost of municipal solid waste management.
- Increase landfill diversion rates for government commercial and residential users.

Food & Agriculture

Top Priorities

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Strategies

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Transportation

Top Priorities

- Ensure that transportation improvements are designed to create convenient, safe and accessible streets for all users.
- Manage public and private supply to serve development needs without compromising community character.
- Support a strong local and regional transit system.

Strategies

- Update the City's street standards to reflect current design best practices, including full accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Maximize the utilization of and existing parking infrastructure.

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Storm Water

Top Priorities

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Strategies

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Energy

Top Priorities

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Strategies

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Development

Top Priorities

- Support the continued vitality of the urban core through public investment and land use regulations.
- Encourage walk able mixed-use development along existing commercial corridors.
- Ensure that new development complements and enhances its surroundings.
- Implement best management practices and site design standards to ensure sustainability and resilience of public and private infrastructure.

Strategies

- Support reinvestment in underutilized buildings and land.
- Enhance the quality and connectivity of pedestrian facilities.
- Encourage mixed-use development in existing commercial areas by adopting new and enhancing existing flexible zoning techniques such as the Gateway Planned Development option.
- Encourage sustainable low impact buildings and site development through strengthened land use regulations, incentives and education.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction

Top Priorities

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Strategies

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Preparedness

Top Priorities

- Incorporate climate change impacts and adaptation into all development review and planning efforts.

Strategies

- Incorporate sea level rise projections based the on up-to-date state of the art dynamic models into adaptation planning and land use regulations.
- Plan for resiliency of critical services and municipal infrastructure.
- Ensure that Hazard Mitigation Plan updates reflect current projections of climate change impacts.
- Conduct regular vulnerability assessments at five-year intervals.

Equity & Economics

Top Priorities

- Adapt housing stock to accommodate changing demographics.

- Accommodate the housing needs of low and moderate-income residents.
- Ensure that the supply and character of commercial space can adapt to a changing economy.

Strategies

- Develop regulation for accessory dwelling units that promote affordable housing for all income levels and protect neighborhood characters.
- Implement housing rehabilitation programs using CDBG and other funds to improve housing stock.
- Streamline the approval process for affordable housing in order to reduce development costs.

Community Engagement

Top Priorities

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Strategies

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Sources:

"Census Profile: Portsmouth, NH." *Census Reporter*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 June 2017.