
CONCORD PUBLIC WORKS
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
133 Keyes Road
Concord, MA 01742

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DATE: September 27, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: Comprehensive Long Range Planning Committee (CLRPC)

FROM: Public Works Commission

CC: Nick Pappas, CLRPC PWC Liaison
Christopher Whelan, Town Manager
Richard Reine, Director, Concord Public Works
Marcia Rasmussen, Director, Department of Planning and Land Management
Elizabeth Hughes, Town Planner
CPW – Division and Program Managers

SUBJECT: 2017 Long Range Plan – PWC Comments

This letter has been prepared at the request of the CLRPC following receipt of their August 7, 2017 letter which included a SWOT analysis. As you know the Commission's CLRPC liaison, Nick Pappas previously provided you with a document titled "Public Works Constraints". The purpose of the "Constraints" document was to summarize the areas which the Commission believes pose the greatest challenges and risk to achieve the Commission's and the Department's mission. These risks are economic, regulatory, cultural, operational and political in nature.

The Commission met at its regularly scheduled August 29, 2017 meeting to discuss in detail the CLRPC's request for comments. In advance of this meeting the Commission was provided with a copy of the CLRPC's SWOT analysis, along with a review outline to guide our conversation. PWC liaison, Nick Pappas attended the meeting and provided an overview of the process to date and input based on his participation on the CLRPC. Below in no particular order or priority are comments from the Commission. The Commission requests you consider them as you advance the plan and include these items in the finalized Long Range Plan as goals and objectives.

- 1. Roads, Sidewalks and Multi-Modal Accommodations** - The Commission notes an interest by some individuals through comments received in adopting a "Complete Streets" program. Many Concord Public Works staff have attended the "Complete Streets" training and are aware of the Town interests in providing multi-modal transportation when feasible and as conditions allow. The Public Works Commission adopted a "Public Works Commission Road Policy" in December 1999 focusing on context sensitive design which



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states “In the reconstruction and construction of roads, the Town of Concord seeks to maintain those aspects of the existing environment which enhance the historic, scenic, and agricultural properties of the roadway consistent with public safety and in addition to consider alternative transportation accommodations on the Town’s roads consistent with this policy and public safety”. This policy includes a focus on pedestrians and cyclists, meeting and maintaining compliance with ADA, ensuring design consistency with engineering design best practices such as American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG), implementing traffic calming strategies where appropriate and maintaining a minimalist approach to design. The Commission and staff will continue to evaluate the “complete streets” program and leverage program funding and participation when benefits are clearly identified. It must however be recognized that at times, infrastructure improvements may not be compatible with community desires and historic layout.

- 2. Walden Street Landfill – A Public Works and Town Priority** – The Commission voted “No Action” be taken on Article 12 - Landfill Conservation Restriction at the 2013 Annual Town Meeting. The Town’s landfill on Walden Street is an invaluable asset to the Community providing a location for many activities. Among them are winter snow storage, management of bulky materials and storm debris, recycling of various materials, composting and brush management, storage of equipment and a fire training site. It is used by many stakeholders including Concord Citizens, Public Works, CMLP, Natural Resources, the School Department and Fire Department. Due to its location, topography and configuration it can serve as a 24/7 operational site while having minimal impact to abutters. It’s critical that the landfill site must always remain unencumbered by any restrictions which would impede Concord Public Works or other entities from carrying out their responsibilities. The Commission requests that this statement, as supported by Town Meeting, be codified in the Comprehensive Long Range Plan
- 3. Infrastructure** - Provide and Maintain infrastructure capacity in line with growth or decline in system demands. Ensure cost of expanded infrastructure is recognized and captured through rates or fees e.g. Sewer Improvement Fee for additional sewer capacity infrastructure or connection fees for expanded water demand. Explore and leverage other funding sources for infrastructure maintenance and expansion including grants, private contributions, and developer fair share contributions for facility expansion and



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impacts. Continue with a proactive approach with replacement/upgrades. Ensure adequate water supply, wastewater treatment, stormwater management, transportation infrastructure (multi-modal) emergency preparedness (winter maintenance), integrated solid waste management and recreational facilities, etc. are properly planned, maintained and rehabilitated.

- 4. Water Supply and Wastewater permit capacity** – As regulations become more rigid and supply becomes more limited it will be vital for the Town’s future that Concord officials and stakeholders aggressively defend any challenges to its water supply rights and permitted/registered water capacity. This includes NPDES Wastewater permitting and Nagog Pond Water rights established in 1884.

In line with this is the inclusion of appropriate language (easements) in future property acquisitions and conservation restrictions to ensure flexibility for crossing and use of these protected properties for water, wastewater, drainage and other utility infrastructure in the best interest of the Town to maintain local control.

- 5. Water and Wastewater Facility Security** – Increased Investments in robust security measures both physical barriers and electronic surveillance around drinking water and wastewater facilities are a priority for the Commission. In addition the growing threat of cyber-attacks to critical water and wastewater infrastructure must be addressed with the continued investment in system vulnerability assessments and implementation of best practices and recommendations.
- 6. Water and Wastewater Conservation** – To manage a finite supply from both a permitting and operational sense, the Commission recommends inclusion of conservation efforts specifically addressing outdoor irrigation, smart metering and steps individuals, businesses and institutions can take to minimize wastewater demands.
- 7. Public Works Facility Space Constraints** – CPW continues to be challenged with making use of the limited existing space at 133 Keyes Road while the CPW program and responsibilities grow. Under cover storage for equipment and materials (salt, mix) is critical when evaluating response times and equipment longevity. Although the 133 Keyes Road campus site footprint is sufficient for operations and the location provides for an optimal response to all areas of Concord, the existing layout is not optimized resulting in inadequate administrative, fleet and operations space, outdoor storage of



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equipment resulting in premature degradation and insufficient supply of deicing materials.

- 8. Public Right of Way** - The Public Right of Way (ROW) is an important aspect in delivering utility services to residents, businesses and institutions in Concord. It's critical to recognize that inefficient use or insufficient planning of this ROW will result in costs being transferred from investor owned utilities (i.e National Grid, Comcast, Verizon) to Concord taxpayers and ratepayers. The PWC supports a consistent application of ROW use to ensure delivery of uniform and efficient utilities services to the public in accordance with the MGL Chapter 164.
- 9. Integrated Solid Waste Management** – The Commission notes a suggestion in the SWOT under “Harmony with Nature Best, Practice 2.8” which indicates “We need to research opportunity for single stream recycling”. The Commission would like to bring to the CLRPC’s attention that it is continually evaluating our solid waste program. On an annual basis a discussion of findings, changes and recommendations are provided at both the Solid Waste Rate Hearing and Finance Committee Public Hearing. Substantial analysis has taken place around the benefits and detriments of single stream recycling in comparison to CPW’s existing dual stream program. After systematically reviewing this option the conclusion which has been consistently reached is that dual stream recycling is the most cost effective collection solution and provides the largest diversion benefit providing clean, high quality paper in high demand from paper mills and recycled material processors. Concord consistently leads the Commonwealth in its curbside recycling program with a rate exceeding 40% of waste diversion.
- 10. Regulatory Permitting** – The Commission’s discussion included an evaluation around the impact of the overabundance of regulations placed upon the Town, regardless of local or regional interests. Frequently these regulations are single interest advocacy issues resulting in little, if any true measurable environmental benefit. It’s imperative that for each regulation proposed, the true “environmental yield” or net benefit resulting from the regulation is identified to ensure it is in alignment with Town goals and objectives. Regulations or permit conditions which do not meet this “environmental yield” test should be challenged to avoid the Town from being burdened with unnecessary and costly regulations making the project or program cost prohibitive. The time, money and bureaucracy of unnecessary regulations can distract

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and drain resources from efforts required to comply with other very legitimate, sound and beneficial regulations.

11. Leadership and Professional Staffing – Continue to strengthen Concord’s town government by attracting and retaining the highest quality professional and volunteer staff for all Departments, Commissions and Boards.