



News from the County of Cumberland

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CUMBERLAND COUNTY ON THE VANGUARD OF CHANGE

Private sector leaders respond to the invitation to help improve government services.

Portland, Maine – March 12, 2008 – On February 26, more than a dozen public and private sector leaders met at the Cumberland County Courthouse to provide input to Cumberland County. Called the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee, this group will meet regularly to explore ways to increase effectiveness and efficiency of government services, and to implement the County's long range plan.

Chair Dana Connors opened the session by saying that "Cumberland County is on the vanguard of change. By actively seeking input from members of the public, business leaders and others, the County is redesigning the way it organizes and delivers services." Dana Connors is Executive Director of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce.

Vice Chair, Pam Plumb thanked the group for their willingness to "roll up their sleeves" and help to implement the plan. County Commissioners Esther, Clenott, Richard Feeney and Malory Shaughnessy emphasized the need for the County to take the initiative to redesign how services are organized and delivered.

County Administrator Peter Crichton described a number of initiatives resulting from the strategic plan, which was implemented early in 2007. These include:

- a partnership with the City of Portland to strengthen public health services county-wide
- the establishment of an emergency communications center that provides service to County as well as several municipalities.
- a work group of County and municipal officials that is considering the feasibility of offering centralized property assessing services

Crichton praised the work of municipal leaders for their willingness to work with the County in finding new ways to both improve service and conserve resources. Crichton stated, "We cannot rely on the old ways of doing business. In particular, technology now enables us to collaborate with other levels of government and the private sector in ways not possible even a decade ago."

The county's strategic plan spans the time frame of 2006-2010. It is available for review on the County's website (Cumberlandcounty.org) Other Advisory Committee members present at the meeting included Robert Goettal, Wes Bonney, Julianne Sullivan and Richard Brzozowski along with a number of county officials and staff.

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