Economic development remains a hot topic in Maine, and it’s an especially high priority in Central York County. Because of this, the area’s first region-wide transportation study will include a focus on assessing how changes in transportation could support regional economic growth.

A public workshop scheduled on Thursday, January 20 from 6-8 pm at the Sanford town office Council Chambers will describe the study process and solicit the public’s thoughts on transportation, land use and economic development issues and opportunities.

Communities participating in the study are Alfred, Arundel, Biddeford, Kennebunk, Ogunquit, Lyman, North Berwick, Sanford, Waterboro, and Wells. (include study area map) Residents of any of these communities should consider attending this important meeting.

Those who are unable to attend can view meeting materials and answer a survey, available the day of the meeting, at www.ConnectingYorkCounty.org. The survey aims to gather feedback on regional travel habits and why people choose to live and work where they do.

The website includes an innovative outreach tool never used before in Maine. Later in the study, the tool will allow citizens to view proposed solutions and see how each might affect the region in terms of jobs, traffic improvement and potential cost. The survey is the first of several interactive steps designed to bring the study materials out to as broad an audience as possible.

The study is funded by the Maine Department of Transportation and the Maine Turnpike Authority, and will be completed early in 2012. For more information about the study and the meeting, please contact Carol Morris at cmorris@morriscomm.net or go to www.ConnectingYorkCounty.org.