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Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Receives National Association of Development Organizations 2011 Innovation Award

WASHINGTON, DC – The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, based in Haverhill, Massachusetts received a 2011 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Research Foundation for *Merrimack Valley Priority Growth Strategy - The Regional Land Use Plan for the Merrimack Valley.*

The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC) is the regional planning agency serving 15 cities and towns along the lower Merrimack River starting in Lawrence and Andover and running to Newburyport at the coast. The Merrimack Valley Priority Growth Strategy is the first regional land use plan developed for the area in over 30 years.

The Priority Growth Strategy, developed with active local involvement, is unique in that it is a “hands on” tool which articulates the vision shared by all communities in the region. The vision they share is a region that promotes development in the right place, generates jobs and new tax revenue, stimulates the economy, and provides for a wide range of housing. It is also a region that balances growth with preservation, maintains open space, protects our most sensitive resources, and is served by an effective transportation system. The Priority Growth Strategy is the tool for achieving that vision.

NADO is a Washington, DC-based association that promotes programs and policies that strengthen local governments, communities and economies through regional cooperation, program delivery and comprehensive strategies. The association’s Innovation Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and partnering organizations for improving the economic and community competitiveness of our nation’s regions and local communities. Award winners will be showcased during NADO’s 2011 Annual Training Conference, to be held October 8–11 in Miami, Florida.

“Creative projects like the Merrimack Valley Priority Growth Strategy - The Regional Land Use Plan for the Merrimack Valley, advance the economic growth and sustainability of our nation’s regions and communities. For more than 20 years, NADO’s Innovation Award has provided regional development organizations throughout the nation a unique opportunity to showcase their important work and their critical role in promoting economic development for rural and small metropolitan communities,” said

NADO President Tim Ware, executive director of the Mid-East Commission in Washington, North Carolina.

For more information about the award-winning project, contact the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission at 978-374-0519.

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Founded in 1967, the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) provides advocacy, education, networking and research for the national network of 540 regional development organizations. NADO members provide professional, programmatic and technical assistance to over 2,300 counties and 15,000 municipalities.