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## **A strong infrastructure will continue to bolster our market - by Joe Friedman**

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Now we are in 2021. With the distribution of the vaccines, we are starting to see what life might be like post COVID. For instance, the National Association of Realtors just announced that they will have their spring meetings virtual and their fall meetings in November in person. Many expect that, by the fall, the vaccines will have been widely distributed enough that we can start to get together again. NH CIBOR will follow the guidelines of the CDC and the State of New Hampshire to determine when we can resume our in-person meetings.

In Washington and in Concord, there is a lot of talk about infrastructure. Infrastructure is critically important for commercial real estate. Town water and sewer, good roadways and access, reliable sources of power and broadband internet availability all add significant value to commercial properties.

New Hampshire has built some great highways including the completion of the long-term I-93 four lane widening from the Massachusetts border to Manchester and the completion of the new General Sullivan Bridge and associated widening of the Spaulding Turnpike between Portsmouth and Dover. New Hampshire is looking into expanding mass transit from Massachusetts up through Nashua and on to Manchester. With money from the MBTE settlement, New Hampshire is finishing a major water line extension that will deliver public water to many southern New Hampshire communities including Windham & Plaistow. Last year Broadband Internet was extended further north in New Hampshire and with a new \$25m Federal grant last month, Broadband will continue to expand in our more rural areas for the next 10 years. There are proposals and considerations of major wind power systems off the New Hampshire coast and clean energy may provide many new jobs.

Some are considering workforce/affordable housing as part of infrastructure. As the overall infrastructure improves, we will likely see more favorable conditions for New Hampshire towns to

permit and allow affordable housing projects.

Recently New Hampshire has seen another wave of people moving here that appreciate the lifestyle, beauty and economics of our state. A strong infrastructure will allow that trend to continue and bolster the commercial real estate market throughout the state.

Joe Friedman is the 2021 president of the NH CIBOR, Bedford, NH.

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