

## FUTURE LAND USE

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The intent of the Future Land Use chapter is to describe and establish a broad vision for the town's future land development. Its preparation requires a careful evaluation and synthesis of all other parts of the Master Plan. This evaluation must take into account many factors, including community goals, the ability of the land to support development, existing land use patterns and zoning, expectations of property owners and local land use laws and regulations.

This chapter is both general and specific. As a policy document, the Master Plan establishes general policies and goals with which to guide development of the built and natural environs of the town. As a Plan it goes further to specify the types of uses appropriate for various areas of town, as well as the specific measures that will help bring about desired future development. These measures may include changes in zoning and site development regulations, new initiatives in land protection or changes in town policy.

The future land use map found in this chapter is a representation of the desired direction of future development in town. While it is a useful tool for visualizing the recommended development pattern, the map is not intended to be a formal zoning map. The boundaries are general guidelines that will be revised as zoning amendments are refined by the Planning Board and adopted by the townspeople.

The Future Land Use chapter provides guidance to private and public entities in their land use decisions. Both town government and private developers should reflect upon the needs, values and goals outlined in this chapter in making their land use decisions.

### 2.0 EXISTING NATURAL CONDITIONS

#### Development Constraints

Land not suited for development includes wetlands, buffer areas around wetlands and shoreland buffer areas. The significance of these areas and the town's zoning requirements are described below:

- Wetlands. The importance of preserving and protecting wetlands is well established in other sections of this plan. They perform vital ecological functions, as well as their value for open space, wildlife and passive recreation all of which contribute to the town's rural character. Future development should be directed away from wetland areas to the greatest extent possible. It is equally important to prevent building in such areas because of the potential negative impact on water quality and public health. In addition, building too closely to wetlands can detract from their natural ability to assist in handling excess water during flood events. The town's existing Wetlands Ordinance will continue to regulate future development with regard to wetlands.

- Buffer areas around wetlands. A wetlands ordinance that prohibits development in wetlands does not necessarily protect wetlands from harmful uses occurring immediately adjacent to them. For those uses permitted within close proximity to wetlands, adequate buffers are necessary in order to insure the protection of the wetland. The town's Zoning Ordinance establishes a 100' or 50' buffer around wetlands (dependent upon the classification of wetland); prohibited uses include structures and associated construction activity. A Conditional Use Permit process exists to allow, in appropriate circumstances, the construction of access ways through wetlands in order to allow upland development. Natural vegetation should be protected or restored in this area as much as possible to control erosion and sediment from contaminating wetlands, and to provide cover for wildlife.
- Buffers along river corridors and Great Ponds. Protecting river shorelines helps preserve wetlands, reduces flooding damage, serves to maintain important wildlife travel corridors and preserves the scenic beauty and recreation value of the river. The town does not have a shoreland protection ordinance that would regulate development activities in proximity to shoreland but there are wetlands restrictions discussed above that limit development activity. In addition, several of the water bodies in town are great ponds and as such the State of New Hampshire's Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act regulates development in close proximity to these waters.

Land with limited suitability for development includes 100-year flood hazard zones and aquifer recharge zones. The town currently regulates development within the flood plain but does not have an aquifer protection ordinance that would regulate land uses above known groundwater resources.

- 100-Year Flood Hazard Zones. Floodplains are undesirable locations for development because of the associated risks to life and property. In addition, construction in the floodplains worsens flood hazards downstream and the inundation of subsurface sewage disposal systems can cause water pollution and a public health hazard. As part of its Zoning Ordinance, the town of Hampstead has adopted specific regulations for development in special flood hazard areas as prescribed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These were adopted in 2005. Development within these flood hazard areas should continue to be limited to those land uses compatible with areas prone to flooding and should be in conformity to FEMA regulations.
- Aquifer recharge zones. Maps prepared by the US Geological Survey (1991) identify the stratified drift aquifers in Hampstead. These aquifers are recharged from precipitation and run-off that infiltrates from land directly above the aquifer. As such, aquifer recharge zones are not suited for any type of development that carries a high risk of contamination. Once contaminants leak into the ground, they can spread rapidly through an aquifer and destroy it as a water supply. While there are currently no municipal water supplies within Hampstead' aquifer recharge zones, thousands of private wells in town depend on these aquifers. The land over Hampstead's aquifer recharge zones is currently zoned variously for commercial/industrial and residential development; the Zoning Ordinance includes a chapter with specific guidelines for developing above these delineated areas.

### 3.0 EXISTING LAND USE

In this section, existing conditions and findings are presented for major categories of land uses found in Hampstead. These include: Residential Zone A; Recreational Zone B; Commercial Zone C-1; Commercial Zone C-2; Commercial Zone C-3; Commercial Zone C-4; Mobile Home Zone D and Historical Zone E. There is also a description of efforts to retain open space town-wide.

#### 3.1 Residential Zones

##### 3.1.1 Findings

The overwhelming majority of land area in Hampstead is zoned for residential use. Of the town's approximately 9000 acres of land 7700 are zoned for residential use. The development parameters for Residential Zone A are described below:

##### Residential Zone A

- Farms and single family dwellings with accessory buildings
- Schools, Churches and Sanatoria and libraries
- Mobile home subdivisions
- Multiple unit Dwellings
- Adult Care, day care and nursery centers as home occupations granted by special exception
- Two accessory single story buildings are allowed. (This limitation does not apply to agricultural uses.)
- One duplex building is allowed contingent upon required lot size.

Home occupations are allowed in Residential Zone - A, provided they meet the standards outlined in the Zoning Ordinance for a special exception granted by the ZBA. While the Planning Board does not currently regulate the approval/permitting of this activity, it is likely that the number of home occupations in Town is increasing, due in part to technological advances in computers, the internet and telecommunications that make working at home more and more feasible and commonplace.

As indicated above, Residential Zone A constitutes roughly 86% of the land area in town. Hampstead has experienced significant residential growth in the last ten years making it one of the fastest growing communities on the seacoast. Although the overwhelming majority of this growth has been in the form of single family detached structures on two acre lots, the town has a history of trying innovative measures for the provision of housing. The town zoning ordinance allows multi family residential housing, cluster residential development of both single family and multi family units. In 2003 the town passed an elderly housing ordinance aimed at giving senior citizens expanded opportunity to remain within the community when their lifestyle no longer requires a large single-family detached unit. One of the town's responses to the high level of residential growth

experienced in the last half decade was to return to a two acre minimum lot size requirement in order to retain open space, especially in conjunction with cluster housing.

The boundaries of the residential zone are expected to remain fairly unchanged. Low density single-family development is expected to continue to develop throughout the residential district. Home occupations are expected to continue to exist. The Planning Board has had requests to review the elderly housing ordinance because attempts to utilize the present ordinance have failed to result in successful projects. If no density bonus is offered within the context of the elderly housing framework the private sector seems most satisfied with focusing upon construction of single family residences. The Planning Board has been very enthusiastic about the senior housing concept and should evaluate the different avenues that could make the concept more acceptable to the private development sector. These options include increasing the density allowed by either reintroducing soil type lot sizing or establishing a fixed unit density allowed only in senior housing developments.

Historically the residential district has been a mix of two uses. Agricultural endeavors such as farming and the raising of horses and other livestock have occurred throughout the town. In a study prepared by Complex Systems at the University of New Hampshire, review of aerial photographs of the town in the years 1962, 1974 and 1998 reveals a continuous decline in agricultural enterprises over the last forty three years. As one might expect, this decline in agricultural activity has been accompanied by a significant increase in both the residential category and the industrial/commercial category over the same time frame.

Land Use/ Land Cover Description	1962		1974		1998		2005	
	Acres	% of Town	Acres	% of Town	Acres	% of Town	Acres	% of Town
Residential	636.0	7.1	1,006.7	11.2	2,480.2	27.5	2,820.8	31.3%
Industrial/Commercial	11.2	0.1	54.4	0.6	218.7	2.4	279.9	3.1%
Mixed Urban	7.7	0.1	18.7	0.2	25.5	0.3	0.0	0.0%
Transportation/Roads	102.7	1.1	122.9	1.4	204.7	2.3	237.8	2.6%
Rail Transportation	3.7	0.0	3.7	0.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0%
Auxiliary Transportation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.7	0.1%
Playing Fields	5.6	0.1	2.9	0.0	7.8	0.1	98.0	1.1%
Active Agricultural	583.4	6.4	364.4	4.0	75.0	0.8	46.7	0.5%
Farmsteads	23.2	0.3	10.3	0.1	1.8	0.0	9.0	0.1%
Forested	6,791.0	75.3	6,520.4	72.4	5,186.8	57.5	3,671.1	40.7%
Water	464.6	5.2	467.1	5.2	484.6	5.4	515.0	5.7%
Wetlands	212.8	2.4	213.3	2.4	177.6	2.0	948.5	10.5%
Idle/Other Open	172.2	1.9	229.3	2.5	147.7	1.6	382.5	4.2%
	9,014.1	100%	9,014.1	100%	9,014.1	100%	9,014.1	100%

Source: UNH Complex Systems, 2004; Rockingham Planning Commission, 2008

It seems clear that as a district the residential land use is far outpacing agricultural activities in Town. The Town should consider taking steps to encourage agricultural uses as an important way to preserve Hampstead's rural character.

### **3.2 Business**

The town has four business districts. These are identified in the zoning ordinance as Commercial Zones C-1 – C-4. The boundaries of the zones are displayed on the zoning map and brief descriptions of permitted and restricted uses and design standards of each of these zones are provided below.

#### **3.2.A – Commercial Zone C-1**

As detailed in the zoning ordinance the following uses are permitted in Commercial Zone C-1:

- Any retail businesses (limited to indoor sales)
- Any service establishments (limited to indoor sales and service)
- Schools and day care and nursery centers and adult care facilities
- Medical and other professional offices
- Automotive filling and service stations.

Restricted uses in the Commercial Zone C-1 district include:

- Residential construction is prohibited
- The sale or offering for sale of motorized vehicles is prohibited

This zone has been an active area for a multitude of commercial and industrial uses over the years. . Although its location along the western edge of town has minimized most negative impacts to townspeople that can arise from this type of use, the single greatest concern in the area is water quality. The town's most significant groundwater resources are located beneath these industrial uses so care must continue to be taken in the siting and expansion of activity in this area to prevent groundwater contamination.

Although the town has not seriously planned to install a municipal sewer system or a wastewater treatment facility within the planning horizon of this Master Plan, Hampstead has had very preliminary advances from the town of Epping with regard to the possibility of expanding Epping's water service southward along the NH Route 125 corridor. To do so would require a great deal of forethought by the town. Such an endeavor could allow increased development density within the commercial zone, which could prove beneficial economically. However, before such density could occur the town would need to evaluate its current development regulations. The town is rightfully concerned about the type of development that occurs within its boundaries and time should be spent working toward attracting the highest quality development possible – development with the greatest tax contribution and the least impact on the rural character of the town.

#### **3.2.B – Commercial Zone C-2**

Commercial Zone C-2 is the largest commercial zone in Hampstead in terms of acreage. 257 acres of land are designated as Commercial Zone C-2. As discussed above, the Commercial / Industrial Zone has served as the only business district in Hampstead for many years. As in many New Hampshire communities, development patterns in Hampstead segregate residential, commercial and industrial uses. This is different from the historical development pattern of New Hampshire communities, which were typically developed with a more dense, mixed-use town center surrounded by increasingly less dense residential development and large tracts of agricultural lands and open space. This district, the Town Center District 1 was created to allow an area of mixed commercial and residential use. This district placed near the major town services (municipal offices, fire station, school, and library) was intended to create a centralized location of service businesses for the local population that more closely mirrored traditional New England development patterns.

The uses allowed within this Allowed in commercial Zone C-2 include all of those uses allowed in Commercial Zone C-1 as well as the following:

- Automotive filling and service stations, public garages, repair shops, sales agencies for automobiles, boats, farm, industrial and construction equipment.
- Establishments for the sale or storage of furniture, plumbing supplies, construction supplies and building materials.
- Animal hospitals, green houses nurseries, kennels, and veterinarian establishments.
- Bowling lanes, golf driving range, miniature golf, drive-in movies and skating rinks.
- Shops for the use of a carpenter, cabinet maker, electrician, painter, upholster, plumber, television and home appliance repair.
- Plants for the manufacturing of electrical or electronic devices, appliances, apparatus or supplies, medical, dental or drafting instruments, optical goods, watches or other precision instruments.
- Research, experimental or testing laboratory. Accessory uses customarily incident to the above.
- Restricted uses in the Commercial Zone C-1 district include:

Restricted uses in the Commercial Zone C-2 district include:

- Residential construction is prohibited.

### **3.2.C – Commercial Zone C-3**

This district, located between North Road and NH Route 27 was established in the late 1980's as a Planning Board response to two separate manifestations of land use needs. On the one hand the New Hampshire State legislature passed a law (RSA 672:1,III-d) that required town's to provide "a balanced supply of housing which is affordable to persons and families of low and moderate income". At the same time, the town was aware that the county was studying the feasibility of relocating the County Courthouse from Exeter to the complex of land in north Hampstead. It seemed that if the new courthouse were to be located in this part of town professionals such as lawyers, surveyors, title researchers and others with close ties to such a facility should be able to locate offices in this area. The Planning Board also felt that many of the residential structures in this area would lend themselves nicely to professional office redevelopment. As a result of these two occurrences, the multi-family / professional office district was developed. The uses in this zone are as follows:

- Multi-family dwellings, including condominiums;
- Professional office facilities developed in a manner consistent with existing residential and agricultural uses.

The district has had both success and failure during its existence. The town's first multi family development has been constructed the district. A development of sixty, six-unit town houses is nearing completion and has succeeded in diversifying the town's housing stock. The quickness with which the units have sold in this development is an indication that such housing types are in demand in Rockingham County.

From the professional office development side of the equation there has been less success. Shortly after the town adopted the new district in 1991, the County Commissioners decided to purchase additional land on NH Route 125 in South Hampstead for the new courthouse facility instead of siting the structure on their land on North Road. This decision effectively negated the primary reason professional office development was earmarked for this area of town. Consequently there has been no movement by the private development sector to locate such facilities to this area of town in the last decade.

#### **4. Non- Zoning Related Actions Regarding Existing Land Use**

The town of Hampstead has taken aggressive steps to preserve the rural character of the town in light of the remarkably sustained growth in residential development experienced since the mid-1990's. As discussed in detail in the master plan growth management chapter the town of Hampstead has experienced some of the most sustained residential expansion in the region and the state in the past eight to ten years. As a result, a grass roots effort to protect the un-built environment of the town has resulted in a number of actions aimed at slowing the rate of conversion of undeveloped open areas to residential use.

##### **4.1 Municipal Trails (This section to be re-worked in its entirety and re-numbered to section 4.2 below)**

~~One of the actions taken by the town to preserve open space was the re-designation of certain Class VI roads to a municipal trail classification. This step was taken with the knowledge that a Class VI road has limited present development potential. The town adopted procedures in the late 1980's that allowed the issuance of building permits within certain parameters for land owners with property abutting these roadways. However, the town learned through a development proposal that under the right circumstances these Class VI roads could be upgraded for development. Once upgraded to class V status development along the roadway was a much easier proposition. The re-designation at Town Meeting of a Class VI roadway to municipal trail effectively eliminated this future development potential. With this in mind, the town re-designated portions of three roadways, Old Gordon Road, Rowell Road and Haigh Road as municipal trails. This action was taken to preserve the scenic beauty of these roadways, and insure that they would not in the future become Class V roadways.~~

##### **4.1 The Hampstead Open Space Committee**

The town has taken a systematic approach to protection of open space. In the 1990's the Conservation Commission along with regional partners like the Rockingham Land Trust and the Rockingham County

Conservation District, began concerted efforts to protect land along the Exeter River as well as other areas in town. Through their diligent efforts approximately 1,700 acres were protected through conservation easements along the river and throughout town. In 2003 the town authorized an open space bond measure at Town Meeting that appropriated two million dollars to be used to purchase land or the development rights of land to prevent these properties from being converted to residential developments in the future. A committee was established to develop a process of ranking parcels for protection and prioritizing these parcels according to site specific criteria. Countless hours have been invested by volunteers in contacting property owners, holding site walks, coordinating the involvement of land development specialists, all in an effort to utilize these public monies to their greatest potential.

Provided below is the Open Space Committee’s evaluative system that enables members to assess point values to specific criteria when evaluating land for purchase or other suitable protection. In addition to these criteria, the Open Space Committee has also created a set of guidelines (to follow) that establish when a parcel is not suitable for protection using public funds. In this way the community is reducing the cost to it of future residential development while at the same time protecting the natural environment of the town.

**LAND PARCEL ASSESSMENT AGAINST FUNDING CRITERIA (Revised 5/26/04)**

Criterion	Parcel Attrib.	Points
<b><i>1. Development Potential (up to 36+ points):</i></b>		
a. Size of parcel & developable portion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. 5-10 acres of developable upland (8 points)</li> <li>ii. 10-25 acres of developable upland (16 points)</li> <li>iii. 25-50 acres of developable upland (24 points)</li> <li>iv. 50+ acres of developable upland (24 points)</li> <li>v. Plus 3 points for each 200 ft of developable frontage on a Class V or higher road, beyond the base lot frontage (open ended)</li> </ul>		
b. Parcel is likely to change ownership within five or at most ten years (6 points)		
c. Imminent threat of development: active negotiation to sell for development, with documentation (name of potential buyers, copy to offer, or equivalent) (6 points)		
<b><i>2. Water Resources Protection (up to 15 points):</i></b>		
a. Aquifer & well protection – property contains aquifer or wellhead recharge area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. &lt;500 ft.<sup>2</sup> aquifer present and/or wellhead protection area (2 points)</li> <li>ii. 500-1,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> aquifer present (3 points)</li> <li>iii. 1,000-2,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> aquifer present (4 points) or</li> <li>iv. 2,000+ ft.<sup>2</sup> aquifer present (5 points)</li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Watershed protection – property protects significant undeveloped wetlands or shoreline of a water body:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Wetlands present (1 point)</li> <li>ii. Vernal pond(s) or seasonal stream (1 point)</li> <li>iii. Perennial stream(s) or ponds (up to 3 points)</li> <li>iv. River(s) (up to 5 points)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>3. Agricultural Potential (up to 12 points):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 10 acres or more of productive agricultural soils (Soil Productivity Index &gt;60) (6 points)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Presence of active agricultural use (pasture/animal husbandry, orchard, tree farm, crops) (6 points)</li> </ul>		
<b>4. Scenic, Historic or Archaeological Value ( up to 10 points):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Property contains a scenic view cherished by the public, as viewed from a public road, access point, trail, or waterbody; or protects a cherished view (5 points)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Property contains unique cultural or historical buildings or historical/archaeological artifacts:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Inhabited farmhouse and/or barn built prior to 1880 contained in parcel or adjacent house lot with same owner as parcel (4 points)</li> <li>ii. Other artifact or structure with recognized historical or archaeological significance (1 point)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>5. Wildlife Protection &amp; Natural Condition of Land (up to 12 points):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Landcover is predominantly natural landcover, such as forest, orchards, natural barren areas, grasslands, crops or wetlands (4 points)</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Property supports specialized habitats for wildlife populations that are valued but not rare, such as deer yard, waterfowl wintering or breeding areas, riparian habitats, or wildlife corridors (4 points)</li> </ul>		

Criterion	Parcel Attrib.	Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Property supports specialized habitat for rare, threatened or endangered species and/or rare natural communities as determined by the NH Natural Heritage Inventory or other State program (4 points)</li> </ul>		
<b>6. Greenway Linkages &amp; Recreational Value (up to 20 points):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Property connects other protected lands:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Abuts one other protect parcel (3 points)</li> <li>ii. Links two or more unconnected, protected parcels (6 points)</li> <li>iii. High potential of preventing development on valued adjacent and unprotected parcels (6 points)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Property has recreational value:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Will be subject to revocable trail easement, but not deed access (2 points)</li> <li>ii. Will be subject to deeded public access via trails (5 points)</li> <li>iii. Will provide interconnection with abutting public trail system, in addition to deeded public access (4 points)</li> <li>iv. Will provide deeded public access to a recreational waterbody (2 points)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<b>7. Availability of Funding Leverage from Landowners or Third Parties (up to 46 points)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The percentage ratio of the Town’s cost to protect the parcel relative to the market value of the parcel or easement*:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. 1-15% (21 points)</li> <li>ii. 16-30% (18 points)</li> <li>iii. 31-50% (14 points)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

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iv. 51-70% (10 points) v. 71-90% (5 points)		
b. The Town’s cost to protect the parcel relative to the number of potential houselots if the parcel were instead developed (cost per houselot avoided)^: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. \$0-\$7,000 net Town cost per houselot avoided (25 points)</li> <li>ii. \$7,001-\$14,000 net Town cost per houselot avoided (20 points)</li> <li>iii. \$14,001-\$21,000 net Town cost per houselot avoided (15 points)</li> <li>iv. \$21,001-\$28,000 net Town cost per houselot avoided (10 points)</li> <li>v. \$28,001-\$35,000 net Town cost per houselot avoided (5 points)</li> </ul>		
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>		

A property may meet the selection criteria favoring a land preservation proposal and still may not be accepted based on other considerations (see attached list).

\* For an easement, this percentage ratio would equal [net purchase price to town for the easement (after landowner donations and third party funding) + any town funded expenses to set up the easement] divided by [appraised fair market value of the easement]. For land donation/acquisition, this ratio would equal [net purchase price to town for the parcel (after landowner donations and third part funding) + any town funded expenses to evaluate and close the purchase] divided by [appraised fair market value of the property without conservation restrictions].

^ The town’s net dollar outlay after all landowner donations and third party funding, divided by the number of estimated potential houselots as shown in property appraisal or other acceptable analysis of development potential.

Some additional considerations which may result in a land protection proposal being declined by the Town:

1. The property is found to be irreparably contaminated or the cost of cleanup is too high.
2. The property is deemed not large enough to be significant for the conservation purpose of the proposed project.
3. Considering the limitations of available funds, other land protection proposals are deemed to have higher merit.
4. There is reason to believe that the land/easement would be unusually difficult to manage or enforce.
5. The Town, in certain situations, may need a degree or type of public access that is unacceptable to the landowner.
6. Adjacent properties are being, or are likely to be, developed in a manner that would significantly diminish the conservation or public values of the property in question.
7. The landowner insists on provisions that the Open Space Committee believes would seriously diminish the property’s primary conservation or public values or the town’s ability to enforce an easement and/or manage the land.
8. Ethical or image problems exist in association with the acceptance of the project.

9. The proposed open space or public value is part of a development proposal that, overall, is likely to have significant adverse impact on conservation resources.

#### **4.2 Class VI Roads and Municipal Trails**

Subdivision Regulations in Hampstead do not allow subdivision of property on Class VI roads, although a single building permit is allowed under certain conditions. By Town Meeting vote in 2001, portions of several Class VI roads (Ole Gordon Road, Rowell Road and Haigh Road) were re-designated as municipal trails. At the same time several roads in town were declared Scenic Roads, and a Trails Committee began to develop a network of voluntary trails on private and public land. The re-designation at Town Meeting of a Class VI road to a Municipal Trail is irreversible except by Town vote. All these actions were designed to recognize the value of open space and to preserve the scenic beauty, wildlife habitat and rural character of the town.

#### **5.0 Future Land Use**

As detailed in the discussion above, the town of Hampstead has developed a number of strategies to guide the pattern of development. Zoning has been used historically to establish major areas for commercial and residential development. In the past these uses have for the most part been segregated. New residential uses have been primarily developed in the interior areas of town. Industrial and commercial development has been with few exceptions directed to the outer edges of the community using NH State Routes 125 and 27 as well as Pine Road for these activities. Important in the context of each of these kinds of development is an

understanding that the town has always put a high priority on protecting natural resources. The town's wetlands, shorelands, floodplain and aquifer protection ordinances in combination influence nearly every development proposal that is reviewed by the Planning Board. This full complement of resource protections is mirrored in only a few of the communities in the County.

In the recent past the town has expressed a desire to become more sophisticated in its zoning approach. Actions such as the establishment of senior housing, and the Town Center District 1 have indicated a move towards less structured separation of land uses and the potential for the return to a more traditional New England development pattern. In addition the town recently adopted an impact fee ordinance that assists the town in the process of providing capital improvements by assessing fees for specific services to new development.

#### **5.1 Commercial Uses**

As detailed on the Future Land Use Map, the town should continue its efforts to expand and upgrade economic development in the commercially zoned areas. Special attention should be given to studying potential growth along the NH Route 125 corridor. In light of increased development activity in the abutting regions of Epping, the town should rationally investigate the pro and cons of any offer by the town of Epping to extend sewer and water into Hampstead. This kind of infrastructure expansion would result in development densities heretofore not experienced by Hampstead and such a course of action requires extensive consideration by the Planning Board and other town officials. The intensity of development that could arise from such an endeavor has already spurred the Planning Board into revising their signage, landscaping and lighting requirements. As

Epping moves toward retail build-out in their south-eastern quadrant, the town of Hampstead should consider looking at a wide range of land use controls, such as zoning for nodal development, access management and architectural review, to deter the “franchising” of NH Route 125 in a way similar to NH Route 1 in Seabrook and NH Route 125 in Plaistow. These are just a few of the ways in which Hampstead could continue to grow but in a manner appropriate to a small rural community.

## **5.2 Residential Uses**

The town has evolved a great deal with respect to residential land use in the past fifteen years. There have been zoning standards developed to encourage “clustered” or open-space residential developments that have resulted in no fewer than four such developments town-wide. In addition, the town has adopted standards to allow the creation of multi-family housing as well as housing for seniors. There are also standards for the conversion of single family structures into two family structures. All of these actions have placed the Town in the position of offering more residential diversity than any other town of similar size in the region. The town should consider adopting inclusionary requirements for affordable housing that could tie the creation of affordable units to each subdivision that is proposed. The State of New Hampshire has been seriously considering this method for providing affordable housing in previous sessions of the General Court. Hampstead would be well prepared to deal with a possible state imposed mandate by taking aggressive steps now to deal with this region-wide issue.

In addition the Town should take steps to promote agricultural activities in the residential-agricultural zoning district. Historically this has been a mixed district and remains so but recent trends show a reduction in agriculture and an increase in residences. The Town should investigate ways to encourage agriculture in order to promote rural character and continue the long established agricultural tradition of the town. These steps can include reviewing local regulations to determine how farm-friendly they are; minimizing site planning requirements for agricultural enterprises; providing adequate buffers between agricultural land uses and other activities; and incorporating agricultural activities as allowed uses in the open space elements of cluster subdivisions.

## **5.3 Retention of Open Space**

The town should continue to aggressively acquire easements and property in order to protect open space. The Exeter River, Little River and Dudley Brook should continue to be a focus of land conservation efforts. The town should strive to protect remaining agricultural activities whenever the opportunity arises and in instances where the agricultural use may be abandoned, efforts should continue to preserve these lands with the goal of potential future agricultural use. Finally, conservation efforts should also place a priority on expanding existing protected areas when the opportunity to do so arises, and on sound management of all protected areas for desirable wildlife habitat.

## **Future Land Use Recommendations**

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1. The town should monitor the success of the Town Center District 1 with an eye to expanding this type of mixed use zoning to other areas in the community.
  2. Local concerns about the potential impact from business growth include increased traffic and congestion, aesthetics and the risk of undermining the Town's quality of life. To address some of these concerns, the town should continue to carefully review site plan applications with regard to visual and traffic impacts, architectural standards, landscaping and signage.
  3. The town should continually monitor its land use controls to insure that they are accomplishing their stated objectives. Of particular note as an example, the Town should work cooperatively with development professionals to enhance the senior housing ordinance. The present ordinance has resulted in no developments and the Town should determine the cause for this and respond accordingly.
  4. The town may wish to re-evaluate the logic behind the professional office zone since the courthouse failed to locate in this section of town. Perhaps there is a more reasonable use of the land located in this district.
  5. The Town should investigate the appropriateness of pursuing inclusionary requirements in all subdivision in order to expand the town's stock of affordable housing.
  6. The town should continue its open space preservation efforts.
  7. Although the town does not plan to install a municipal sewer system or a wastewater treatment facility within the planning horizon of this Master Plan, the Town might wish to explore the possibility of extending water and sewer service from Epping southward on NH Route 125.
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8. The town should investigate ways to preserve agricultural activities throughout Hampstead and should establish a Town Agricultural Commission to represent the farming community, to encourage agricultural enterprises and to work for the preservation of farmland.

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INSERT MAP FLU-1

FUTURE LAND USE

Notes:

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