

Town & Village of Cambridge
Municipal Development Plan 2008

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INTRODUCTION (2008)

The Town of Cambridge recognizes that growth and development are inevitable and that with careful planning they can be in harmony with present land uses. It is the basic goal of this plan to maintain the blend of residential, rural, business and recreational elements that have led to the character of our present community.

Growth and development must be planned and managed so they do not put an undue burden on the ability of the Town to provide municipal services. The community recognizes its responsibility to respect the property rights of individual landowners. At the same time, the Town is obligated to protect public health and safety, be fiscally responsible and safeguard the long-term interests of the community as a whole.

Our agricultural and resource-based economy must be maintained while allowing our tourist, recreational and business economy to expand, as needed, to broaden the tax base and provide jobs for our citizens. Growth and development that provide employment within the town should be encouraged as a way to reduce traffic, conserve energy and preserve a sense of community--a sense which can be difficult to maintain in a bedroom/resort community. The Town must be sensitive to the need for affordable housing for current residents as well as for businesses seeking to locate here.

Future growth and development must take into account the inherent limitations of the land itself and should take place where they are compatible with current land use patterns. Open space and scenic preservation are important to the residents of the community as well as to the tourist economy and will be encouraged.

All of these objectives are important to maintain the present character of the Town and provide for orderly growth and development. They will be discussed in greater detail under the appropriate sections of the plan, which follows.

History of Cambridge's planning efforts.

The history of planning in Cambridge has been filled with successes and failures. As far back as 1963 Cambridge was engaged in planning with the appointment of a "zoning commission." In 1968 there was a vote at town meeting to establish a planning commission. Below are some of the key events that have occurred over the past 35 years of planning in the Town and Village of Cambridge.

Perhaps as early as 1971 there were efforts to draft zoning bylaws in town. The first plan for the Town of Cambridge, Village of Cambridge and the Village of Jeffersonville was likely adopted by the Selectboard December 18, 1972 (although it could not be confirmed in town records). In any event, the Selectboard was again holding a hearing to adopt a municipal plan with the villages 18 months later on July 23, 1974.

The first local land use regulations in Town were passed on April 8, 1975. These were flood hazard regulations and were passed on an interim basis (not permanently). The first attempt to pass permanent flood hazard regulations was at the March 1977 Town Meeting. Records were again not available to confirm whether they were adopted or defeated but permanent zoning for flood hazard areas was voted again by Australian ballot June 12, 1978 (results unknown). By the end of the decade the Planning Commission starts appearing in the Annual Report (1977 until the present).

A revised joint municipal plan was adopted January 21, 1980. Another joint plan may have been adopted in 1985 but it has not been verified (the Selectboard held a hearing on an amended joint municipal plan on May 8, 1985).

With changes in state law in 1988 (the act now known as Act 200), each municipality created their own planning commission and decided its own regulations. Jeffersonville created its own planning commission in 1988 and passed a village plan in June 1989. From this point forward, the Cambridge municipal plan only covered the Town and Village of Cambridge. It is believed the Town of Cambridge adopted its own plan June 30, 1988 while the Village of Cambridge adopted its own plan on June 27, 1989.

Throughout the 1980s efforts continued to update the flood hazard area regulations and to draft other regulations. Amendments to the permanent flood hazard zoning bylaws were proposed in April 1983 (unknown if they were ever voted on). It is known that permanent flood hazard area zoning for Town of Cambridge, Village of Cambridge and Village of Jeffersonville passed March 3, 1987. Permanent flood hazard area zoning for the Village of Cambridge was adopted separate from town on June 27, 1989. Jeffersonville, having created its own planning commission six months earlier, adopted interim zoning August 24, 1987 that expired on August 24, 1990.

While flood hazard regulations continued to be amended, efforts to adopt other regulations were not very successful in the 1990s. A vote at the 1990 Town Meeting defeated proposed subdivision regulations. One year after adopting their own flood hazard regulations, joint Town and Village of Cambridge Interim flood hazard area zoning bylaws are adopted June 18, 1990. These interim bylaws expired June 18, 1992.

Permanent Town and Village flood hazard area zoning bylaws are adopted September 26, 1994 and again at Town Meeting on March 5, 1995. The Town and Village of Cambridge Municipal plan was adopted December 11, 1995 and this same plan was readopted without change on August 13, 2001. A new plan was developed in 2003 and adopted in the fall of that year.

Most recently, the Town of Cambridge Zoning and Subdivision bylaws (including both Villages) were defeated March 2, 1999 (203 in favor of and 222 against). The drafts were revised and considered again

on November 7, 2000. As with the previous vote, the bylaws were defeated- 714 in favor and 774 against.

Following those defeats the planning engaged in a process to adopt subdivision regulations which were approved and made effective in September 2006. Since that time the Planning Commission has engaged in an effort to develop zoning regulations. These bylaws should be ready for a vote in the fall of 2008 or spring 2009.

Uses of a municipal plan.

Towns are not required to adopt municipal plans so the question is sometimes asked – why spend the time and effort to write a town plan? There is a range of ways in which a town plan can be used - from simply a source of information to a foundation for regulations. Ultimately, the residents of Cambridge determine the uses of the Cambridge Municipal Plan. Among the potential uses of the municipal plan are the following:

1. A source of information: The plan is a valuable source of information for local boards, commissions, citizens and businesses. The information in a plan could serve to familiarize residents, potential residents, and development interests about Cambridge and its resources.

2. A basis for community programs and decision-making: The plan is a guide for the recommendations contained in a capital budget and program, for any proposed community development program, and for the direction and content of local initiatives such as farmland protection, recreation planning and housing.

3. A source for planning studies: Few plans can address every issue in sufficient detail. Town plans not only record and discuss what is known about the resources and residents of the town but also what is not known. Therefore, many plans will recommend further studies to develop courses of action on specific needs.

4. A standard for review at the state and regional levels: Act 250 and other state regulatory processes identify the municipal plan as a standard for review of applications. Municipal plans are important to the development of regional plans and regional and inter-municipal programs. In addition, state proposals must comply with town plans including the purchase of state land for parks and recreation.

5. A long-term guide: The plan is a long-term guide by which to measure and evaluate public and private proposals that affect the physical, social, and economic environment of the community.

6. To fulfill an eligibility requirement for state and federal grants: In 2000, the state began requiring towns to adopt plans in order for

communities to be eligible for most grants and low interest loans. Planning grants, water and wastewater grants, community development grants, historic preservation grants, and other key sources of funding all now require the municipality to have an adopted plan. While many private funding sources do not require town plans in order to be eligible, having a town plan that documents the need for funding will generally strengthen the application.

7. A basis for regulatory action: The plan can serve as a foundation and guide for the creation of zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, official map, shoreland bylaws, flood hazard bylaws and for the decisions made under these regulations.

Fundamental themes & objectives.

This plan has been developed with five guiding principles in mind.

- Acknowledgement that growth in Cambridge is an inevitable consequence of population growth in Vermont, the United States and the rest of the world.
- In recognition of that truism, the Cambridge Municipal Plan does not seek to stop growth in town. This plan shall not be interpreted as a foundation for efforts to do so. The plan seeks to manage and direct growth in ways that preserve Cambridge's rural, agricultural character and quality of life while preserving the property rights of the town's landowners.
- Retaining/ increasing the amount of land utilized for agricultural purposes by removing or minimizing financial obstacles to agricultural land uses. This goal shall be accompanied by all practicable methods including without limitation:
 - Town funded tax abatement programs to compliment existing state programs.
 - Encouraging the purchase of development rights.
 - Ensuring that no town regulatory hurdles are erected to agricultural land uses.
 - Clearly and emphatically stating the town's preference for agricultural uses.
- Maintaining the rural character of Cambridge to the greatest extent possible consistent with private property rights. Mechanisms for attaining this goal should include without limitation:
 - Encouraging growth in existing village cores and other pre-existing higher density areas.
 - Discouraging scattered development patterns on open land by encouraging clustering in development projects.
- Encouraging the preservation of scenic areas for economic (tourism) as well as local (aesthetic) reasons.

How this plan has been setup.

This plan has been structured such that the plan will include this plan summary and 11 reports. Each report appears as a part of the appendix and contains more detailed statistical data and inventory information. The summary is intended to offer a quick view of the community including the goals, policies, and recommendations. Anyone interested in the details on why a goal or policy has been adopted can look at the respective report in the appendix.

The reason for the new format is two fold. The first municipal plan in Cambridge was only 5 pages long. The Plan adopted in 2001 was 58 pages long. When the idea of reviewing and redrafting the town and village plan was first discussed, it was decided that anyone looking for information shouldn't need to wade through 60 pages of economic and census figures to find the information they need. By keeping the plan summary to less than 20 pages, the reader can get an understanding of Cambridge without reading all the sometimes-mundane statistics.

The second advantage the new format offers is that the plan will be easier to amend in the future. A single report can be amended without necessarily changing the whole plan. As the general planning has been done for Cambridge, it is expected that future planning studies will examine specific issues and topics in more detail.

Neighboring communities and the regional plan

Perhaps more than any other community in Lamoille County Cambridge is connected to its neighboring towns. State highways connect Cambridge to Fairfax, Westford, Fletcher, Waterville, Johnson, and Stowe. A busy secondary road ties Pleasant valley to Underhill. Being as connected as Cambridge is to its neighbors, the potential for impacts, both positive and negative, is high.

This plan has been developed with the idea in mind that Cambridge is not isolated from its' neighbors. Nothing proposed in this plan is intended or expected to limit or prevent any of Cambridge's neighbors from implementing the goals of their municipal plans. If such conflict occurs, the Cambridge Planning Commission is prepared to work cooperatively with our neighbors to strive for a plan that would achieve the goals of both communities.

The Town of Cambridge and Village of Cambridge both have seats on the board of directors of Lamoille County Planning Commission. Cambridge does not intend or expect that this plan will prevent any current for future efforts to implement the regional plan of Lamoille County.

PLAN SUMMARY

I. Community Profile

The Town of Cambridge covers an area of approximately 40,637 acres (63.5 square miles) on the western side of Lamoille County. Three elected members of the Select board conduct the governing of Cambridge. Located within the Town of Cambridge are two chartered-Villages: the Village of Cambridge and the Village of Jeffersonville. Each village has their own elected 'Board of Trustees.' For matters concerning the School Districts, Cambridge Elementary School & Lamoille Union School District, there are two elected boards, the Board of Grade School Directors and the Board of Union School Directors, respectively.

According to the 2000 Census, Cambridge has a population of 3,186. This represents a 19 percent increase since 1990. Nearly all growth since 1960 has occurred outside of the villages and approximately 75 percent of the population now lives outside of the villages. Over the past twenty years population growth in town has been evenly split between natural growth (more births than deaths in town) and migration (net number of persons moving into town).

Population predictions for the next ten years are for continued increases. If earlier population estimates are accurate, Cambridge could have a population of 4,000 residents sometime around 2010.

The percentage of residents with high school diploma and residents with a bachelor's degree both increased since the previous census. Slightly more than half of the employed residents worked in 'sales and office occupations' and 'management and professional occupations'. The four industries that employed the most number of Cambridge residents were 'education, health, and social services'; 'manufacturing'; 'arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food services'; and 'retail trade'.

The median income in 1999 for Cambridge was \$44,950- 10% higher than the state average. The town has a low poverty rate of 5.2% of all residents.

A drop in the percentage of residents that work locally has meant that, for the first time, Cambridge is considered a bedroom community. While the number of local jobs is growing, the workforce is growing faster. Cambridge seeks to increase local employment opportunities to help reverse this trend.

II. Economic Development

The local Cambridge economy is based upon one very large company (Smugglers' Notch Resort), a few medium size companies (G.W. Tatro Construction and Jack F. Corse Inc.) and many small businesses. Over the past few years Cambridge has lost some important industries

and some farms. Businesses that rely on recreation and tourism are becoming more prevalent which may leave the town vulnerable to the boom and bust cycle that tourism tends to follow.

According to the 2000 Census, 1910 residents of Cambridge were in the labor force with 1834 of them employed. Smugglers' Notch Resort is the largest employer in town with over 250 full time positions and 500 part time/ seasonal employees.

While median incomes in town were some of the highest in the county, local wages paid by businesses in town were below the county average. This is the result of Cambridge being a bedroom community. The high paying jobs earned by residents tend to be outside of Cambridge in neighboring Chittenden County while the local jobs tend to be lower paying service jobs.

Cambridge has an unemployment rate around 4%, which is slightly higher than the state average but lower than the county average.

An important component to economic development is taxes. Businesses in Cambridge generate substantial state tax revenues. The Vermont Sales and Use tax and Meals and Room tax generated \$59 million and \$14 million respectively in 2001 from Cambridge businesses.

A review of the local grand list identified four areas of interest or concern. First, outside of commercial values, the grand list on nonresidential properties has been flat over the past decade. Residential properties increased 171% in the 1990s while commercial values increased 113%. Second, a decrease in farm parcels and values is another indicator of a weakening farm economy. Third, a decrease in the number of woodland parcels may indicate some decline in forestlands value for timber. And fourth, and perhaps most important, Cambridge is becoming more dependent upon residential properties to cover the cost of local services. In the future the town will need to identify ways to bring a diversity of land uses into town including more industrial and commercial uses and to protect the existing farm and forest parcels.

Property taxes are separated into two categories - the municipal rate and the education tax rate. For municipal taxes, rates can be kept steady though efficient spending and by controlling increases in services. As roads and schools are, by far, the services with the largest budgets, road policies and education policies (including land use decisions) are important to controlling tax rates. Actual spending on municipal services has remained stable over the past five years. Education taxes will be discussed below under education.

III. Natural Resources

Elevations in Cambridge range from about 440 feet along the Lamoille River to about 3,900 feet where the towns southern border crosses the ridgeline of Mount Mansfield. The topography is rugged with more than 12,000 acres in town having a slope greater than 30%.

Land resources.

Most of the soils in town are derived from glacial till. The upland areas are generally thin, stoney, well drained, and shallow to bedrock. The lowlands consist mainly of sand and gravel with pockets of silt and clay in the floodplains. The nature of the soils in town make traditional on site septic fields difficult to install. Some newer alternative systems may be available in these areas if the town adopts zoning or in 2007 otherwise.

Cambridge has limited gravel resources due to low quality gravel and sites that are currently used for other purposes. On the other hand, Cambridge does have more than 13,000 acres of prime and statewide agricultural soils. The best agricultural soils are found along the Lamoille River flood plain.

Water resources.

Water is an important resource from several perspectives. Historically water provided the principle means of transportation and commerce, as well as drinking water and power generation. Today it is recognized that this resource is an essential component of the community's natural and human environment in that it provides safe and clean drinking water, recreational opportunities, wildlife diversity, and enhanced landscapes.

For a majority of residents, private wells and springs are the primary source of water for consumption and domestic use. Residents of Smugglers' Notch and the Villages of Cambridge and Jeffersonville receive their water from municipal or community wells. Cambridge has Well Head Protection Areas (WHPAs) in three parts of town. Development within the WHPAs must be carefully controlled in order to maintain water quality in these areas. Cambridge currently has no zoning to protect these areas and could consider specific zoning (similar to how floodplains are regulated today) to protect these areas.

Features such as rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and wetlands are classified as surface waters. The primary river flowing east to west through Cambridge is the Lamoille River, which serves as an important focal point for the community. The Brewster River is considered a unique "undeveloped river corridor". The Brewster River Gorge is an important example of a hydro-geological feature. It is one of Vermont's deepest gorges with a long vertical drop in a natural setting.

There are two types of environmentally sensitive areas in Cambridge- flood hazard areas and wetlands. Floodplains are land areas adjacent to water bodies, which are subject to seasonal or periodic flooding. These areas store runoff during heavy rains and spring thaws, thus slowing the velocity of the water downstream and preventing damage to vegetation, streambanks, and other structures in the flood hazard areas. The Town and Village of Cambridge Flood Hazard Area

Bylaws protect flood hazard areas.

Wetlands refer to water and land areas commonly known as marshes, swamps, bogs, fens, and similar areas where water is a controlling factor in the development of plant and animal communities. While wetlands are found throughout the community and are protected by State law, Cambridge has three areas with concentrations of wetlands-

1. Along the Lamoille River (east and west of Jeffersonville) and north along the North Branch.
2. In the northern part of town along Route 108 north of the old railroad bed and in the upper reaches of Black Creek.
3. In the southern part of town between Upper Valley Road and Route 108.

Water quality in Cambridge is generally good. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has indicated that current usage of both the Brewster and Seymour Rivers are threatened due to land use activities within their watersheds. Uses in the Seymour River are considered threatened at its headwaters where there is evidence of groundwater contamination at the Underhill Landfill. Storm water runoff, failed septic systems and increased residential development threaten usage for approximately 4.5 miles of the river until it reaches the Village of Cambridge. Use of one mile of the Brewster River is considered partially impaired by iron bacteria below the old Smugglers' Notch Resort leach field.

Wildlife resources.

Fragile and natural areas comprise some of the irreplaceable habitats, ecosystems, and natural features found as a part of Cambridge's heritage. While no systematic inventory has been prepared, there are two significant areas in the Town of Cambridge, which are presently in public ownership.

The Cambridge Pine Woods Natural Area is an old-growth stand of white pine and hemlock on a steep, sandy hill. Individual trees reach large diameters and height. The area is considered an important forest community as it offers a view back to what some of Vermont's original forests may have looked like when the area was first settled.

Smugglers' Notch is located in the southern part of town in the mountain pass between Spruce Peak and Mount Mansfield. It is an exceptional example of a cold-calcareous cliff community. This site harbors several arctic/alpine plant species growing at the southern limits of their range. Many of the plants that appear in this community are considered rare, and are protected by state law. In fact Smugglers' Notch maintains one of the highest concentrations of rare plants in Vermont. Smugglers' Notch is also home to several unique animals and birds. Most notable is the Peregrine Falcon who resides on the cliffs above and around 'Elephants Head'.

In addition to these fragile habitats, Cambridge also contains around 4,470 acres of deer wintering habitat and approximately half of town is considered habitat suitable for black bears.

IV. Agricultural and Forestry Resources

The use of land for agricultural and forestry purposes plays an important role, both directly and indirectly, in Cambridge's economy. It also supports the community's traditional settlement pattern by providing a diversity of land uses and open space. Contrasting with the farmland in the valleys, the forested hills and mountains add a dramatic backdrop to the town. Planning for and supporting the working landscape is critical to maintaining this balance. Working landscapes, like farming and forestry, contribute to the town's overall beauty, its economy, and its history.

Agricultural resources.

According to Vermont Agency of Agriculture figures, the number of active dairy farms in Cambridge has dropped by half since 1985. Today, only 13 farms remain and many are in danger of folding. In other parts of the state, farms are surviving by consolidating and becoming larger but this trend is not occurring in Cambridge. In 1992 a survey of Cambridge dairy operations found 17 farms and 1,660 milking cows. A similar survey in 2002 found only 750 milking cows remaining on the 13 farms. The primary concern cited by farmers was milk prices, which are the same in 2002 as they were during the 1992 survey.

From an environmental view, Cambridge has an abundance of natural resources with potential for use in agriculture. Approximately 13,745 acres (34 percent of the land area) in town are considered primary agricultural soils as defined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The future of agriculture in Cambridge will depend on the protection of these resources- whether that future involves a renaissance of dairy farming or another type of agriculture.

Four methods are used for protection of agricultural resources- Use Value Appraisal, Purchase of Development Rights, local tax relief, and land use regulations. Each of these options has costs and benefits that need to be weighed by residents and farmers in town.

There are many issues that affect the sustainability of agriculture in Cambridge. Some difficulties can be addressed or assisted locally while others are state or national issues. First, as mentioned earlier, low milk prices are perhaps the most pressing of all issues. Second, the current dairy industry is limited in the commodities it produces making it susceptible to market fluctuations. Education taxes are another issue along with the loss of farmland to development.

Forest resources.

Woodland is the dominant land cover in the community- covering approximately 74 percent of Cambridge's acreage. While the total woodland acreage appears high (28,000 acres), it does not indicate what percentage of that woodland is being managed for productive purposes. Cambridge's forest resources contribute directly to the economy through the timber industry and the production of maple syrup. Some of the less quantifiable benefits derived from Cambridge's forests include habitat for wildlife, water resource protection, recreational opportunities, and scenic beauty.

The same tools used for protection of agricultural resources can be used to protect forest resources. In 2002, 13,394 acres were enrolled in current use as productive forestland.

V. Community Facilities and Services

The town, village, or other quasi-public entities provide community facilities and services for the health, benefit, safety and enjoyment of Cambridge residents and the general public. Careful planning for community facilities and services are essential if local goals and needs are to be met.

Water facilities.

Municipal water systems serve the villages of Jeffersonville and Cambridge and there is a private "public water supply" system serving Smugglers' Notch Resort. Most aspects of the Jeffersonville Water System are under the jurisdiction of the Village. Discussion of this system, therefore, appears in the Village of Jeffersonville Municipal Development Plan.

The Village of Cambridge water system is relatively new and in good condition. Private wells in town must meet state water supply rules including isolation distances.

Sewage and septic facilities.

There are two wastewater treatment facilities in Cambridge, one that is owned by the Village of Jeffersonville and the other is a privately owned and operated wastewater treatment plant that serves Smugglers' Notch Resort. Most aspects of the Village of Jeffersonville system are under the jurisdiction of the village. Discussion of this system therefore appears in the Village of Jeffersonville Municipal Development Plan.

Solid waste.

Cambridge is a member of the Lamoille Solid Waste Management District which is responsible for waste management policies within the district.

Electric utilities.

Two electric utilities provide services in the Town and Village of Cambridge. Central Vermont Public Service Corporation provides service in the Village of Jeffersonville and portions of the Town and Village of Cambridge. Vermont Electric Cooperative provides service to the remainder of the Village of Cambridge and Town of Cambridge.

Communications facilities.

Residents of the Town of Cambridge can receive signals in a variety of formats depending on location and site conditions. Telephone, cellular service, cable television, radio and broadcast television, and local newspaper coverage are all available in places in town. Internet service and cellular coverage has been identified as an area in need of improvement especially in the rural parts of town.

Public safety.

Police coverage is provided by the Vermont State Police and crime rates in town are average for Lamoille County. Fire protection is provided by the Cambridge Fire Department, which is a volunteer department organized as a private- non-profit corporation in 1952. The fire station is in poor condition and in need of renovation or construction of a new or expanded facility.

The Cambridge Rescue Squad is a volunteer organization, which provides full emergency response and medical transport services.

All emergencies are reported using the E911 system through the County Sheriff's Office. Communication between municipal emergency providers is difficult due to the different systems and frequencies used. Preliminary work is currently underway to address this and other emergency service communications concerns.

Health care facilities.

The Cambridge Regional Health Center is a tax-exempt organization providing primary health care services for Cambridge. The town is equidistant from Copley Hospital in Morrisville, Fletcher Allen in Burlington, and Northwest Medical Center in St. Albans. Any of these may provide primary services to Cambridge residents.

There are also regional non-profit services that require local funding in order to continue to provide free services.

Cemeteries.

There are eight cemeteries in the Town and Village of Cambridge and there is at least one undelineated family plot. Generally, the people buried in Cambridge's cemeteries were either Cambridge residents or were individuals with ties to Cambridge. There are three Associations, one Cemetery Commission and at least three private individuals (or families) who oversee the care of cemeteries in town.

Library.

The Varnum Memorial Library is owned and administered by a private non-profit organization, the Crescendo Club. The Club conducts fund raising activities and has some endowments which contribute to the operation of the library.

Recreation.

The Cambridge Recreation Board is a nine member appointed board that arranges recreational programs coordinates with public and private facilities for their use.

The Arts.

The Cambridge Arts Council is a local non-profit organization that sponsors events, artists, workshops, and discussions on the arts. Cambridge is fortunate to have a healthy and active local arts council.

VI. Educational Facilities and Services

Educational facilities.

The Cambridge Elementary School Building is located in Jeffersonville on a 6.15-acre parcel. The elementary school is operating below capacity and space does not appear to be a barrier to future growth at this time.

The high school facilities are located on a 56.2-acre parcel in Hyde Park. A new middle school was added in 2002 to accommodate the growing student population at the high school.

Education issues.

Concerns have been raised in a few areas with regard to education. Act 60 has had a prominent negative impact on the town's school budget. As a sending town, over \$600,000 are collected locally to be sent to the state for redistribution. Even with the added expenses, school budgets have increased only modestly in the past five years.

A second concern is the amount of time some high school students are spending on the bus. A final concern is over the increases in population and housing and the impact that will have on the total school enrollment.

VII. Transportation Facilities and Services

The transportation network serving Cambridge is critical to all aspects of life in Cambridge: commerce, recreation, commuter travel and general mobility. The efficient and safe movement of people, goods and services, both within and between communities, is needed to maintain

the vitality of Cambridge.

Highways and roads.

There are approximately 107 miles of roads in the Town of Cambridge. 32 miles of these are State Highways under the jurisdiction of the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans). State Highways (Routes 15, 104, 108, and 109) are maintained by the Vermont District #8 Highway personnel based at St. Albans; a district garage is located on Route 15 east of Jeffersonville. The town highway department is responsible for the remaining roads within town, including those in the villages of Cambridge and Jeffersonville.

Traffic on both state and local roads has grown steadily over the past two decades. The busiest traffic counter in town is now at the wrong-way bridge where 7,100 motorists drive over the bridge each day.

The town has adopted local road and bridge standards to ensure any new roads are constructed to state standards. In the absence of subdivision regulations, the town should adopt an ordinance that applies the same road standards to all roads built by private developers in order to ensure emergency services can access new developments located on private roads. State roadways are currently managed to minimize access to ensure smooth flowing traffic and to limit dangerous intersections.

Railroads.

Railroads in Cambridge are currently only found in historic accounts. The last train to run in Cambridge was in 1994. There is an effort underway at the state to convert the 98-mile Lamoille Valley Rail line to a bike path. This would be very valuable to Cambridge as it would add another recreational facility in town and Cambridge Junction would be at an important intersection along the route.

Airports.

Two public airports provide service to Cambridge residents. These are the Burlington International Airport and Morrisville-Stowe State Airport.

Bicycle and pedestrian.

Several areas within Cambridge are traversed with trails and footpaths, which are used by residents for hiking, hunting, cross-country skiing and mountain biking. There are a few trails maintained for public use including the Long Trail and Cambridge Greenway. The Long Trail is a hiking trail bisecting the entire state, which runs through a section of Cambridge in the vicinity of Smugglers' Notch. The Greenway is a trail developed in the 1990s connecting the Jeffersonville to Cambridge Junction. In 2009, The Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) is expected to come on line on the old Lamoille Valley Rail Line.

Public Transportation.

There are a variety of human service agencies providing transportation services in Lamoille County, which are available to Cambridge residents. Each agency provides services specific to their particular mission and are very important to the quality of life of those who depend on them. Many of these programs serve a large elderly population. The demand for these services is likely to increase over time as the population ages and residents desire to remain in their own homes while still interacting with the community.

VIII. Housing

The amount, type, and cost of housing in town directly impact the quality of life of the area. The availability of affordable housing has also been identified as a factor in attracting business and industry to an area. Additionally, the type and amount of housing also may determine whether young families, retirees, and individuals with special needs have the ability to live in our community.

Housing demographics.

The most common type of dwelling in Cambridge is the single-family home. This type of housing now makes up three quarters of the units in town and most new units are constructed outside of the villages. Three quarters of units are also owner occupied units.

The cost of housing has been increasing rapidly over the past few years from \$103,925 in 1999 to \$142,157 in 2002 (average cost of a house sold on a lot less than 6 acres).

Affordable housing.

Statewide housing policy states that housing is affordable when households with incomes below county median pay no more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Regionally, housing affordability has improved since 1990 (at least according to the statistics). While fairing better than county averages, many homeowners and renters in Cambridge are spending a disproportionate amount of their income on housing. A combination of rising land and home prices, physical limits to residential growth, concentration of employment in the low-wage service sector, and increased pressure on the rental market could rapidly push Cambridge's housing out of the affordable range for low and middle-income residents.

Special needs housing.

Within every community are individuals or families with special housing needs. The elderly and families with children living in poverty are examples of groups with special needs that are found in most communities. The disabled or infirm may also require special

arrangements. A final category of special needs housing is group quarters or institutional care. Living arrangements such as nursing homes, correctional facilities, group homes, and homeless shelters fall into this category.

While there are residents in Cambridge with special needs there are few facilities available to provide for them. Senior housing opportunities are available in town although group home arrangements are still not available.

IX. Energy

Energy for light, heat, transportation, and the operation of equipment is essential for the economy and well being of the community. Too heavy a reliance on any one source or type of fuel to provide that energy can leave the population vulnerable to wide market swings in energy costs. Production and consumption of energy also may have negative environmental effects, such as pollution of water and air, which may in turn contribute to public health problems.

Many of the factors that determine the availability and cost of fuels are beyond the control of the community. There are, however, things the Town of Cambridge and its residents can do to influence their energy future. They can encourage development of diverse energy sources and implementation of conservation measures such as encouraging energy efficiency in proposed developments and in improvement of existing structures.

Energy sources.

The town of Cambridge does not have any electric generation facilities and is therefore entirely dependant on outside sources. The heating of homes and businesses in town is primarily through the burning fossil fuels but wood is an important local renewable resource that is also available. All transportation beyond bicycles and pedestrian is powered by fossil fuels.

Energy Providers.

Electricity is provided through Vermont Electric Cooperative and Central Vermont Public Service Corporation. Home heating fuel, such as oil and propane, along with fuel for transportation are entirely provided through private companies.

X. Historic, Scenic, & Archeological

Special features that reflect the cultural development and character of the Town include its historic sites, buildings, and districts, and scenic areas. The visual character of a community is of value to its residents, businesses, and visitors.

Historic Resources.

Evidence of Cambridge's past is found throughout the Town and Villages in the form of its historic buildings and areas. These historic resources not only provide a physical link to the past, but also contribute to the present landscape. While preservation of historic structures recognizes them as an important component of the overall fabric of the community, it should not prevent innovation and the expression of different styles.

There are three covered bridges in the community which are listed on the National Register: Grist Mill Covered Bridge, Poland Covered Bridge and Gates Farm Covered Bridge (all entered in 1974). The Cambridge Meeting House and the Jeffersonville Historic District also are listed on the National Register.

Scenic Resources.

Scenic resources include views observed from both a stationary point, and while moving along a road or path. They include natural scenes or a mixture of natural and man-made elements (such as houses, roads, farms).

There is much natural beauty in the community that contributes to the quality of life of residents and is appealing to its visitors. A drive on almost any of the roads in town puts the "observer" in contact with farmland, pastures, hills, forests, historic buildings and views of the nearby mountains, rivers and streams.

Archeological resources.

Cambridge contains an archaeologically sensitive corridor associated with the Lamoille River valley and extending up to Smugglers' Notch along the Brewster River. Archeologically sensitive corridors are areas that have certain environmental factors present which make them more likely than elsewhere to have had early human occupation.

XI. Land Use and Development Plan

The land use pattern of any community is typically characteristic of several interdependent influences: physical constraints of the land, historical development patterns, transportation routes, economic influences, and personal preferences. This pattern of uses and development give a community character, and serve as the foundation for future development.

Current land use.

The development pattern of Cambridge is typical of the communities throughout northern Vermont. This pattern is one of traditional New England settlement with compact village centers

surrounded by agricultural and forest lands. The villages of Cambridge and Jeffersonville, both located along the Lamoille River, serve as the activity centers of the community with community services, commercial and industrial activity, and higher density residential development.

The flood plains along the Lamoille River serve as the primary location for agricultural activity in town - with high concentrations of nationally prime agricultural soils. Areas such as the Pleasant Valley, and North and South Cambridge, both have their own concentrations of agricultural land uses.

The community's higher elevations and steep slopes are typically forested - much of which is covered with mixed hardwoods, with stands of softwood dominating the highest ground. Cambridge's high elevation land is also home to the Smuggler's Notch Ski Resort. Smuggler's Notch is located in the southern tip of the community, and encompasses the northern faces of Morse Mountain, Madonna and Spruce Peaks, and the old settlement area of Morse's Mill.

It is this combination and hierarchy of land use activity, in combination with contrasting open and forested land, that provide the essential character of Cambridge. It is this pattern and character of development that the community wishes to maintain into the future.

Future land use districts.

Village of Cambridge

The Village of Cambridge is proposed to remain a historic center with higher density residential development, commercial establishments, agriculture, and industrial uses consistent with the scale and surroundings. Until such time as sewerage or other off-site wastewater treatment options become available, density will be limited by the soils ability to absorb on-site septic systems. Agriculture is expected to continue especially in the flood hazard area in the north and large agricultural parcels in the southern portions of the village.

Cambridge Junction

Cambridge Junction is expected to continue as a small cluster of commercial, residential and industrial development. Adjacent to Jeffersonville and connected to the village by a bike path and Route 15, Cambridge Junction is a logical area for continued growth and development.

Industrial

The industrial district has been established to provide area for industrial growth that has good highway access and where businesses can operate without conflict with residential areas.

Rural residential district

The rural residential district is a broad district covering lands all over Cambridge. Development within the rural residential district should be consistent with specific site conditions and at a scale consistent with its' proximity to major highways and existing growth centers. Protection of open space and maintenance of existing working landscapes are additional objectives in these areas.

Ski

Smugglers' Notch Resort has been provided its own district on the grounds that it has its own sewage treatment facility. The resort is expected to have a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational development associated with the area. Protection of the scenic and aesthetic qualities of the area, both within and without the resort, is critical to success in the future in the district.

Route 108 South

This district has been established to balance the pressure of commercial and visitor development with aesthetic and scenic concerns as well as the need for safety along this highway corridor. In the future, development in this area should be of a scale and character that maintains the historic feel of the road and continues to protect stretches of open space along the route to the notch.

Conservation

The conservation district has been established to protect the scenic ridgelines and to provide an upper elevational limit (1500 feet) where development may occur in town. The conservation district will provide habitat for wildlife, wilderness for recreation, and large tracts of working forestland.

Flood hazard area

The purpose of this district is to minimize and prevent the loss of life and property, the disruption of commerce, the impairment of the tax base, and the extraordinary expenditures and demands on public services that result from floods.

Future land uses.

It is the desire of the residents of Cambridge to maintain, and expand upon, the traditional settlement pattern that has evolved within the community over the past 200 years. This pattern is characterized by compact residential and commercial development in our Village centers, surrounded by an active, rural, landscape comprised of working farm and forest lands, and residential developments that are sensitive to the limitations of the land, community services, and the viability of productive resource lands.

Implementation.

This Plan may be implemented in a variety of ways including both regulatory and non-regulatory means. In Cambridge, there are currently no zoning regulations (except for flood hazard bylaws) although there is a draft currently under consideration. Subdivision regulations have been in place since 2006. Any bylaws considered for adoption should be focused to address specific issues.

Other non-regulatory options include conservation efforts and capital improvements.

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES (2003)

Objectives

- Cambridge should have a balanced and diverse local economy.
- Cambridge seeks to provide local employment opportunities that provide rewarding jobs at a livable wage
- Cambridge seeks to have stable taxes in order to minimize the burden on economic development.
- Cambridge should minimize barriers and maximize opportunities for economic development in town.
- Development in Cambridge is to be constructed with respect to the northern temperate conditions in town.
- Cambridge should maintain a level of air quality that supports a healthy and safe environment and maintains a clear view of our many scenic vistas.
- Use Cambridge's land resources conservatively for the benefit of existing and future generations.
- Conserve and enhance the soils in Cambridge, especially prime and statewide significant soils, for present and future generations.
- Cambridge's water resources, including its lakes, ponds, streams, rivers, wetlands, groundwater, and associated habitats, are to be preserved and, where degraded, improved in order to ensure water quality for drinking, recreation, and the environment.
- Cambridge must maintain the quality and quantity of local ground water supplies.
- Ensure Cambridge's rivers and streams contain clean water, a healthy riparian habitat and stable stream banks.
- Preserve and protect wetlands from pollution, filling, and any other use or activities that will result in their degradation or a reduction in its capacity to provide wildlife habitat, flood control, and water storage.
- Protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Cambridge by limiting the development in the flood hazard areas to agriculture, recreation, and open space.
- Ensure fragile and natural areas are protected and preserved.
- Maintain the native diversity of wildlife throughout Cambridge through protection of critical habitats.
- Promote the retention of working farms and agricultural products as viable parts of Cambridge's economy, landscape, and culture.
- Retain working forestland as a viable part of Cambridge's economy, landscape, and culture.
- All water, whether public or privately provided, should be clean and sufficient to supply the intended use of the property.
- Cambridge must ensure all wastewater is properly treated so as to protect public health.
- Cambridge's businesses and residents should responsibly dispose of solid waste including efforts to reduce the amount of waste generated and increase recycling.
- Wireless and wired communications facilities must be adequate to support Cambridge businesses and residents.
- For Cambridge to have a well-trained and funded fire, police and rescue

services to provide a safe environment in which to work, live, and play.

- For Cambridge to have a variety of quality local health care options.
- Cambridge's cemeteries should be maintained with respect and dignity and have sufficient capacity to support future need.
- To provide access to recreational facilities and to develop needed facilities in Cambridge, for all of Cambridge's residents.
- Provide for a comprehensive educational experience for all students in a stimulating and supportive environment in the most financially efficient manner practicable.
- The town highway system should be safe and efficient for vehicular and non-vehicular use, as appropriate, and be maintained in a cost efficient manner.
- Bicycle and non-vehicular transportation networks should be safe and conveniently located to encourage their use.
- Cambridge supports efforts to provide regional public transportation services for the general public and special transportation services for those who require assistance.
- Cambridge seeks to have a variety of housing to meet the various needs of the community including vacation homes, single-family dwellings, two family dwellings, mobile homes and apartments.
- Cambridge seeks to have a variety of housing available to meet the needs of the families and non-family households of all age groups.
- The town of Cambridge seeks to promote housing for purchase or rent that is affordable based on a typical household income in town.
- The town seeks to ensure households and individuals with special needs, including the elderly, handicapped, and low-income households, are able to attain suitable and affordable housing.
- For Cambridge to reduce dependence on outside sources of energy through energy efficiency and use of locally available renewable sources.
- Residents and businesses in Cambridge should have reliable power and of the types suitable to meet the various land-uses in town.
- Promote energy efficiency and conservation in the design, construction, and use of municipal, residential, industrial and commercial structures.
- Record and preserve the history of Cambridge.
- Protect, maintain and encourage the functional use of Cambridge's historic structures, sites and areas.
- Maintain the scenic character of Cambridge's landscape.
- Identify and preserve Cambridge's fragile archeological record.
- To maintain and expand upon the traditional settlement pattern and working landscape that has evolved within the community over the past 200 years.
- For development and growth in Cambridge to occur in a reasonable and sustainable manner so as to protect the natural resource base, use services efficiently, and to preserve Cambridge's rural character and historic settlement patterns.

Economic Development Policies

- Cambridge recognizes that small businesses are critical to future economic development in town as they employ a majority of workers. Cambridge, therefore, seeks to promote small business growth in town.
- Home occupations are encouraged and supported provided they do not

- conflict with existing uses in the neighborhood.
- Cambridge supports economic activity that strengthens the viability of farm/forestry and related activities including value added manufacturing.
- Cambridge encourages diversification of the economy provided the activity that is in keeping with the scale and character of the community.
- Cambridge supports protection of its scenic resources as an important component to the tourism sector of the economy.
- The town supports proposals that will provide workforce training to improve opportunities for residents in local businesses.
- The town supports existing and proposed businesses that provide jobs at a livable wage.
- Economic development at the expense of the environment is strongly discouraged. Businesses and industries shall not degrade or endanger air and water resources.
- Planning for future transportation improvements should take the needs of local business and industry into account.
- Cambridge recognizes the value of converting the Lamoille Valley Railroad to a recreation trail. Cambridge supports businesses that will take advantage of this opportunity.

Natural Resources Policies

- New or replaced woodstoves should be replaced with cleaner burning modern woodstoves.
- Any new or replacement furnace should be a clean burning system.
- Earth resources (primarily sand and gravel) should be identified and conserved until needed and reasonably developed in the public interest.
- Development that is proposed near or over important earth resources should account for the potential loss of that resource.
- Extraction and related processing operations will be permitted only when it has been demonstrated that there will be no undue adverse impacts on the town or its residents. Potential conflicts between current land use and proposed extraction operations will be minimized. Strict standards for the operation, maintenance, and restoration of extraction sites may be established as appropriate based on the unique conditions of the area affected.
- All development in town must be pursued with strict regard to the capacity of the soils to support it.
- Development on slopes greater than 30% is prohibited.
- Development on lands over 2,500 feet in elevation is prohibited.
- No form of land waste disposal or storage of possible contaminants should be permitted in high water tables and ground water recharge areas.
- Development within or proximate to a river or stream must take place in such a way as to avoid crossing the stream and to protect and maintain a 50-foot vegetative buffer.
- All bridges and culverts should be built to standards recommended by the Better Back Roads program to ensure minimal impact on rivers and streams.
- Development near the Brewster River Gorge must not have a negative

- impact on the quality of this significant stream feature.
- A naturally vegetated buffer around lake and river shores is required in order to protect the water quality from contaminants as well as protecting the scenic values of the areas.
 - Access to and, where appropriate, traditional uses of the public waters of the community should be maintained.
 - All wetlands are required to have a 50-foot setback. No filling or draining of wetlands is permitted.
 - No development should occur within a flood hazard area except in conformance with the flood hazard bylaws.
 - Agriculture, recreation fields, parks, and open space are all appropriate uses of flood hazard areas.
 - All construction where soil is to be disturbed is required to provide adequate erosion control so that no soil moves off site or into surface waters or wetlands.
 - Agriculture and forestry must abide by Accepted Agricultural Practices and Acceptable Management Practices. Where an activity may have a negative impact on water quality, Best Management Practices are recommended.
 - Total impervious surfaces on developed sites should be less than 10% of the site. Where appropriate, stormwater technologies or techniques should be used to prevent runoff from directly entering any surface water.
 - Development within or proximate to designated natural areas will take place in such a manner as to preserve their value for education, science, research, aesthetics, and recreation.
 - Deer wintering areas and bear habitat must be protected from development and other uses that threaten the ability of the habitat to support the species. Commercial, residential, and industrial development shall not occur in these areas. Developments will be permitted adjacent to deer wintering areas only if it is demonstrated that, in consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, that the integrity of the area for deer habitat will be preserved.
 - Subdivisions and other development should avoid fragmenting habitat. Core habitat areas and interconnecting links (e.g. wetlands areas, riparian zones, travel corridors) are to be preserved.
 - Rare threatened and endangered plants and animals and their habitats will be protected and preserved through appropriate conservation techniques. Where appropriate, a buffer strip should be designed and maintained to ensure protection.

Agricultural and Forestry Policies

- Further fragmentation of productive agricultural land is to be discouraged; continued access to productive farmland will be ensured.
- Development within agricultural areas will be sited to avoid taking viable agricultural areas permanently out of production. Non-agricultural structures should not be placed in open fields and meadows; such structures and related infrastructure will be set back from field edges and follow tree lines where feasible to minimize disturbance and visual impacts and to maximize open productive space.

- Cambridge encourages the use of Best Management Practices where feasible.
- Cambridge supports the efforts of the Cambridge Conservation Commission in the purchase of development rights and other conservation methods provided the land protected meets the objectives of this plan.
- Cambridge encourages farm owners to participate in Vermont's Current Use Program.
- Further fragmentation of productive forestland is to be avoided; continued access to productive forestland will be ensured.
- Cambridge encourages the use of Best Management Practices where feasible.
- Cambridge does NOT support the purchase of working forestland by the state or other public entity unless there is an overriding environmental benefit.
- Cambridge strongly discourages ridgeline development regardless of elevation.

Community Facilities and Services Policies

- Any development within the Village of Cambridge should not place an undue burden on the water system.
- All private wells must be drilled in accordance with state water supply regulations.
- Development within the wellhead protection areas of the public water supplies for Jeffersonville, Cambridge, or Smuggler's Notch Resort or within the isolation distances of a private well must not present a risk of contamination of these resources.
- All wastewater treatment systems must be approved by the Cambridge Health Officer before construction begins.
- Septic systems are not permitted on slopes greater than 20 percent as mandated by state regulations.
- All projects must provide for adequate removal of solid waste.
- Backyard burning of trash is prohibited.
- Wireless telecommunication towers must meet aesthetics standards and other safety requirements as provided in the Town of Cambridge Tower Ordinance.
- Cambridge supports the expansion and enhancement of communication services in town including improvements to high speed internet and cellular phone coverage.
- Driveways and private roads should not exceed eight percent slope so as to accommodate fire and rescue vehicles.
- Height limitations of 40 feet shall be maintained in all residential construction to accommodate fire and rescue efforts.
- Any new development should not place an undue burden on the health services of Cambridge.
- Any new development adjacent to cemeteries should be sited and, if necessary, screened so not to have a negative aesthetic impact on these public spaces.
- Support the provision of recreational facilities which meet identified community needs.

Educational Facilities and Services Policies

- Maintain and enhance facilities for a variety of academic, athletic, social, cultural, and community activities.
- Manage residential growth in a planned, graduated, and predictable pattern and at a level consistent with the Town's fiscal capacity to accommodate its impact on the education system.
- Future design of educational facilities should consider community needs and multiple uses subject to Act 60 restrictions on education spending.

Transportation Facilities and Services

- Provide safe and reliable year round access on class 2 and 3 roads presently maintained by the town and to maintain the scenic quality of roads where practicable.
- Major roadway, especially Routes 15, 104, 108, and 109 should have limited accesses to allow for smooth travel into and out of town.
- New road and driveway accesses must have a suitable sight distance so as to not create blind and hidden driveways.
- All new or upgraded roads, both public and private, must be constructed to town standards.
- Land use and development activities must not have a negative impact on traffic safety and the condition of roads and rights of way.
- Unless the rail line is thrown up by the state, all development adjacent to the rail bed should consider the possibility of future rail use.
- Cambridge supports the railbanking and conversion of the rail line into a recreational right-of-way in the event the rail line is determined to be no longer viable for commercial rail use.
- Cambridge supports continued state ownership and operation of the Morrisville-Stowe Airport recognizing the many useful services it provides the region and its municipalities.
- Sidewalks are expected within village areas to allow safe pedestrian traffic.
- Cambridge encourages and is supportive of grassroots efforts to improve the town pathway network.
- Cambridge supports efforts to provide transportation services to assist elderly and disabled residents who wish to remain in their homes.
- Cambridge supports carpooling and vanpooling by local commuters to reduce transportation costs and impacts.

Housing Policies

- Accessory apartments are encouraged as they provided needed income for the homeowner and needed small apartments for residents living alone.
- Vacation homes are encouraged.
- Cambridge supports a mix of housing types to permit all ages, income levels, and household types to live in town.
- Manufactured homes will be treated in the same manner as site built homes.
- Accessory apartments within or attached to single-family residences are allowed in accordance with state law and are encouraged.

- Low-income housing should be located in areas with access to appropriate services.
- Affordable and low-income housing should minimize long term living costs through high quality design, efficient construction, energy efficiency, and proximity to employment and/or service centers.
- Cambridge encourages land use patterns that are inherently more affordable by nature of cost efficiencies associated with construction (e.g. shorter access roads, common walls, proximity to public utilities, smaller lot sizes).
- Efforts by regional and non-profit organizations to provide increased opportunities for affordable home ownership will be supported provided the efforts are consistent with other elements of the Cambridge Town Plan.
- Support will be given to efforts that assist elderly and disabled residents who want to remain in their homes, and to community based health care systems that enable elderly and disabled people to remain in the community.
- Cambridge supports efforts to provide housing for low income and seasonal employees.

Energy Policies

- Cambridge encourages the development and use of wind, wood, solar, and other renewable energy sources.
- Cambridge supports efforts to upgrade energy transmission and distribution systems in order to increase efficiency.
- Energy conservation and the use of renewable energy resources will be considered in town buildings and operations as appropriate.
- Energy efficiency will be included as a factor in municipal construction, purchases and use. Life cycle costing will be used by the town in evaluating capital expenditures as appropriate.
- Cambridge supports demand side management programs as appropriate to increase energy efficiency and reduce costs.
- Electric heat for home heating is strongly discouraged.
- The energy efficient clustering of development, building, and site design which uses siting and landscaping techniques to reduce building requirements for power, lighting, heating, and cooling will be encouraged.
- Ridesharing, and/or development of bike and pedestrian paths and park and ride lots to reduce transportation costs will be encouraged.
- Home occupations and home based businesses that reduce transportation energy consumption and expense will be encouraged.

Historic, Scenic, & Archeological Policies

- Efforts to compile a history of Cambridge are supported.
- Efforts to protect and preserve items and artifacts of historic significance to Cambridge are supported.
- Development within any designated historic district should be in character with the surrounding architecture.
- Cambridge encourages the restoration and reuse of historic buildings.
- Cambridge supports the efforts of the Cambridge Historical Society in order to implement the goals and policies of this chapter

- Cambridge supports activities that help to maintain and enhance the working landscape and natural beauty of the area.
- Telecommunications towers and other large obvious structures should be carefully designed and sited to minimize impacts on scenic resources.
- Development of high elevation ridgelines is strongly discouraged. Where ridgeline development does occur, it shall be designed and sited so as to maintain the natural scenic character of Cambridge.
- Development in the conservation district, which is not for forestry purposes, is strongly discouraged unless designed and sited not to have a negative impact on the district.
- Projects occurring in the archeologically sensitive areas in town should consider the potential of their project to impact an archeological site during the early planning stages. This will offer the best opportunity to minimize potential impacts.
- If during the development of a project, an archeological site is discovered, the town must be given a reasonable opportunity to investigate and suggest a means to minimize the impact.

Land Use and Development Plan Policies

- Cambridge supports development that is sensitive to the inherent limitation of the land and its impact on the environment, community services and the visual landscape.
- Cambridge encourages diversity within its economic base by supporting commercial and industrial development that is in keeping with the scale and character of the community.
- The clustering and/or siting of development is encouraged in order to replicate traditional patterns of development, to protect rural and scenic character, and to maintain contiguous tracts of resources and open.
- The Flood Hazard district is intended to protect life and property within federally designated flood hazard areas. New construction should not occur within these areas and existing buildings should be flood proofed.
- Higher density residential developments should be located closer to major roadways and existing villages to improve emergency service response.
- Mixed-use developments are encouraged to allow commercial, business, and residential uses to be located near each other.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Economic Development

- ❑ The Cambridge Planning Commission shall explore ways to protect the scenic resources, which are important to the recreation economy and integral to the agricultural and forest sectors.
- ❑ The Cambridge Planning Commission should examine what barriers may exist to industrial development in town and develop a plan to address them.
- ❑ The Planning Commission and Conservation Commission will need to develop a plan for the agricultural future of Cambridge. This plan will need to address the current working landscape and open space.
- ❑ The Planning Commission needs to coordinate open space preservation activities with those of the Cambridge Conservation Commission.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should continue to monitor labor statistics in town including wage and unemployment information.
- ❑ The Selectboard and Trustees should develop capital budgets to stabilize municipal expenses and, therefore, stabilize property taxes required to pay for the services.
- ❑ Cambridge should work with Lamoille Economic Development Corporation (LEDC), area Chambers of Commerce and local businesses to provide local input to regional economic concerns.
- ❑ The Cambridge Planning Commission should pursue funding to develop a recreation plan in order to tie the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail to other trails, services, parking, and attractions in Cambridge.
- ❑ The Cambridge Planning Commission, Selectboard and/or Trustees should provide comments to projects pursuing state approvals. Boards should provide support through letters or by participating in state hearings where a project will have a positive influence on the community.
- ❑ Before adopting any bylaws the Planning Commission should ensure the permit process is not unnecessarily burdensome to applicants due to inefficient or ambiguous regulations.
- ❑ The town should create a development review board to handle project review if any bylaws are adopted.

Natural Resources

- ❑ Carpool and ride share lots should be evaluated to ensure sufficient space is available for commuters. This should be included as a part of the transportation plan.
- ❑ Continue to enforce a burning and disposal of solid waste ordinance, which prohibits the burning of trash.
- ❑ Review state information when the town plan is updated to identify specific issues and opportunities related to air quality in Cambridge.
- ❑ The land use plan should encourage compact developments in or near existing high density centers in order to reduce unnecessary travel thus reducing air pollution.
- ❑ If necessary the town should consider purchasing the rights to a gravel pit or to purchase a property with sufficient gravel resources to provide for the town's needs in the future.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should consider drafting zoning bylaws that

include provisions for the regulation of earth extraction operations. The bylaws should achieve the goals of this section and provide the owner of the site with a clear set of guidelines to follow.

- ❑ Any bylaws should require the submission and local approval of site restoration plans and the provision of adequate surety to guarantee the completion of the restoration plan at the operator's expense.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should identify potential threats to groundwater supplies.
- ❑ The town should adopt, within or separate from zoning bylaws, Wellhead Protection Area regulations to restrict land uses that present a risk of contamination to the groundwater.
- ❑ Cambridge Conservation Commission should continue working with Lamoille Watershed Council and other agencies whose goal is the protection of the rivers and streams in the area.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should consider acquiring funds to have a wetland inventory of the town conducted.
- ❑ The town should consider acquiring funds to purchase properties or development rights of properties within the flood hazard areas.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should review the flood hazard zoning regulation to ensure they are adequate to meet the goals and objectives of this plan.
- ❑ The town supports effort by the Cambridge Conservation Commission to acquire natural and fragile areas in town.
- ❑ The Conservation Commission should conduct a study to determine how much of the fragile habitats and natural areas are protected and determine what gaps exist in the conservation effort.
- ❑ As a result of living in Cambridge, many landowners have an ethic to be good stewards of the land. The Planning Commission recognizes that more can be accomplished by educating, advising, and assisting landowners with their natural and wildlife resource concerns than could be accomplished through regulations. The Planning Commission will support and provide guidance to any property owner with questions or concerns about their natural resources.

Agriculture and Forestry

- ❑ The Planning Commission should assist landowners interested in adopting Best Management Practices.
- ❑ If subdivision regulations are considered for adoption in the future, the Planning Commission should establish standards and allow the use of Planned Unit and Planned Residential Developments (PUDs and PRDs).
- ❑ The Land Use Plan should establish areas in town where agriculture is the primary land use. In this way, conflicting land uses, such as residential properties, will be identified and minimized.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should identify significant agricultural lands through the development and use of planning tools such as Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA).
- ❑ The Planning Commission should monitor and evaluate the local impact of changes to the Current Use Program and examine local property tax alternatives that are sensitive to maintaining productive resource lands.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should identify significant forestlands through

the development and use of planning tools such as Forest Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (FLESA).

- ❑ The Planning Commission should establish areas in town where forestry is the primary land use. In this way, issues such as fragmentation of the resource can be minimized.

Community Facilities and Services

- ❑ As the water system is in good condition, the Trustees should continue to oversee the Village of Cambridge Water System in the same manner as they have in the past.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should conduct a study of the potential threats to the water supply within the WHPA for the Village of Cambridge Water System.
- ❑ The town should adopt, within or separate from zoning bylaws, Well Head Protection Area regulations to restrict land uses that present a risk of contamination to the groundwater that supply our public water supply.
- ❑ Any zoning regulations, if drafted, should require identification of water supplies and provide proof of state compliance.
- ❑ In order to encourage development to locate in close proximity to municipal services and facilities, Cambridge should encourage the access, use and expansion of existing community water systems within their physical limitation and financial constraints of the ratepayers.
- ❑ Cambridge needs to review and if necessary update the Health Ordinance in light of the new septic rules passed by the state in 2002.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should review the tower ordinance to ensure the town's goals are met with respect to telecommunications.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should develop a plan to address telecommunications and information technology.
- ❑ The Selectboard should adopt road standards to ensure that all roads are built to a safe standard.
- ❑ Cambridge should continue to support the fire, rescue, and police services at Town Meeting Day. These services have been provided efficiently and effectively in the past and are expected to continue in that manner in the future.
- ❑ Cambridge supports regional efforts to provide improved emergency services communications.
- ❑ Work with public safety providers (Fire, Rescue & Law Enforcement) in defining problems which may exist as they relate to land use and development in the community.
- ❑ The Selectboard, Planning Commission, and members of the emergency services community need to identify facility needs so that plans can be made to accommodate the town's needs.
- ❑ Cambridge should support public safety improvements and improve development regulations as they relate to identified safety concerns.
- ❑ For the Town to continue to support organizations who provided needed health services to members of the community.
- ❑ For the Planning Commission to meet with the Cemetery Commission and four Cemetery Associations when plans are updated to determine future needs and to discuss issues.

- ❑ For the Planning Commission to work with the Varnum Memorial to address space issues.
- ❑ Work with Recreation Board and other interested groups in planning for recreational facilities as they relate to land use and development.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should work with CAC and other interested groups in planning for facilities as they relate to the arts.

Educational Facilities and Services

- ❑ Representatives and Senators representing Cambridge should work to ensure Act 60 funding is equitable towards Cambridge residents and businesses.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should work with Selectboard, Village Trustees, School Boards and Department Supervisors to develop a capital budget and program for the community as a whole.
- ❑ For safety and to assist in cost containment for busing, Cambridge should enact an ordinance for all regulatory road signs.
- ❑ The Planning Commission and Selectboard should solicit input from the School Board on all Act 250 development projects that may have an impact on education.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should work with School Boards to share information to better understand how to address impacts created by increased residential growth.

Transportation Facilities and Services

- ❑ The road foreman, Selectboard, and Planning Commission should work to maintain and update a Road Surface Management System (RSMS) and Culvert inventory. They are useful for planning; scheduling and budgeting needed road repairs; and major improvements to be included in the town's capital budget and program.
- ❑ The selectboard should plan ahead with sinking fund for bridges and road maintenance.
- ❑ Any zoning or subdivision regulations adopted should address the type and amount of development along Routes 15, 104, 108, and 109 to ensure smooth and safe traffic flow outside of the villages.
- ❑ Where dangerous intersections are identified, Cambridge should work with the state and regional transportation officials to mitigate the risks.
- ❑ The Selectboard, Trustees, and Planning Commission should continue to participate in discussions involving the future of the Lamoille Valley Rail Line.
- ❑ Cambridge should pursue funding for improvements to pedestrian and non-vehicular projects.
- ❑ Cambridge should continue to support the non-profit services provided at the regional level, which provides public transit and other services.
- ❑ Cambridge should continue to appoint a municipal representative to the Lamoille County Transportation Advisory Committee (LCTAC) to coordinate transportation planning, road maintenance, and improvements with adjoining towns, and to ensure that the interests of the town are adequately addressed by the region and state.

Housing

- ❑ Any zoning bylaws, if adopted, should encourage higher density housing near the village areas to take advantage of services and reduce municipal services expenses.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should continue to monitor changes in population demographics to determine if adequate housing exists for all segments of the population.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should work with Lamoille Housing Partnership to encourage development of an adequate supply of affordable housing in Cambridge.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should work with special needs service providers to encourage the availability of housing for those individuals with special needs.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should recommend zoning bylaws if low quality or unattractive transient housing becomes an issue in town.

Energy.

- ❑ Cambridge should conduct an inventory of all renewable energy opportunities in town including wind, wood, hydroelectric and solar.
- ❑ Zoning bylaws, if adopted, must address the needs of fuel providers. The bylaws should include areas in town for bulk storage of heating fuels and include locations for gasoline service stations.
- ❑ Conduct regular energy audits of all municipal buildings.
- ❑ Study the feasibility of developing another commuter park and ride lot in town.

Historic, Scenic, & Archeological

- ❑ The Cambridge Historical Society should work with individual property owners to develop a historic resources inventory for the community. Review and verify existing inventories for completeness and accuracy.
- ❑ A historic district should be considered if zoning bylaws are proposed.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should coordinate with the historical society in order to implement the goals and policies of this plan.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should consider site plan review and/or subdivision regulations as a means to guide development to achieve the goals and objectives identified in this plan.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should review the Cambridge tower ordinance to ensure the provisions are adequate to achieve the scenic goals of this plan.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should incorporate ridgeline standards in any zoning or subdivision bylaws. Alternatively, the Planning Commission could consider developing a ridgeline ordinance to regulate development in certain scenic areas of town.
- ❑ Where an archeological site is discovered on an undeveloped property or part of a property, the town supports the purchase of the property or development rights on the effected portion as a means of compensating landowners for the loss of development potential. Purchase of development rights are always on a willing seller basis.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should develop a comprehensive set of provisions within the zoning bylaws to achieve the policies of preservation of archeological resources.

Land Use and Development Plan

- ❑ The Planning Commission should work closely with local developers, landowners and businesses in defining innovative ways of encouraging development activity that will serve to enhance the rural character of the community.
- ❑ Cambridge should utilize existing development controls and state regulatory proceedings, such as Act 250, in an effort to implement the goals and objectives of this Plan.
- ❑ Cambridge should investigate the need and support for local development controls that will implement the goals and objectives of this Plan while encouraging flexibility and creativity as part of the development process.
- ❑ The Planning Commission should review all ‘Act 250’ applications for its compliance with the land use plan. Where the application is determined to not conform to this chapter or any goal or policy, the Planning Commission should participate in the ‘Act 250’ process in order to ensure the concerns of the town are addressed.