

PLANNING AMHERST TOGETHER

LAST CALL

FOR YOUR “LAST MINUTE” ENDORSEMENTS OR CRITICISMS OF 242 DIFFERENT STRATEGIES FOR AMHERST’S FUTURE!

Over 500 town residents participated in our 10 different **IDEA GATHERING** sessions last fall where over 3400 different ideas on Amherst’s future were generated. You can find all these different citizen ideas at

WWW.PlanningAmherstTogether.org

Over 150 citizens further distilled those ideas at **COMMUNITY CHOICES** in February.

Over 600 citizens, chosen at random, have so far completed a **COMMUNITY SURVEY** that tells us if our work really reflects the aspirations of the Amherst community. In addition, some 50 other citizens have served for many months on 7 **Work Groups** helping our Comprehensive Planning Committee of 27 citizens and its consultants complete the job.

But somehow along the way, we might have missed you. Or you might have missed us!

So this is our **LAST CALL** for you to tell us which strategies you like most and like least for the future of Amherst. All 242 strategies are divided among 7 different elements as required in a Master Plan. Under EACH subject headings (# 1 through #7), you are being asked to select *the 5 strategies you like MOST* and also indicate the other 5 you *like LEAST*. On the last page – you can add your personal comments and suggestions.

Please return this completely filled-out 12-page form to us no later than Friday, Aug. 10th by way of the individual who gave it to you. . .

Or by inserting it in the nearby suggestion box. . . Town Hall... or the Libraries.

Or by mailing it to: **Planning Department, Town Hall, Amherst MA 01002**

For further information, contact Niels la Cour 259-3040 or at lacourn@amherstma.gov.

1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**STRATEGIES: PLEASE CIRCLE EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE MOST.
& CROSS-OUT EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE LEAST.**

- E-1: Increase the size of suitably zoned industrial research parks, business and commercial areas provided with appropriate town infrastructure
- E-2: Develop zoning that encourages sustainable development principles for mixed use, residential and high density within the village centers and downtown.
- E-3: Market and promote the town to targeted business.
- E-4: Make downtown/village centers attractive and convenient to use.
- E-5: Increase land for professional, light industrial and commercial use.
- E-6: Provide incentives for high priority, targeted development.
- E-7: Re-examine regulatory by-laws, streamline business regulation and expedite permitting to provide regionally competitive, responsive and timely services to businesses.
- E-8: Provide pre-approved zoning in targeted development zones.

- E-9: Develop and implement a shared town/gown strategy for economic development to achieve common goals.
- E-10: Encourage and assist UMass to create a research park that provides for commercialization and business expansion of university/college research, including incubator space for companies.
- E-11: Share university, college and town facilities and resources for mutual benefit.
- E-12: Organize and develop financial and staff resources to support the town's economic development program and strategic plan.
- E-13: Appoint a permanent committee to develop and implement a comprehensive economic development strategic plan.
- E-14: Support initiatives to market local products, businesses and services.
- E-15: Conduct a broad assessment and market downtown to target businesses and visitors.
- E-16: Resolve parking needs and improve accessibility and circulation to downtown.
- E-17: Develop downtown and the town's natural resources as tourism destinations by leveraging existing cultural, historical, entertainment and education resources, provide inviting streetscapes and develop new attractions.
- E-18: Capture "secondary (follow-on) market" of visitors to colleges and university.
- E-19: Improve and expand internet communication/ broadband (including wireless availability) E-throughout the town, including high speed (internet 2 and other state of the art technology) connections.
- E-20: Identify new opportunities for industrial research park and commercial centers. Change zoning as necessary, and provide with appropriate town infrastructure.
- E-21: Support growth of burgeoning technology and creative economy businesses, including development of necessary facilities.
- E-22: Provide internships in local businesses (including agricultural) to high school and college students.
- E-23: Create a network of advisors to mentor new businesses in town ranging from the virtual company to bricks and mortar businesses.
- E-24: Establish the real cost of the University and colleges to the town and negotiate fair compensation.
- E-25: Promote economic development projects at the University and colleges that produce tax revenues for the town.
- E-26: Link and partner with other municipal and state wide advocacy groups to promote significant relief of property taxes.

2. HOUSING

**STRATEGIES: PLEASE CIRCLE EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE MOST.
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- H-1: Develop a flexible development bylaw, with site plan review and performance standards, using a range of prices as the key criterion that allows the developer to use the flexible development bylaw.
- H-2: Base building within a development on a formula for the total allowable square footage for all units combined rather than a unit count, with the goal of seeing a greater number of smaller units instead of fewer larger homes.
- H-3: Allow 2-family houses by-right in all residential zoning districts, with site plan review.
- H-4: Eliminate lot size requirement differences for 1- and 2-family homes.
- H-5: Encourage the construction of smaller homes by zoning for smaller lots and using dimensional regulations to limit the footprint of homes.
- H-6: Revise Zoning regulations to make it easier to create attached and detached accessory apartments in all residential zoning districts.
- H-7: Develop design guidelines for multi-family dwellings, such as town homes and apartments, to increase community acceptance of a diversity of housing types.
- H-8: Increase the percentage of affordable units required in new developments when cost feasible.
- H-9: Increase the density bonus to make it financially attractive for developers to build affordable units.
- H-10: Create a formal process for receiving and acting upon input from the Amherst Housing Authority and/or the Housing Partnership regarding the potential for a set-aside of land specifically for affordable units when the town is acquiring conservation land or other new land, and whenever the town is disposing of town land.
- H-11: Create a formal Town process for resolving competing land use interests, such as open space and affordable housing.
- H-12: Develop a fast-track subdivision, site plan, and building permit process for qualified affordable housing developments.

- H-13: Waive, reduce and/or rebate fees, including water and sewer connections and permitting fees, for all affordable housing units.
- H-14: Look for ways to preserve family rental housing options and strategies to preserve affordable units whose affordability restrictions are expiring.
- H-15: Work with local CDCs and affordable housing developers to develop new family rental housing with more than 2 bedrooms.
- H-16: Work with the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity to encourage the creation of sweat-equity ownership housing for low-income households.
- H-17: Help create funding for and encourage collaboration with Amherst Area Housing Trust, Inc.
- H-18: Lobby the State Legislature to create a state-level matching fund program for the purchase of land to be used specifically for affordable housing.
- H-19: All newly created affordable units should have long-term affordability restrictions with equity building provisions.
- H-20: Review existing zoning districts and modify both zoning district lines and zoning setback/dimensional requirements to create more infill opportunities.
- H-21: Inventory and analyze the lots that are categorized by the Assessor as “unbuildable” and create a mechanism whereby small infill homes might be allowed on some lots in exchange for affordability deed restrictions.
- H-22: Intensify upper story housing development Downtown (B-G and B-L zoning districts) by revising zoning to eliminate unit count and total residential area limitations.
- H-23: Rezone Limited Business areas near Downtown to General Business to make it easier to create multi-family residential units and residential units in conjunction with businesses.
- H-24: Increase the allowable residential density near existing services, Village Centers, campuses and in other suitable areas.
- H-25: Ensure zoning and land use regulations encourage mixed-use, multi-family development projects.
- H-26: Provide a density bonus incentive for developments that meet energy efficiency standards in new buildings.
- H-27: Adopt Low Impact Development standards for all new residential developments.
- H-28: Modify the Amherst Cluster Bylaw to require high-density clustering of housing in the more rural parts of town, to achieve a smaller development footprint and greater open space.
- H-29: Create special zoning districts or zoning overlay districts in certain suitable areas for private student housing.
- H-30: Develop design standards for private student housing zones.
- H-31: Encourage the production of affordable units for seniors.
- H-32: Encourage the production of affordable assisted living units.
- H-33: Increase the density bonus to make it financially attractive for developers to build accessible units.
- H-34: Provide incentives to developers to encourage “visitability” throughout housing developments where accessible units are built.

3. LAND USE

STRATEGIES: PLEASE CIRCLE EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE MOST.
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- L-1: Creating design standards
- L-2: Update inventories of key natural resources in Amherst and publish the results.
- L-3: Evaluate resource lands on the basis of quality, priority, and connectivity.
- L-4: Identify areas to preserve, areas where a varying combination of preservation and development should occur, and areas to allow development with only modest controls.
- L-5: Purchase the most critical properties.
- L-6: Revise growth management regulations—zoning, subdivision regulations, health regulations, etc.
- L-7: Revise or create zoning overlay districts for aquifer, watershed, forest, and farming resources. [Such districts already exist for everything except forest lands.]
- L-8: Buffer zones can minimize the impact of new buildings on nearby key resources.
- L-9: Encourage development in village centers and downtown.
- L-10: ID un-built areas suitable for development consider increased density zoning for them. Encourage development in non-key resource areas.
- L-11: Create market or another mechanism for transfer of development rights from key areas to non-key areas and village centers. Should include bonus density for energy efficient development.

- L-12: An ad hoc committee for rezoning Town.
- L-13: Give benefits for sustainable/green farming practices
- L-14: Revise or create zoning overlay districts for aquifer, watershed, forest, and farming resources. [Such districts already exist for many types of farming except forest lands.]
- L-15: Create and expand farming overlay districts
- L-16: Create regulations that assure farmers' interests would be supported.
- L-17: Acquire APRs (agricultural preservation restrictions), buy development rights to farms
- L-18: Create a "market" for protection – sell density to other more appropriate areas. For example establish a mechanism for transferring development rights to areas where denser development is more appropriate.
- L-19: Create zoning that allows sustainable agriculture (farming practices that preserve the fertility of the soil over generations) as well as other general practices of good farming or forestry and its impacts on the local neighborhood.
- L-20: Encourage community charettes to encourage public input into design.
- L-21: Educate public in land use accepted practices and principles.
- L-22: Create a "market" for protection – sell density to other more appropriate areas. For example establish a mechanism for transferring development rights to areas where denser development is more appropriate.
- L-23: Appropriate re-zoning
- L-24: Economic Development Opportunity Area (EDOA) type programs
- L-25: Identify areas appropriate for density increases and redevelopment.
- L-26: Reduce energy use by putting new residences near supporting goods and services
- L-27: Use flexible zoning techniques, such as form based codes, to promote mixed use.
- L-28: Create zoning/overlay bonuses for well designed infill/redevelopment
- L-29: Evaluate these areas on the basis of quality and priority, identifying areas to:
 - a) Emphasize preservation (historic areas of the downtown and village centers - key resource areas)
 - b) Emphasize adaptive reuse (particularly high quality historic areas of the downtown),
 - c) Allow a varying combination of preservation and re-development (other village centers, transitional or neighborhood business areas)
 - d) Allow more extensive development and redevelopment with a balance of incentives and controls (highway commercial corridors, research parks, etc.).
 - e) Encourage appropriately scaled and designed but denser uses (village centers and downtown)
- L-30: Change zoning to allow denser residential occupancy near services.
- L-31: Create walkable neighborhoods and Village Centers
- L-32: Create walkways between businesses and residences – create walkways between buildings.
- L-33: Find out how much housing is needed to support vibrancy
- L-34: Support spaces that combine living and work (artist's lofts, high tech small business)
- L-35: Build a permanent farmer's market
- L-36: Develop more public art
- L-37: Use downtown green spaces more intensely, add play spaces to encourage people of all ages to congregate
- L-38: Sweep more often in the sand and salt season
- L-39: Create music/dance/meeting venues downtown
- L-40: Promote tourism in town
- L-41: Revise growth management regulations—zoning, subdivision regulations, health regulations, etc.
- L-42: ID design elements and ID a strict design process, Design Review Board?
- L-43: Increase density of residential units in specified areas when strict design and planning guidelines are met
- L-44: Allow/encourage "in-law" (auxiliary) apartments and duplexing of existing housing stock
- L-45: Explore establishing "RPRs: Residential Protection Restriction (similar to APRs) that will allow selling part of the cost of a housing unit so it becomes permanently affordable
- L-46: Identify and inventory areas suitable for different kinds of commercial development in Amherst.
- L-47: Purchase development rights, easements, for the most critical properties to spur appropriate development & redevelopment.
- L-48: Use public property ownership as a development incentive as well as a control.
- L-49: Create zoning/overlay district for light business?
- L-50: Establish business parks with necessary infrastructure for clean businesses, research, hidden tech looking for visibility, professionals in appropriate areas.
- L-51: Organize and coordinate administrative procedures to ensure that the permit process itself does not represent an unreasonable impediment to desired development.

- L-52: Better utilize the expertise made possible by the university and colleges to benefit the local private economy.
- L-53: Increase usefulness of PRP.
- L-54: Actively promote local business.
- L-55: Revise growth management regulations—zoning, subdivision regulations, health regulations, etc.
- L-56: ID design elements and ID a strict design process, Design Review Board?
- L-57: Make the map of future greenways, sidewalks, bike lanes and work toward the map.
- L-58: Work with land owners to establish easements.
- L-59: ID areas - Inventory and evaluate town-owned lands that are not dedicated or restricted to a specific use (e.g. land on Stanley Street, at the schools, Sand Hill Road, community field near the high school, and the north fire station are land parcels that fall into this category)
- L-60: ID appropriate locations for building for recreation - Evaluate these areas on the basis of quality and priority, for preservation (historic areas of the downtown and village centers, key resources and development.)

4. NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

STRATEGIES: PLEASE CIRCLE EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE MOST. & CROSS-OUT EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE LEAST.

- N-1: Continuously update the Inventory and map of Amherst's historic resources and verify that they are available to the Building Department. Assure a link between demolition requests and the list of historic resources.
- N-2: Establish a historic overlay district in order to encourage preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of buildings and other resources in existing and proposed Historic Register districts.
- N-3: Establish a local historic district ordinance in order to provide enhanced protection and attention for our most significant concentrations of historic resources.
- N-4: Establish a low-interest revolving loan program for rehabilitating historic buildings. (likely administrative body: Amherst Historical Society or other non-profit organization).
- N-5: Encourage preservation, restoration and rehabilitation/adaptive reuse of historic buildings and outbuildings. (collaboration with: Assessor's Office)
Examples:
a) Tax incentives, tax abatements.
b) Seek grants that pay for restoration of significant agricultural buildings, with long-term maintenance contracts with owners.
- N-6: Establish a historic plaque program in conjunction with the Amherst 250th anniversary. (Use the income from plaque purchases to benefit historic preservation efforts such as the revolving fund, above.)
- N-7: Continue to expand and improve the wayfinding system, to mark historic districts and village centers, and to encourage tourism. (collaboration with: Design Review Board, Department of Public Works, Chamber of Commerce, Town Commercial Relations Committee, etc.).
- N-8: Develop outreach tools (tours, print publications, web sites, etc.) to disseminate historical data and knowledge of town history among the public.
- N-9: Work with Chamber of Commerce to encourage cultural tourism.
- N-10: Develop a street tree inventory and shade tree replacement plan, e.g. in conjunction with the 250th anniversary. (collaboration with: Department of Public Works, Shade Tree Commission).
- N-11: Create an inventory of local organizations and artists in all fields of cultural endeavor.
- N-12: Inventory and assess performance, assembly, and exhibit venues within the community (including open air spaces, meeting rooms, etc.).
- N-13: Organize a town and 3-college cultural event committee to create opportunities for joint programming and promotion. (collaboration with: Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Committee, Cultural Commission, etc.)
- N-14: Create a clearinghouse to compile and disseminate information on cultural events through a variety of outlets (e.g. web site, brochures, broadcast media, scrolling LED sign, etc.).
- N-15: Develop a Visitor/Cultural Center in the town center that provides information and amenities such as public restrooms, publicity materials, and a calendar of events.
- N-16: Provide an incentive program/zoning amendment that requires large development projects within the town center to provide a certain percentage of civic and/or publicly accessible space.
- N-17: Provide incentives to building-owners to increase space for locally produced public art and performances (e.g. public acknowledgement, density bonuses, opening-hour extensions).

- N-18: Establish a revolving/trust fund to support public art and resident artists. (oversight authority to be determined)
- N-19: Sponsor design competitions for streetscape fixtures (bus stops, furniture, recycling bins, etc.)
- N-20: Identify and permanently protect highest-quality habitats, particularly as identified by MA-DCR, EOEEA.
- N-21: Identify and permanently protect lands buffering Amherst water supply wells and reservoirs from development. Apply appropriate conservation mechanisms to protect Amherst water supply, wells, and aquifers. Example: *purchase restrictions from Water Resource budget.*
- N-22: Identify and permanently protect lands containing priority soil types for best viable agricultural activities (e.g. farming, forestry).
- N-23: Identify and permanently protect important wildlife corridors (movement areas and connections through fragmented habitats) from development, to help piece together the corridors and to link habitats together, in the regional as well as local context. Example: *Identify and place warning signs at major wildlife crossings.*
- N-24: Create Green Infrastructure plan to prioritize areas most suitable for land protection and/or development.
- N-25: Research the markets for all agricultural products produced in Amherst.
- N-26: Award higher points for creating (not just eliminating) open space/habitat contiguous to the undeveloped or protected portions of land adjacent to housing construction.
- N-27: Actively manage town-owned conservation land as wildlife habitat.
- N-28: Establish an incentive program for green building design standards for new and renovated municipal, commercial, and residential development. (e.g. using LEED Rating System by USGBC)
- N-29: Encourage cluster subdivision design, construction of low energy houses, application of renewable energy sources (solar, geothermal, etc.) by means such as tax incentives, accelerated permitting.
- N-30: Encourage the University and colleges to adopt green design principles similar to those proposed for the town.
- N-31: Implement a program of education and incentives to promote a green lifestyle by Amherst citizens.
- N-32: Reduce reliance on the personal auto or low-occupancy use of same by providing alternative means of transportation and incentives for their use.
Examples:
a) *Increase PVTa bus services in and to/from Amherst.*
b) *Create integrated system of bike lanes and bike paths throughout town to promote a cycling culture. Plan for ample bike parking spaces in zoning bylaw.*
c) *Work with employers to reward carpooling and use of public or energy-efficient transportation.*
- N-33: Encourage recycling by placing receptacles in public spaces of village centers.
- N-34: "Green" the schools as a means of both implementing and teaching sustainability.
Examples:
a) *Implement green building design standards for renovation projects and furnishings.*
b) *Encourage the cafeteria to use organic/local produce and fresh foods.*
c) *Encourage student use of buses and other alternatives to the personal auto.*
d) *Encourage private schools to use collective transportation.*
e) *Increasing recycling efforts.*
f) *Educate students about sustainable choices in areas from nutrition to the environment.*
- N-35: Design walkable conservation neighborhoods and intra-neighborhood connections, and update current subdivision regulations accordingly.
- N-36: Create incentives to attract targeted businesses—e.g. those providing essential everyday services and products—to village centers. Examples: *incentives could include shared parking, accelerated permitting, tax-incentive financing.*
- N-37: Invent and promote a green motto for Amherst ("Amherst goes green" or the like). Under this initiative, give out rewards/awards/plaques for lifestyle choices.

5. OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

STRATEGIES: PLEASE CIRCLE EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE MOST. & CROSS-OUT EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE LEAST.

- O-1: Identify key strategic conservation, recreation, and agriculture land parcels that may be eligible in the future for acquisition or protection.
- O-2: Match these parcels with public and private programs that will support acquisition and/or protection.

- O-3: Develop clear agreements between the regional school department and the Town that define the division of maintenance responsibilities for recreational facilities
- O-4: Improve handicap access to existing recreational facilities
- O-5: Develop new, well-designed recreational facilities that are, or will be, in high demand
- O-6: Focus the development of new facilities on activities that are underserved by the current limitations of the Town's existing recreational assets e.g. Ultimate, Town League baseball.
- O-7: Employ town policies to encourage the economic viability of the farm community.
- O-8: Define priority agricultural districts and develop a protocol for conserving land within these districts.
- O-9: Acknowledge and support the original plan to use the old land fill for recreational purposes
- O-10: Conduct a juried design competition to develop a supportable vision for Kendrick Park
- O-11: Identify tracts of land where recreation and conservation can exist side by side ala Mill River.
- O-12: Augment the public trail system with ad hoc permission from private landowners to connect commercial destinations to public rights of way as a means of encouraging sustainable transportation
- O-13: Work with the Town Manager to develop the role of a "Land Use Specialist" to mediate, prioritize, and coordinate competing proposals for various municipal land parcels and prospective private land acquisition targets
- O-14: Inventory old "pocket park" projects e.g. Stanly Street, Cow Field, Orchard Valley, Pomeroy Court, and develop an appropriate plan for public use
- O-15: Publicize National recreation standards to inform Amherst citizens about the relative shortfalls in Town recreational facilities
- O-16: Use creative zoning by-laws e.g. open space offsets, TDR's, preservation banks, to encourage design that enhances the landscape.

6. SERVICES & FACILITIES

**STRATEGIES: PLEASE CIRCLE EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE MOST.
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- S-1: Continue to support high quality police, fire/EMS and dispatch services that are adequately staffed, trained and equipped.
- S-2: Improve Fire/EMS response time to all areas of Town consistent with national standards with careful consideration of the Fire Station Study Committee report.
http://www.amherstma.gov/departments/Fire/11_2006_presentation_to_town_meeting%20.pdf
- S-3: Encourage community policing and bike patrols and other opportunities to bring citizens and law enforcement together (benign police presence)
- S-4: Continue collaboration of colleges and the Town regarding student behavior.
 - a) Work with University to craft messages to address noise, drug and alcohol and other problems.
 - b) Encourage neighborhoods to work with police to control disruptive behavior and encourage neighborhoods to share strategies of controlling disruptive behavior with others.
- S-5: Negotiate payments from the tax exempt colleges and the University for their share of the cost of public safety services.
- S-6: Provide adequate funding for school renovations and new facilities as recommended by the school committee, school administration and the Joint Capital Planning Committee.
- S-7: Identify potential land parcels and secure a site for a future new elementary school.
- S-8: Maintain high quality library services.
- S-9: Continue to support recreation and leisure activities (e.g., LSSE) for Amherst residents of all ages.
Examples:
 - a) Provide activities for youth supportive of a responsible life style.
 - b) Support the concept of community facilities and public meeting space (e.g., Library community spaces, school buildings).
 - c) Multi-purpose community/recreational facility (see LSSE Master Plan).
 - d) Explore possible uses of old landfill for recreation or other purposes.
 - e) Construct public rest rooms at Kiwanis Park, Plum Brook soccer fields and other public areas.
- S-10: Identify land for new cemetery space.
- S-11: Expanded senior services to meet the needs of a growing senior population.
- S-12: Help support social service agencies by encouraging communication, coordination, collaboration and accountability. If seeking funding, support priority needs of Amherst low-income residents.
- S-13: Continue to use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and other available sources of revenue to help low and moderate income families pay for childcare services.

- S-14:** Support the expansion of medical facilities in Amherst with more comprehensive health care services.
Examples:
a) Continue to assist Hampshire HealthConnect in maintaining a satellite site which assists Amherst residents in finding free or low-cost health care.
b) Encourage multi-cultural education and outreach to Amherst residents on health care issues.
- S-15:** Encourage good health care practices such as physical activity through community design, public policies and communications strategies.
- S-16:** Promote policies to encourage maintenance of rental housing in compliance with Massachusetts codes and town regulations.
- S-17:** Explore alternative means of disseminating information for those who don't have access to the Town website, such as notice in newspapers, flyers distributed to homes, and village center postings.
- S-18:** Explore the use of an information and referral system such as First Call For Help, through which people can get answers to questions about services, programs, and facilities in the town.
- S-19:** Support and implement recommendations and priorities of the Joint Capital Plan and provide adequate funding to support the plan to avoid a backlog of deferred maintenance.
- S-20:** New or renovated Department of Public Works facility.
- S-21:** Continued maintenance and repair of sidewalks consistent with the sidewalk plan.
- S-22:** Maintain excellent wastewater facilities according to the Wastewater Facilities Plan.
- S-23:** Maintain and update water facilities as appropriate to ensure high water quality standards according to the Water Facilities Plan.
- S-24:** Maintain street lights and upgrade the lighting system to be more energy efficient and implement "Dark Sky" concepts to reduce light pollution.
- S-25:** Investigate and study future sewer extensions.
- S-26:** Explore extension of utilities (e.g., water and sewer) to encourage appropriate commercial development.
- S-27:** Make improvements to the storm water and drainage system as appropriate.
- S-28:** The Town should continue to practice Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) in the following areas:
a) Water conservation and leak detection
b) Wastewater reuse for irrigation of athletic fields
c) Implementation of a Stormwater Management Plan and water quality Best Management Practices (BMPs).
d) Reduction of inflow/infiltration in the wastewater collection system
e) Watershed and aquifer land acquisition.
- S-29:** Support principles of the town's Climate Action Plan (2005) to reduce greenhouse gases.
http://www.amherstma.gov/departments/Conservation/CAP_9-27-05_FINAL-cover1.pdf
- S-30:** Provide incentives for use of alternative sources of energy (e.g., wind, solar). Identify programs that will facilitate alternative sources through public and private partnerships.
- S-31:** Explore ways of reducing energy consumption and implementing environmentally sound practices in public buildings and facilities.
- S-32:** Develop a single Town website/portal that provides citizens and businesses secure access to all Town services information.
- S-33:** Extend the Town's technology infrastructure securely and completely to the wireless world, providing Town departments seamless access to technology systems while mobile (e.g., Inspection Services, DPW, public safety).
- S-34:** Improve and expand internet communications/broadband (including wireless availability) throughout the Town, including high speed (internet 2 and other state of the art technology) connections to connect citizens with each other and the outside world and to promote business retention and growth.
- S-35:** Continue to support for the mutual aid agreement with the Town and colleges.
- S-36:** Continue to explore ways of coordinating services and develop programs such as public health emergency planning and community service activities.
- S-37:** Explore shared use of existing facilities at Amherst and Hampshire Colleges and the University of Massachusetts (e.g., recreation fields and facilities).
- S-38:** Support the Human Rights Commission to develop and implement principles to promote a respectful and civil community. Examples of issues to be addressed:
a) Raise the level of awareness of problems.
b) Provide opportunities that would encourage community service and volunteer work for all Amherst residents, including students.
c) Encourage and reinforce a sense of civic pride.
d) Support and encourage multicultural activities.

- e) Promote respectful and civil behavior.
- f) Promote education and training to encourage tolerance.
- g) Develop a culture of neighborhood civility that is shared with students residing in the neighborhood.

7. TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION

STRATEGIES: PLEASE CIRCLE EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE MOST. & CROSS-OUT EXACTLY FIVE NUMBERS AT LEFT OF STRATEGIES YOU LIKE LEAST.

- T-1:** Designate and maintain bicycle lanes of at least four feet in width on all major arterial and commuter roadways. (short term and ongoing)
Examples:
 a) *Stripe and mark lanes annually.*
 b) *Incorporate new bicycle lanes in the repaving design of roads currently lacking sufficient width for bicycle lanes.*
 c) *Install "Share the Road" signage where bicycle lanes cannot be designated.*
 d) *Remove or repair impediments such as grates, rough pavement and potholes, overhanging mailboxes and brush, etc.*
 e) *Regularly sweep away sand and broken glass from bicycle lanes and intersections.*
 f) *Smooth crosswalks, railroad crossings, and sewers. (medium term)*
- T-2:** Provide shelters, benches, and bicycle racks at all major bus stops in town.
- T-3:** Expand the sidewalk network to increase pedestrian accessibility and safety along major roadways, in neighborhoods, and in other areas of high pedestrian traffic. (medium term)
Examples:
 a) *South East Street (Colonial Village to College Street), East Pleasant Street (Village Park to Eastman Lane), East Hadley Road (South Pleasant Street to Columbia Drive), and Old Farm Road (Cross Brook to Pine Grove)*
 b) *Require new developments to link to existing pedestrian connections.*
 c) *Develop an integrated network of sidewalks, footpaths, and trails to maximize geographic access. (long term)*
- T-4:** Improve safety and comfort features used by pedestrians. (short & medium term and ongoing)
Examples:
 a) *Maintain smooth walking surfaces and prioritize sidewalks in need of repair of cracks, potholes, and tree root upheavals.*
 b) *Maintain clearly marked crosswalks at intersections of high pedestrian traffic that do not have pedestrian signals.*
 c) *Provide adequate street lighting in downtown, village centers, and neighborhoods.*
 d) *Switch current pedestrian signals to "countdown"-style signals, allowing adequate time for the elderly and handicapped to cross.*
 e) *Enforce timely snow removal in downtown, village centers, and neighborhoods.*
- T-5:** Build parking/storage facilities for bicycles at destination sites such as downtown, village centers, shopping areas, bus stops, and possible new park-n-ride lots. (medium term)
Examples:
 a) *Include indoor or weather-protected shelters when possible.*
 b) *Racks should be visible to the cyclist and have adequate surrounding lighting.*
- T-6:** Make village centers bicycle friendly and pedestrian friendly.
Examples:
 a) *Site motor vehicle parking in the rear of commercial buildings*
 b) *Incorporate bike lanes and sidewalks*
 c) *Minimize curb cuts*
 d) *Have well-marked pedestrian crossings and pedestrian-activated traffic signals.*
 e) *Provide ample bicycle parking, adequate street lighting, and benches.*
- T-7:** Create "smart" transit stops. (long term)
Examples:
 a) *GPS technology on transit vehicles and cheap display technology at transit stops allows riders to monitor wait times.*
 b) *Directions and information about business, attractions, and events in the immediate vicinity and throughout town could be provided in response to queries.*

- T-8:** Establish community-oriented transit using appropriately sized buses and vans, to complement existing Five Colleges-oriented transit but unconstrained by its operational requirements and utilizing a cost-effective mix of town-operated and contracted-out equipment and operations. (long term)
- T-9:** Make land use changes to reduce the number of cars in the downtown area.
Examples:
a) Abolish parking requirements for residential development in the downtown area in order to increase density, maximize the area available for residential and commercial development, and create a vital pedestrian atmosphere. (medium term)
b) Unbundle parking from development requirements so that residents pay for the parking they use in addition to rent or condo fees. (medium term)
c) Tax land devoted to parking at the same rate as land used for other development. (medium term)
- T-10:** Utilize maps, guides, and instructional materials to promote alternative transportation modes.
Examples:
a) Produce and distribute maps of pedestrian routes, trails, and footpaths.
b) Create multimodal access guides showing intersections of pedestrian, bicycle, and bus routes.
c) Create guides identifying major destination points within Amherst and in the nearby area, with instructions on how to reach them by foot, bicycle, or bus, and noting whether they are handicap accessible.
d) Produce instructional videos to air on ACTV on how to use alternative transportation in Amherst and how to get to major destination points.
- T-11:** Experiment with other ways to encourage non-motorized transportation.
Examples:
a) On a trial basis, close one or two blocks of the downtown area for special town events such as a Street Fair, Arts and Craft Fair, Harvest Festival, "Walk About Town Day". (short term)
b) Offer a Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program to ensure that public transit riders can get home in an emergency. (long term)
c) Adopt a "Safe Routes to School" program <<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/>>. (medium term)
d) Promote bicycling and walking to school, possibly as an alternative to physical education requirements. (short term)
e) Consider using present locations with excess parking as temporary lots for town weekend events. For example, a public school parking lot could be used for park-n-ride services for town weekend events. (short term)
f) Lobby the State Legislature to change the excise tax to a mileage-based system that would encourage drivers to consider transportation alternatives. (long term)
- T-12:** Establish a north-south route that offers weekday and Saturday service throughout the year.
Examples:
a) Persuade PVRTA and UMass to support this community-oriented route and to operate it according to a business calendar, rather than an academic calendar. (short term)
b) Focus funding resources and promotional efforts on making this a convenient and well-used route. (short term)
c) Offer express bus service along a north-south spine that connects village centers and downtown with east-west local service shuttle loops based at nodes along the spine. Some loops might circulate continuously during the day, while others might be flex routes that go into neighborhoods depending on demand. (long term)
- T-13:** Pursue local and regional improvements to transit service connectivity.
a) Revise Amherst town bus schedules as necessary to facilitate transfers between routes. (short term)
b) Coordinate schedules, stops, and frequency of service of Amherst-based transit system with other transit systems in the region, including other PVRTA bus routes and FRTA bus routes (FRTA bus route goes from Greenfield to South Deerfield and Amherst). (short term)
c) Advocate for expanded and more direct bus service from Amherst to other major employment centers in the region. (medium term)
- T-14:** Provide seasonal bus service to major off-road hiking and biking trailheads. (medium term)
- T-15:** Use Zoning Bylaws and Planning Board project review to advance transportation goals.
Examples:
a) Adopt zoning provisions and other policies that call for large-scale retail and housing developments to have transit access (and discourage large-scale development in areas without transit access). (short term)
*b) Encourage "Transit Oriented Development" in village centers (Transit-oriented development (TOD) is a **mixed-use** densely developed residential or commercial area that is designed to maximize access to public transit and that is designed to encourage transit ridership (narrow streets, sidewalks, limited*

- parking, etc.))*
- c) Encourage alternative means of transportation in special permit projects. (short term)*
- d) Require transportation impact and access studies as part of development review. Consider adopting the appropriate language from MGL c.44 s.53G to institutionalize this option. (medium term)*
- e) Require transportation demand management programs as part of mitigation for large development projects. (long term)*
- T-16:** Create a "traffic-shed" computer model that can evaluate short- and long-term impacts of new development on existing roadways. (long term)
- T-17:** Evaluate whether parking policy changes would organize the current parking supply more efficiently.
Examples:
- a) Restructure metered parking into zones with a tiered fee structure such that the most convenient parking is the most short-term and more expensive than areas further away from downtown.
- b) Apply a progressive price structure to meters with three-hour limits or more. For example, \$.75 for the first hour, \$1.00 for the second, \$1.25 for the third, etc.
- c) Apply performance-based parking prices that set meter rates so that 15% of parking remains open in peak periods.
- d) Increase parking revenue by adding meters on town streets near University of Massachusetts.
- T-18:** Install, relocate, utilize, and evaluate effectiveness of available traffic control systems.
Examples:
- a) *Street and traffic signs need more visibility, clearer displays, and consistency in all ways.*
- b) *Control settings should be adjusted [automatic or pre-set] to take into account traffic volume, time of day, type of pavement, pedestrian and bicycle needs, etc. and continually monitored for efficiency and effectiveness. (short term)*
- T-19:** Adjust traffic circulation patterns.
- a) Use one-way streets, no left (or right) turns, tow-away zones with NO PARKING/STANDING lettering.
- b) Install traffic calming methods, especially in congested areas, so impediments to flow are not intrusive. (short term)
- T-20:** Complete and release traffic calming guidelines for residential neighborhoods. Adopt a policy for prioritizing traffic calming assistance requests. (short term)
- T-21:** Improve roadway signage.
Examples:
- a) *Undertake proper sign placement that is visible and appropriate such as clear, eight-inch, reflective street name signs at entrances to streets.*
- b) *Improve way-finding signs at major intersections and destination points. (short term)*
- c) *Clearly display speed limit signs. (medium term)*
- d) *Have consistent street naming.*
- T-22:** Adopt a town policy of "Complete Streets" <<http://www.completestreets.org/>> for all reconstruction or new construction of streets. (Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street). (long term)
- T-23:** Enhance enforcement of traffic laws to achieve transportation goals.
Examples:
- a) *Enforce safe driving speeds to improve traffic calming in residential neighborhoods.*
- b) *Enforce motor vehicles yielding to pedestrians at crosswalks and right-turn-on-red intersections to make walking safer.*
- c) *Crack down on parking violations including parking in handicap zones and bicycle lanes.*
- d) *Crack down on jaywalking and irresponsible cyclists and motorists as a way of encouraging mutual respect among users of different modes of transportation.*
- e) *Enforce parking meter time limits to increase turnover of spaces.*
- T-24:** Reestablish a Transportation Management Association (with membership including Five Colleges; major employers; and the municipalities of Amherst, Hadley, Northampton, etc.) to educate employers and the public about commuting options and incentives; collaborate with the MassRides program through the State Executive Office of Transportation.
- T-25:** Create and distribute informative materials and programs on the values of an active and all-inclusive program of traffic management throughout the town.
- T-26:** Encourage transportation options to reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips.
Examples:
- a) *Enable UMass and other area employers to offer financial or other incentives for employees and*

students to carpool or use alternative transportation.

- b) Encourage UMass and the Town of Amherst to organize car-sharing options, such as Zipcar, for employee use during the workday.*
- c) Install a car-sharing station, such as Zipcar, downtown. Promote this option by offering free parking for these vehicles. (short term)*
- d) Create park-n-ride lots in outlying areas that would serve commuters as well as visitors traveling to downtown and UMass. Ensure that these lots are adequately served by public bus routes or shuttles. (long term)*
- e) Provide zoning or tax incentives for installation of shower facilities and bicycle parking for bicycle or pedestrian commuters to downtown or village center employment.*

- T-27:** Introduce reloadable cash-substitute "Amherst Card" that could be used for parking, transit, local shopping, and event or attraction admission. (short term)
- T-28:** Lobby the State Legislature for additional funding for regional transit services. (short term)
- T-29:** Apply for federal and state grants through PVPC as a source of financial support for public transportation. (medium term)
- T-30:** Enact residential- and business-unit permit fees for village center and downtown development projects to support public transportation. (medium term)
- T-31:** Explore potential for Parking Districts in downtown and village centers with payment-in-lieu-of-parking provision. (medium term)

Here are some other thoughts I'd like to share: