

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIES	RESPONSES			PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS		
	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses
E-1	16	14	30	37%	33%	70%
E-2	4	25	29	9%	58%	67%
E-3	6	9	15	14%	21%	35%
E-4	2	13	15	5%	30%	35%
E-5	12	8	20	28%	19%	47%
E-6	14	4	18	33%	9%	42%
E-7	8	23	31	19%	53%	72%
E-8	22	3	25	51%	7%	58%
E-9	2	8	10	5%	19%	23%
E-10	10	12	22	23%	28%	51%
E-11	7	6	13	16%	14%	30%
E-12	10	12	22	23%	28%	51%
E-13	16	5	21	37%	12%	49%
E-14	7	5	12	16%	12%	28%
E-15	7	3	10	16%	7%	23%
E-16	7	6	13	16%	14%	30%
E-17	8	13	21	19%	30%	49%
E-18	6	5	11	14%	12%	26%
E-19	8	4	12	19%	9%	28%
E-20	13	10	23	30%	23%	53%
E-21	3	10	13	7%	23%	30%
E-22	14	6	20	33%	14%	47%
E-23	14	2	16	33%	5%	37%
E-24	7	22	29	16%	51%	67%
E-25	3	9	12	7%	21%	28%
E-26	8	15	23	19%	35%	53%

## HOUSING

STRATEGIES	RESPONSES			PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS		
	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses
H-1	9	2	11	21%	5%	26%
H-2	4	11	15	9%	26%	35%
H-3	21	8	29	49%	19%	67%
H-4	13	1	14	30%	2%	33%
H-5	6	9	15	14%	21%	35%
H-6	11	12	23	26%	28%	53%
H-7	5	6	11	12%	14%	26%
H-8	8	12	20	19%	28%	47%
H-9	3	5	8	7%	12%	19%
H-10	11	5	16	26%	12%	37%
H-11	7	12	19	16%	28%	44%
H-12	23	1	24	53%	2%	56%
H-13	22	3	25	51%	7%	58%
H-14	2	18	20	5%	42%	47%
H-15	4	1	5	9%	2%	12%
H-16	1	10	11	2%	23%	26%
H-17	5	2	7	12%	5%	16%
H-18	6	4	10	14%	9%	23%
H-19	2	11	13	5%	26%	30%
H-20	6	7	13	14%	16%	30%
H-21	7	6	13	16%	14%	30%
H-22	4	15	19	9%	35%	44%
H-23	3	13	16	7%	30%	37%
H-24	3	10	13	7%	23%	30%
H-25	4	7	11	9%	16%	26%
H-26	2	8	10	5%	19%	23%
H-27	1	7	8	2%	16%	19%
H-28	7	8	15	16%	19%	35%
H-29	11	5	16	26%	12%	37%
H-30	12	3	15	28%	7%	35%
H-31	2	14	16	5%	33%	37%
H-32	1	8	9	2%	19%	21%
H-33	3	0	3	7%	0%	7%
H-34	5	1	6	12%	2%	14%

## LAND USE

STRATEGIES	RESPONSES			PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS		
	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses
L-1	5	1	6	12%	2%	14%
L-2	1	4	5	2%	9%	12%
L-3	0	7	7	0%	16%	16%
L-4	4	12	16	9%	28%	37%
L-5	9	8	17	21%	19%	40%
L-6	5	5	10	12%	12%	23%
L-7	3	2	5	7%	5%	12%
L-8	2	5	7	5%	12%	16%
L-9	3	27	30	7%	63%	70%
L-10	6	3	9	14%	7%	21%
L-11	9	7	16	21%	16%	37%
L-12	25	0	25	58%	0%	58%
L-13	3	9	12	7%	21%	28%
L-14	0	1	1	0%	2%	2%
L-15	6	4	10	14%	9%	23%
L-16	1	5	6	2%	12%	14%
L-17	5	10	15	12%	23%	35%
L-18	7	2	9	16%	5%	21%
L-19	1	13	14	2%	30%	33%
L-20	5	1	6	12%	2%	14%
L-21	2	1	3	5%	2%	7%
L-22	3	3	6	7%	7%	14%
L-23	3	2	5	7%	5%	12%
L-24	4	3	7	9%	7%	16%
L-25	3	7	10	7%	16%	23%
L-26	2	6	8	5%	14%	19%
L-27	7	3	10	16%	7%	23%
L-28	3	4	7	7%	9%	16%
L-29	4	8	12	9%	19%	28%
L-30	4	3	7	9%	7%	16%
L-31	0	16	16	0%	37%	37%
L-32	3	2	5	7%	5%	12%
L-33	8	0	8	19%	0%	19%
L-34	1	5	6	2%	12%	14%
L-35	11	4	15	26%	9%	35%
L-36	7	1	8	16%	2%	19%
L-37	3	3	6	7%	7%	14%
L-38	14	2	16	33%	5%	37%
L-39	6	0	6	14%	0%	14%
L-40	2	1	3	5%	2%	7%
L-41	2	0	2	5%	0%	5%
L-42	9	0	9	21%	0%	21%
L-43	5	0	5	12%	0%	12%
L-44	5	3	8	12%	7%	19%
L-45	4	4	8	9%	9%	19%
L-46	4	5	9	9%	12%	21%
L-47	4	4	8	9%	9%	19%
L-48	6	0	6	14%	0%	14%
L-49	4	1	5	9%	2%	12%
L-50	6	9	15	14%	21%	35%
L-51	4	11	15	9%	26%	35%
L-52	2	4	6	5%	9%	14%
L-53	2	6	8	5%	14%	19%
L-54	2	0	2	5%	0%	5%
L-55	2	0	2	5%	0%	5%
L-56	1	0	1	2%	0%	2%
L-57	2	6	8	5%	14%	19%
L-58	2	1	3	5%	2%	7%
L-59	1	1	2	2%	2%	5%
L-60	3	4	7	7%	9%	16%

## NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

STRATEGIES	RESPONSES			PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS		
	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses
N-1	1	13	14	2%	30%	33%
N-2	5	7	12	12%	16%	28%
N-3	4	6	10	9%	14%	23%
N-4	11	2	13	26%	5%	30%
N-5	2	10	12	5%	23%	28%
N-6	6	3	9	14%	7%	21%
N-7	3	5	8	7%	12%	19%
N-8	2	4	6	5%	9%	14%
N-9	4	8	12	9%	19%	28%
N-10	3	13	16	7%	30%	37%
N-11	16	0	16	37%	0%	37%
N-12	4	3	7	9%	7%	16%
N-13	5	9	14	12%	21%	33%
N-14	5	0	5	12%	0%	12%
N-15	7	13	20	16%	30%	47%
N-16	5	3	8	12%	7%	19%
N-17	6	4	10	14%	9%	23%
N-18	18	2	20	42%	5%	47%
N-19	8	2	10	19%	5%	23%
N-20	0	10	10	0%	23%	23%
N-21	0	20	20	0%	47%	47%
N-22	4	7	11	9%	16%	26%
N-23	1	12	13	2%	28%	30%
N-24	3	4	7	7%	9%	16%
N-25	10	0	10	23%	0%	23%
N-26	3	2	5	7%	5%	12%
N-27	3	4	7	7%	9%	16%
N-28	2	6	8	5%	14%	19%
N-29	3	10	13	7%	23%	30%
N-30	3	5	8	7%	12%	19%
N-31	7	1	8	16%	2%	19%
N-32	6	6	12	14%	14%	28%
N-33	2	9	11	5%	21%	26%
N-34	0	12	12	0%	28%	28%
N-35	1	10	11	2%	23%	26%
N-36	4	8	12	9%	19%	28%
N-37	23	1	24	53%	2%	56%

## OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

STRATEGIES	RESPONSES			PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS		
	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses
O-1	3	26	29	7%	60%	67%
O-2	5	19	24	12%	44%	56%
O-3	6	16	22	14%	37%	51%
O-4	5	10	15	12%	23%	35%
O-5	21	7	28	49%	16%	65%
O-6	14	10	24	33%	23%	56%
O-7	7	16	23	16%	37%	53%
O-8	4	10	14	9%	23%	33%
O-9	11	20	31	26%	47%	72%
O-10	13	17	30	30%	40%	70%
O-11	1	17	18	2%	40%	42%
O-12	6	17	23	14%	40%	53%
O-13	25	7	32	58%	16%	74%
O-14	9	7	16	21%	16%	37%
O-15	25	3	28	58%	7%	65%
O-16	14	10	24	33%	23%	56%

## SERVICES AND FACILITIES

STRATEGIES	RESPONSES			PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS		
	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses
S-1	2	29	31	5%	67%	72%
S-2	7	15	22	16%	35%	51%
S-3	2	10	12	5%	23%	28%
S-4	1	20	21	2%	47%	49%
S-5	0	30	30	0%	70%	70%
S-6	7	11	18	16%	26%	42%
S-7	7	2	9	16%	5%	21%
S-8	0	19	19	0%	44%	44%
S-9	12	7	19	28%	16%	44%
S-10	16	1	17	37%	2%	40%
S-11	7	4	11	16%	9%	26%
S-12	6	2	8	14%	5%	19%
S-13	8	3	11	19%	7%	26%
S-14	4	3	7	9%	7%	16%
S-15	11	4	15	26%	9%	35%
S-16	2	2	4	5%	5%	9%
S-17	10	1	11	23%	2%	26%
S-18	10	0	10	23%	0%	23%
S-19	7	12	19	16%	28%	44%
S-20	7	5	12	16%	12%	28%
S-21	2	8	10	5%	19%	23%
S-22	0	2	2	0%	5%	5%
S-23	0	5	5	0%	12%	12%
S-24	7	5	12	16%	12%	28%
S-25	11	1	12	26%	2%	28%
S-26	9	7	16	21%	16%	37%
S-27	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%
S-28	0	8	8	0%	19%	19%
S-29	2	8	10	5%	19%	23%
S-30	3	3	6	7%	7%	14%
S-31	0	7	7	0%	16%	16%
S-32	6	2	8	14%	5%	19%
S-33	5	3	8	12%	7%	19%
S-34	7	4	11	16%	9%	26%
S-35	0	10	10	0%	23%	23%
S-36	2	1	3	5%	2%	7%
S-37	6	7	13	14%	16%	30%
S-38	12	2	14	28%	5%	33%

## TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

STRATEGIES	RESPONSES			PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS		
	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses	NO (Least Favorite)	YES (Most Favorite)	Total number of Responses
T-1	8	16	24	18.6%	37.2%	56%
T-2	7	6	13	16.3%	14.0%	30%
T-3	1	21	22	2.3%	48.8%	51%
T-4	1	16	17	2.3%	37.2%	40%
T-5	7	1	8	16.3%	2.3%	19%
T-6	2	13	15	4.7%	30.2%	35%
T-7	11	4	15	25.6%	9.3%	35%
T-8	5	9	14	11.6%	20.9%	33%
T-9	11	7	18	25.6%	16.3%	42%
T-10	8	4	12	18.6%	9.3%	28%
T-11	5	8	13	11.6%	18.6%	30%
T-12	6	9	15	14.0%	20.9%	35%
T-13	1	8	9	2.3%	18.6%	21%
T-14	19	1	20	44.2%	2.3%	47%
T-15	8	9	17	18.6%	20.9%	40%
T-16	9	2	11	20.9%	4.7%	26%
T-17	3	8	11	7.0%	18.6%	26%
T-18	6	4	10	14.0%	9.3%	23%
T-19	7	5	12	16.3%	11.6%	28%
T-20	2	14	16	4.7%	32.6%	37%
T-21	1	5	6	2.3%	11.6%	14%
T-22	6	6	12	14.0%	14.0%	28%
T-23	5	11	16	11.6%	25.6%	37%
T-24	2	1	3	4.7%	2.3%	7%
T-25	15	0	15	34.9%	0.0%	35%
T-26	7	8	15	16.3%	18.6%	35%
T-27	8	5	13	18.6%	11.6%	30%
T-28	1	6	7	2.3%	14.0%	16%
T-29	1	2	3	2.3%	4.7%	7%
T-30	6	0	6	14.0%	0.0%	14%
T-31	5	1	6	11.6%	2.3%	14%

**RESPONDENT #1:**

Far too many of these ""options" are duplicative. It looks as if someone just copied all the items from other lists. This would have been more informative if you had refined the "options" to eliminate most of the duplication.

The excessive emphasis on "economic development" makes it clear that that slogan has become the 21st century version of "that man behind the tree" in the 19th century ditty: "Don't tax me, don't tax thee, tax that man behind the tree." That man is as elusive in the 21st century as he was in the 19th.

Absent some changes in federal and/or state policy, Amherst has few options for increasing income. It therefore must address the other side of the financial equation, costs. Too many of the changes in the list here involve additional expenditures of town funds, rather than a reduction that will be needed if the town is to respond to the basic demand for services.

Many of these suggestions have a familiar ring: they sound like the "wish list" suggestions that came out of the earlier, failed effort to develop a master plan.

**RESPONDENT #3:**

This questionnaire is borderline useless. It does not address the fact of too many boards, committees, etc. Town Government needs a total reorganization. Get rid of overlay districts. The zoning bylaw sucks. Get the conservation commission out of land use! Get rid of the wetlands bylaw. I could go on. Yet nice try (no cigar!).

**RESPONDENT #4:**

1. Many options proposed are puzzlingly (dangerously) ambiguous; while it was tempting to circle/slash a few of them simultaneously (thus Ø), for the most part I decided to leave these unmarked! (rather than "exactly 5", consider "no more than 5").

2. Regional transit issues are mostly missing: Amtrak and commuter rail services (Amherst-Palmer and points East via Springfield-Worcester-Boston; Noho-Holyoke-Springfield-Hartford and points South, for example) would not only reduce long-distance car travel, it would also significantly reduce the number of student cars (and their attendant parking lots) by offering a real alternative to getting to & from Amherst.

3. Redevelop brownfield (21E) sites, combining clean up \$\$ with speculative \$\$ in public-private partnerships; use these as NEW PRP and LI zones, and preserve the old PRP&LI zones for agricultural purposes where appropriate (North Amherst, e.g.).

**RESPONDENT #5:**

- Don't destroy what you've got--maintain what little ambiance we have.
- This survey is way too long and has much redundancy--cluster topics.

**RESPONDENT #6:**

- It is difficult to attract commercial tenants to Amherst with the tax rate and evaluations higher by half than Hadley, Sunderland and Deerfield.



- Inspection services and Fire Department inspectors need to be more realistic and less severe. The old days with Chet and Bill were far less Draconian in enforcing codes.
- We have enough housing of all kinds. We have enough recreation park land. Don't spend any more \$\$ on buying land, especially land that no homeowner would build on due to ledge, no water, no perk, etc.
- I am happy with things as they are now--no change needed especially if staff time or tax \$\$ needed to accomplish.

**MISCELLANEOUS COMMENT:**

Be more business friendly.

**RESPONDENT #8:**

When considering traffic-calming (or any other sorts of) measures, do not respond to "squeakiest wheels" without carefully considering effects on other town residents, commuters and visitors.

**RESPONDENT #12:**

- Commuter rail service to Northampton, Springfield, Hartford
- Expand shared-automobile plan (Amherst College) to include town residents. Oh, it's in T-26.
- Restrict ugly tree pruning by electric/cable companies.
- Promote buried electric cables.
- Reduce "eye pollution" in downtown. Too many signs!
- Develop a town tree nursery. Free shade trees for residential property.
- Preventive pruning of town trees, particularly very old ones.
- Restore leaf pickup--and compost them like Umass.

**RESPONDENT #13:**

Please define sustainability as used in E2 to explain how mixed use, etc. is sustainable; L19 defines the term correctly--Fertility of the soil over generations. How does mixed use do anything like this?

**RESPONDENT #15:**

Starting with over 3000 citizen-generated ideas, we now have 242 strategies...a measurable percentage of which do NOT reflect the flavors of the original citizen input. Hopefully but maybe not realistically, the final draft of the comprehensive Master Plan will become more reflective and/or congruent with the citizen ideas from the original IDEA GATHERINGS as they appear on the PLANNING AMHERST TOGETHER website. If this planning effort is to be successful, we need to move away from an extremist "do-it-all-now" zeal and move toward a much more inclusive, harmonious and moderate feel.

1. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** Overall Score & Comments: **B**

351 Massachusetts cities and towns believe that economic development is the key tool for their deliverance from skyrocketing property taxes. While Amherst may be competitively advantaged to use economic development to alleviate our property tax problems, we also need a sobering view of development myths and realities – and possible timetables for

growing tax revenues over the long haul. This kind of information needs to be added to what is otherwise a mature economic development agenda for Amherst.

PRO: The 26 Economic Development strategies represent a coherent cross-section of options to gradually create an improved and more balanced commercial climate. Specifically, E-2, E-6, E-12, E-25 and E-26 highlight five essential elements of a dynamic economic development plan for Amherst – prudent zoning changes... incentives... adequate staff... partnering with UMass, Amherst College & Hampshire College... and joining together statewide with other municipalities and advocacy groups to deliver meaningful property tax relief.

CON: There is a failure to clearly state the mythical perspectives and realistic limitations of economic development to actually deliver property tax relief in meaningful amounts. One of the unanswered questions: “Under the various methods to assess the 100% valuations of residential, commercial, personal, professional and tax exempt properties – what is the dollar value for new valuations under each category to equal a dollar on the tax rate?”

## 2. HOUSING Overall Score & Comments: C

Certain kinds of housing can dramatically escalate public school and municipal budgets upwards into the stratosphere. Another kind of housing involves few or no new students in our local public schools and develops tax revenues well beyond the cost of town services rendered to those living in this kind of housing. And there is another kind of student housing for those in our schools of higher learning that might supply more tax revenue than it would cost for municipal services. Then too, there is the built-in desirability of maintaining 10% of housing units as affordable housing (under MGL Chapter 40B). No specific strategy or groups of strategies deals with how to maintain a desirable healthy balance between these various considerations over a period of years. No attempt is made to realistically offer a replacement mechanism for “phased growth” to direct housing growth so that we maintain a desirable balance in the growth patterns of our housing stock. We still need to carefully create the more critical core components for planning future Amherst housing. The strategies in this section need considerable more work in order to be both comprehensive and coherent. Without sufficient legally-defensible controls, unbalanced housing growth can hasten chaotic sprawl.

PRO: Several of the Housing strategies (H-6, H-21, H-23, H-28 & H-31) represent a collection of initial strategies that would inject some prudence and balance into the orderly expansion of housing units.

CON: The 34 Housing strategies seem to be a collection of suggestions that lack an overall coherency. In terms of a concern around Amherst’s maintaining a 10% level of affordable units, these strategies reflect an almost “panic” kind of thinking, creating a sort of alliance between affordable housing advocates and developers. “Affordable” wording comes up at least 15 times within the 34 Housing strategies. The overall collection of Housing strategies fails to interact with any timeline that would allow for a set of complimentary strategies dealing with the town’s capacities to provide adequate municipal service for new housing during a continuing fiscal emergency.

### 3. LAND USE Overall Score & Comments: D

Land Use has put forth a whopping 60 (or 25%) of the total of 242 strategies among the 7 work groups. However, Amherst citizens mentioned only 152 land use ideas (less than 5%) among the 3400-plus ideas that they mentioned.

PRO: Only 2 clear-cut citizen endorsements emerged from the IDEA GATHERINGS in the fall of 2006. First, Village Centers is the wave for Amherst's future. Our community's citizens want to concentrate growth within attractive centers composed of high-density, multi-use (residential, business and professional) buildings. Secondly, they want to preserve the open space and rural appearance of Amherst.

CON: a) No overall umbrella concept in these specific planning strategies projects an imaginative visual concept for Amherst land use.

b) Bad editing within the land use strategies (L-18 & L-22), (L-6, L-41 & L-55), plus (L-42 & L-56) are word-for-word duplicates.

c) Despite a separate section devoted entirely to development strategies, the 60 strategies within the Land Use section manage to wander into the development planning arena. Variations of the word "development" appear more than 20 different times. (Ironically, the word "land" is used only 4 times while the term "land use" is used just once!)

d) There are many unclear words or terms that never appear within the 152 original citizen ideas devoted to Land Use. Some are "insider terms" known primarily by planning professionals. Here are some of these concepts:

"Revise growth management regulations"

"subdivision regulations"

"zoning overlay districts for aquifer, watershed, forest, and farming resources"

"Buffer zones"

"non-key resource areas"

"bonus density"

"Create a "market" for protection – sell density to other more appropriate areas."

"Encourage community charettes to encourage public input into design."

"a mechanism for transferring development rights"

"Economic Development Opportunity Area (EDOA) type programs"

"flexible zoning techniques"

"form based codes"

"zoning/overlay bonuses for well designed infill/redevelopment"

"Emphasize adaptive reuse (particularly high quality historic areas of the downtown)"

"vibrancy"

"development incentive"

"PRP"

"Work with land owners to establish easements."

### 4. NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES Overall Score & Comments: A

The content and organization of the strategies here is exemplary. Not perfect but easily understandable and coherent. Read it.

PRO: N-2 injects a sense of history and continuity into the Master Plan mix.

N-10 encourages an inventory of trees and a replacement plan.

N-12 proposes an inventory of all public meeting places, indoors and out.  
N-21 suggests ways & means to protect our water supply.  
N-35 would create walkable conservation neighborhoods.

CON: My 5 choices for “least liked” items for this element are still quite likable – only of a lower priority.

#### 5. OPEN SPACE & RECREATION Overall Score: C

Another collection of 16 strategies that have not been drawn together with either an internal coherency, or externally, in terms of meshing with other planning strategies. Needs work.

PRO: Among the few highlights: O-2 hinges on the O-1 strategy to match “open space-eligible” parcels with public & private programs for acquisition and protection. O-10 calls for a juried design competition to develop a supportable vision for Kendrick Park

CON: It’s a combination of fair-to-good suggestions without any creative town wide vision!

#### 6. SERVICES & FACILITIES Overall Score: B

This element covers 38 different strategies and covers a rich but complicated menu of vital government activities well into the future. It lays out the fundamental responsibilities in a well-ordered, easy-to-grasp and engaging manner.

PRO: These strategies are “conservative” in the best meaning of that term in that they emphasize continuity and sharing of existing facilities and capacities.

CON: These strategies have need for both a likely timetable involving the next ten to fifteen years plus rough cost estimates based on current 2007 dollars for these strategies since they include many of the most predictable municipal needs. Anticipated timetables and cost estimates are essential in managing future municipal budgets.

#### 7. TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION Overall Score: B

Mostly, these strategies anticipate the need for a more expansive public transit system throughout our neighborhoods, village centers and downtown. It also builds upon Amherst’s long-term bicycling and walking trends.

PRO: Addresses many of the ideas gathered earlier. Includes strategies that deal with pedestrian interests, bus travel, parking management, traffic congestion and how this element relates to other aspects of community planning.

CON: Over 100 strategies have been somewhat disguised within 31 numbered strategies – making this the most numerous single collection of strategies among the 7 elements covered. The language is overwhelmingly dense and needs both simplification and prioritization for greater coherency. Regional transportation including rail travel needs to be covered more emphatically.

#### CONCLUSION:

We continue to have before us a work-in-process that is likely to be approved in some eventual form by the Amherst Planning Board. But the ultimate acid tests for this

Amherst Master Plan will come before Town Meeting over the years ahead when many key implementation steps will require a challenging 2/3rds vote of those in attendance. It is totally undesirable in a democracy that this town's legislative body will simply write a blank check for whatever any comprehensive plan guidelines might dictate.

Given our Town Meeting's history since 1938, we need to engage in some dramatically creative ways of getting things done. Instead of polarizing self-defeating posturing, we initially need to avoid taking firm hard-held "us versus them" positions. Instead, we need to lower our personal levels of paranoia and stop mythically imagining and blaming "the other side". We need to find common ground on which we can meet eyeball-to-eyeball and build middle-ground agreements involving both "give & take" movements away from our earlier mental inclinations on specific issues.

Democracy at its least is an assembly of ecstatic winners and crying losers. Preferably, at its best, it finds a prudent haven among those who churn peaceful choices – then come to celebrate a future together often as we may win a lot – even as we lose a little.

**RESPONDENT #16:**

I do not think the Master Plan needs to re-state policies or "support statements" for things which are already part of Town Practice, i.e. L40, L54, S8, S19, S29, S38; nor ideas for lobbying state or Feds for \$\$!

**RESPONDENT #17:**

Many of the Housing strategies are unintelligible; they require specialized knowledge to understand what their implications are.

**RESPONDENT #18:**

1. Can student nightlife and mixed-use development (including housing) coexist downtown? I wonder who will want to live here if they are kept awake until 3 am four nights a week. Perhaps we need a separate student nightlife district--on University Drive?
2. Land use elements have a lot of redundancy (e.g. L11, L18, L22, L5, L41, L55).
3. The land use committee should try to see what goes where. Move the specific housing and economic development items to those sections--even though they were some of my favorite land use ideas!
4. It was hard to eliminate any economic development ideas--I liked them all.
5. Transportation--Add parking downtown--build another level on the parking garage or build another garage behind CVS/ or under the commons. Not everyone will ride bikes or buses everywhere--and we want visitors to come from out of town.

**RESPONDENT #19:**

Schools need more emphasis in a comprehensive plan. The importance of education in the culture and self-description of this town needs to be explicitly stated in the plan.

- Commercial development and expansion of the tax base need strong prioritization. No, the business taxes won't replace the property taxes or lower them, but they will provide additional revenue.
- Need real clarity about how little unencumbered land is left in Amherst and that we have to stop town purchase and preserving of each newly ownable parcel without pausing to consider whether more conservation or APR land is really the correct long-term choice for future residents.
- Kid-friendly, senior-friendly, diversity (in all senses)-friendly town is my hope.
- Implementation of Master Plan is the crucial part of the Plan!

**RESPONDENT #20:**

There is way too much emphasis on economic development and development in general in this plan. I'm for protecting and preserving land we have, confine development for business to brown zones, Town Center and Village Centers. Let's not have a dozen village centers either. I'd like to see more protection of quiet neighborhoods from development and traffic.

**RESPONDENT #23:**

This questionnaire is unwieldy--too long and confusing--it should have been boiled down to real choices. The whole Comprehensive Plan process has been too long, convoluted and unwieldy. Hope something useful can come out of all this.

**RESPONDENT #24:**

The idea of choosing 5 "most liked" and 5 "least liked" was "forced" for me. Often I had a hard time finding 5 "least liked". I would rather indicate what are my desired outcomes or undesired outcomes as opposed to selecting among methods (strategies). I do not understand zoning and what effect certain changes might cause. Anyway, I never find surveys easy. Too long, only highly committed citizens will be able to thoughtfully and thoroughly complete this survey.

**RESPONDENT #26:**

Impressive, but:

- Too long.
- Exhausting.
- Too much repetition and/ or similarities, not only among but also within sections.
- Too many strategies where the unpredictable level is in the details.
- I did the best I could, given what I know, understand, question.
- Good luck!

**RESPONDENT #28:**

1. How big do we want the Town to be? What can we afford to be? Amherst must first pursue the efficient delivery of basic local services. These are: police, fire, public health and sanitation, water and sewer, public works infrastructure (roads, etc.), a K-12 school system, libraries, public buildings and environmental conservation. Also, local government must insure the orderly regulation of competing interests which would consume scarce town resources of land, air, water and space.

2. The town of Amherst if not, constituted as, a public charity, or as a commune, or an educational institution (except for schools and libraries). Nor is the town an amusement park or a religious institution. Private sectors are equipped to provide services in areas measured by market forces and the public's general inclination to voluntarily participate, pay for, and/or donate needed resources. (Empty PVTAs on our rural roads are a sad demonstration of waste, pursuing an expensive social engineering program, with negligible, local consumer support. And what is the carbon off-set from years of diesel smoke on our back roads?)

3. The town need not plan to be all things to all people. Some town residents are enthusiastic supporters of town funding for recreation, public bus transportation, affordable housing, the arts, bicycle riding, services for the poor, and leisure/athletic pursuits for all. Highly budgeted town agencies accommodating many of these enthusiasms, are holdovers from times when the town's population was a few thousand. Today, ambitious extraneous services burden town budget resources. Yet, there are, non-town entities, providing and managing similar services. In, an era of accelerated population transience, town services must be appropriate to our level of government. The state, fed, and privates can meet needs beyond the local level, (e.g. there are town roads and state roads). Because people gravitate toward high service, (fee free), locales, the state and fed must play an increasing role. Town funding of an extensive list of town social needs with scarce resources will inevitably lead to financial chaos. Nor will the town budget find balance by seeking to import a population of service consumers. Many government programs are best, funded and administered at the state and/or national level. This reflects the mobility of the general population.

4. Seeking 'more' of everything is frivolous. A well educated comprehensive plan will mediate competing interests while not being a stealth design of 'pet', fashionable, 'smart', or professionally current 'priorities'. Planning need not imply expansion. It can mean consolidation, refinement and even contraction. Providing the basics in better and more cost effective ways must remain the guiding priority of the Comprehensive Plan. Amherst's best efforts should be to insist that private sector and the State and the Federal budgets assume appropriate areas of involvement.

5. MGL Ch 40B is the elephant in the room. The time and effort invested in a comprehensive zoning plan can be frustrated by those who would affirmatively or negatively invoke MGL Ch 40B. Accordingly, it is essential that the town work diligently to preserve the current affordable housing stock. That effort will block negative uses of 40B. And the ZBA must accept guidelines which apply a consistent set of restrictive qualifications to any process seeking to invoke 40B affirmatively.

**RESPONDENT #29:**

1. We have enough open space now; protect farmland but let the rest go. If NIMBY's don't want development, let them buy it without taxpayer support.

2. Town employees should receive priority in the filling of any affordable housing units to be built.

3. We have too many low-income units as it is. Just look at the weekly police reports. It's time to stop the liberal guilt trips. Could a developer afford to build in Amherst when the price of land and taxes are as high as they are?

**RESPONDENT #30:**

This questionnaire is the only input I have given to the Plan. The most important planning issue for me is to increase the sidewalks for pedestrians throughout town, and to improve and increase the bike lanes. Amherst is overall simply terrible in its pedestrian and bicycle access and safety. Stop 'improving' sidewalks while leaving so many streets with none at all! Don't impose difficulty on automobiles, such as parking restrictions, etc., while doing nothing to improve bicycle and pedestrian access.

ALL new development should include sidewalk construction with the goal of safe pedestrian access on all streets. And ALL roadwork should include bicycle-safe access.

NOTE: Residents ought not to have a choice about whether or not to have a sidewalk. Many would choose not to be responsible for snow and ice removal; other would resist loss of yard, etc. But safe walkways and bicycle lanes are important and should override selfish attitudes. As far as I can tell, this issue is not receiving the attention it should in the current planning process.

**RESPONDENT #31:**

1. All projects to go out to bid. "Specs" should be discussed and finalized and described for "vendors" decisions made according to presentations and abilities of vendors. This actually is state law and also most economical.

2. Plans and decisions of the planning board should be reviewed by town meeting.

3. The moderator should not appoint the finance committee, the select board should.

**RESPONDENT #33:**

Thanks for doing this.

**RESPONDENT #34:**

1. Provide adequate time for Town Meeting to digest and discuss Comprehensive Plan proposals (e.g. Wait until the Spring '08 meeting).

2. Establish greater public oversight of Town Planner.

3. Plan contains many good ideas--difficult to choose 5 best in each category.

**RESPONDENT #35:**

1. Many alphabet shorthand's for agencies--without stating what they are. Also, there are other terms that are not known by the reader.

2. Section 7 has far too many specific 'remedies' that cannot be evaluated without the reader trying to do extensive research (such as look into how such actions have operated in other towns).



3. In fact, in all sections very many of the 'choices' would require major research in order to evaluate their usefulness.
4. This 'questionnaire' is far too long, not possible to select 'exactly five' I like most and 'exactly five' I dislike most in each section.
5. I am amazed that, with the huge number of unpaid volunteers, this process cost \$210,000!
6. There are no estimates of what the choices would cost the town. Cost is critical in making selections that are informed, not just wish lists!

**RESPONDENT #36:**

1. Preserve and protect agricultural land.
2. Support farming.
3. Emphasize bike lanes and sidewalks, build infrastructure for these modes of foot-power transport and reduce use of motor vehicles, including buses.
4. Get Amherst College and Hampshire College to pay their fair share of town services-- failure to do this means overrides are likely to continue to fail.
5. Support schools and core town services; reduce scope and cost of government.

**RESPONDENT #37:**

Economic Development: Only extend infrastructure if you have a bonafide customer. No more committees. No viable land in right place for extensions.

Housing: Student housing standards and overlay might be a good idea, but it could become a ghetto.

Recreation and OS: All good ideas.

Transportation: Good ideas but some are time consuming, with less prospect of achievement of goals!

What will you do with the too many other ideas--in terms of priority? This is too big a laundry list to be able to come up with a reasonable conclusion. I am still for more or some meaningful controls over what and where something is built! Other towns do exert the same controls--"Amherst is too difficult to do business in" is a MYTH. We are desirable because we do try to maintain the ambience of our place.

**RESPONDENT #40:**

A great deal of repetition! Most projects are impossible and this town already has a great deal of persons who need help. We do not need more low income families. We have our share. Unless we get industry and money from Umass and other colleges we will go broke. All the students have 3/4 babies and other children going to our schools. Their countries would not pay us for our children. All of these foreign students bring their parents here and they get food etc. from survival center and we take care of them for

health needs. Also we need to get more money from other towns that use our ambulance and fire equipment. Hadley should get their own services. Enough. We also need a mayor to make decisions, not as is.

**RESPONDENT #43:**

This was very difficult...it took me 4 hours and still does not reflect my priorities.

Flaws: Repetitive and duplicative. Land use scattered in 1,2,3,4 &5. One chance to say I support a fine library but surrounded by critical need areas competing for my support.

Duplicates: E1-5-20. L7&14 (identical)

**MY PRIORITIES:**

- Protect Open Space
- Discourage McMansions and Subdivisions--Encourage Cluster
- Support Libraries

The current fixation on economic development misleads. We would need \$200 million to have any impact on property tax. Considering lack of available land and distance from Rt.91, we should focus on: Cultural Tourism, Umass and colleges coughing up their fair share, and State help on property tax reduction (residential).

**RESPONDENT #44:**

Most Important for Most People:

1. Support Fire and Police
2. Support Education/Schools
3. Enhance Town's income \$\$ through sustainable business/farm/cultural tourism etc. vs. only property taxes
4. Protect land/farming/history
5. Revise town zoning/permitting and government to make "doing" business in Amherst EASIER!!

Thank you.

**RESPONDENT #46:**

I hope this form won't be disregarded because I failed to circle or cross out EXACTLY five numbers in each section.

**RESPONDENT #48:**

We don't want to make Amherst denser. If we wanted to live in Boston, or a suburban Boston-type place, we would have moved there.

Why so much emphasis on getting more affordable housing? We already exceed state guidelines for affordable housing. Or is this code for "more student housing needed?" Certainly, you don't want low income families who bring more school and sewer/water needs.

The strident voices of long-time Amherst activists are clearly heard when talking about bicycle use/access/storage. These same people will not be able to pedal a bike in a

couple of years. A bicycle is not a viable mode of transportation for someone who works in an office and/or has to go shopping for groceries or to the doctor's after work. Let's be realistic and see it as a pleasurable past-time."

**RESPONDENT #49:**

Police should coordinate with crossing guards and school bus drivers to identify dangerous situations (to children) and provide stronger enforcement to keep kids safe.

There's nothing here about improving schools. Why?

**RESPONDENT #50:**

This was very difficult to complete! It is very "wordy"--too many repetitions (in some cases word for word) and overlapping ideas--and in many cases, too many technical terms. It is difficult for the average resident to understand the implications of many of the ideas--and we are probably more informed than most.