

# Plan for Tomorrow

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Master Plan 2010, Canterbury, NH





## *Foreword*

The Planning Board would like to thank the 1971, 1980, 1989 and 1998 Planning Boards for their contributions to the previous Plans for Tomorrow. Without their foresight and efforts the Town would be a vastly different town from what it is now. The 1971 Planning Board members were pioneers in planning for Canterbury, and it is hoped that future planning boards will gain inspiration from this Plan for continuing the difficult and challenging task of planning the Town's future.

Many individuals assisted the Planning Board in its effort to update the Plan. The Board extends its appreciation to all of those who assisted us, including members of the 2008 and 2009 Planning Boards.

## *An Invitation to Canterbury Residents*

The Canterbury Plan for Tomorrow, the result of many years of work by the Canterbury Planning Board and others, is only the beginning of preparing Canterbury for the 21st Century. We are now challenged with implementing the plan's recommended actions and policies. The Planning Board, Selectmen, Conservation Commission, and other Town boards will need additional help from the residents of Canterbury if this task is to be accomplished in a timely and effective manner.

If you have expertise in the issues addressed in this plan, we can use your help. If you do not have expertise in these issues but are concerned about how your community will change or not change in the next twenty years, we would like to have you join us. You may participate in either a short-term project or on a long-term basis.

Please let us know if you want to participate by calling any member of the Board or dropping us a note at the Sam Lake House, PO Box 500, Canterbury, New Hampshire 03224, or attending a Board meeting on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. in The Meeting House.

# *2010 Canterbury Planning Board*

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*Photos by Beth L. Blair, Canterbury, NH*





# **CHAPTER 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is the fourth revision of the original Master Plan for Canterbury, which was first approved in 1971. As in the past, Canterbury's Master Plan is called the "Plan for Tomorrow." Since 1971, many things have changed in and around our Town. However, one thing has remained consistent throughout the years; as compared with growth and development in surrounding towns, Canterbury's long-term planning efforts have been extremely effective. The Town has changed, as it must, but it has remained the same in the many ways that are most valued by the Townspeople. This is due, in large measure, to the foresight and efforts of Canterbury's Planning Boards, Selectmen, and all of the community's thoughtful citizens who have participated in past planning efforts.

Planning, by its very nature, is a continuous activity. When done well, it can anticipate the expected needs of the Town and the region and can help to create and/or preserve the kind of environment the majority of citizens want in the years ahead.

In 2007, the Canterbury Planning Board conducted a survey of the Town's residents relating to zoning, housing, development and other issues. The results of the survey were used as a starting reference point to many of the issues that required consideration during the revision of this document.

The Plan for Tomorrow is divided into twelve chapters, including an appendix with the current zoning map. In each chapter we review a specific aspect of the Town and, where applicable, present long-range goals, policies, and objectives with recommended actions. Goals are intended to provide direction, recognizing that implementation will be a gradual iterative process over the course of time. Some of these may be compatible with others while some are mutually exclusive.

As the responsible town body, the Planning Board has a duty to translate the priorities of the citizens of Canterbury into an agenda for action by the Town and its people. It is the intent of the updated Plan for Tomorrow to identify our town's future needs and then to prepare for the challenges in order to effectively meet these opportunities.



# CHAPTER 2: IMPLEMENTATION

## Canterbury “Plan for Tomorrow” and Executive Summary

Planning is useful only if it leads to decisions and actions. This Master Plan expresses the long-range goals of the community, which will define the Town that future Canterbury generations can hope to find. The policies and objectives provide guidelines for making decisions.

Everyone should accept that changes will occur in Canterbury. Adoption of this new Plan for Tomorrow presents an opportunity to direct those changes. The primary tools for directing growth are this Plan, Canterbury's Zoning Ordinances, and our Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations and updated Capital Improvement Plan. These tools must be reviewed and revised based on this Plan for Tomorrow as well as current needs and conditions. These revisions, guided by the policies and objectives of the Plan, will be extremely important to the future of Canterbury.

Equally important is recognition by the residents of Canterbury that many of the goals and objectives of this Plan can be achieved more effectively by voluntary actions than by Town Regulations. Information about conservation easements, restrictive covenants, and other estate planning techniques, when shared with landowners by the Conservation Commission and Planning Board, should help to lead to wise decisions by individual landowners. Such information would also convey important tax and land planning options, which can help to protect family lands.

Recommended Actions are listed at the end of each chapter of the Plan. These are actions designed to achieve objectives, carry out policies, and determine priorities. The group with primary responsibility for implementing an action is indicated in *italic type*.

There are two overall areas that cover many of the essential recommendations in this document. As a town, we wish to preserve Canterbury's rural character while also improving the Town's economic, recreational and intellectual resources.

Conservation-wise, we can work to achieve this balance by creating plans to guide land protection and town land management. Educating landowners on the best ways to preserve open spaces and updating the Town natural resources inventory, among other efforts, will help ensure that tomorrow's Canterbury remains much as today's looks now.

Economically, we can continue to foster the development of the commercial and industrial land currently zoned that way, and encourage the growth of more small/home businesses, tourism, and agriculture-related activity. Coupled with a needed traffic and safety analysis of Town roads, and identifying our 21st century needs such as broadband, this approach should help to control future Town expenditures on infrastructure.

The actions recommended in each section of the Plan cover a wide range of topics. Implicit in the word "action" is involvement. Residents are encouraged to consider the many areas in which action is recommended and to identify those that are most interesting to them. Contact the group responsible for future action and get involved. Decisions based on wider participation will be all the more meaningful.



## **CHAPTER 3: CANTERBURY HISTORY**

Canterbury's future as a town, envisioned in this Plan for Tomorrow, is linked to its past development and heritage of nearly 275 years as a community.

Like many towns in New England, Canterbury was created by grant of the British Crown to friends and political supporters of the King. What is now Canterbury, Northfield, and Loudon was granted by George II in 1727 to 200 persons in 80-acre lots. The first settlers arrived in 1733, and by 1742 about 30 families had established residence.

In the early years of settlement, in the midst of the French and Indian Wars, conflict with the Indians was a principal worry for residents. A fort and trading post, located close to the present intersection of Route 132, Center Road and Carter Hill provided protection and a hub of economic life. Most residents of Canterbury during this period lived within two miles of the safety offered by the fort.

By 1773 the threat of Indian warfare had decreased. Residents living in the southeastern part of the grant, having grown weary of traveling relatively long distances, petitioned and were granted the right to form the separate Town of Loudon. In 1780, for similar reasons of distance and convenience, Northfield was chartered as a separate town. Despite losses of population to both Loudon and Northfield, by 1790 Canterbury reported a population of 1,048.

In 1792, a seminal event occurred which distinguishes Canterbury to this day. The Shakers arrived to establish a settlement on a hill in the eastern part of Town. This religious sect, brought to the United States from England by its founder, Mother Ann Lee, prospered in Canterbury and by 1850 numbered over 300 members. Canterbury's initial receptiveness to the Shakers also may have encouraged the migration from Warner of another sect, the Osgoodites, in 1820. The Osgoodites made their homes in Canterbury until their dissolution about 50 years later.

By 1820, Canterbury's population had risen to nearly 1700. Following the Civil War, however, talk of better land and opportunity to the west and, for some, in the mills to the south began a gradual and steady decline in New Hampshire's agriculture base and rural populations. The allure of fertile soil and land grants offered to veterans of the Civil War dispersed many of the Town's residents to Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, and other mid-western states. That decline in population was not to reverse itself until 1930, by which time Canterbury's population had fallen to 505 residents.

In April of 1943, tragedy befell the Town Center when a midnight fire swept out of control and most of its buildings, including the Congregational Church built in 1825, were destroyed. When a shaken group of townspeople faced the wreckage the next day, they rallied their spirits to conceive a new vision for the Center. Many planning and discussion meetings ensued, and ultimately, with volunteer labor and fund-raising, a new fire station, Parish House and church were built. The damaged Town Hall was moved to its present location and restored.

The 1930s to the 1950s saw moderate population growth and increasing awareness of change and by 1952 Canterbury had established a planning board and adopted zoning ordinances. With the adoption of zoning in 1952, Canterbury took its place in the forefront of New Hampshire communities providing leadership in land use regulation. In the 1950s and 1960s the Town continued to grow moderately, and in the 1970s, as the attractiveness of life in Town became known, Canterbury's population growth accelerated.

In 1971 the Town adopted its first Plan for Tomorrow. The following year during the annual Town meeting, a zoning map based on topography, water resources and soils was adopted. Although there have been minor alterations to the Town Zoning Map since it was formally established and approved in 1972, significant revisions to the Town Zoning Map have not occurred.

Spurred by additional growth throughout the 1970s, in 1978 the Town passed one of New Hampshire's first growth control ordinances as a measure to address what many perceived as rapid and unfocused change. In 1979, by unanimous vote of Town meeting, the ordinance was amended and adopted as a vehicle for community planning. During the period of rapid growth in the 1980s, Canterbury was frequently cited by growth management advocates as an example of a small community that had sought to grapple with unpredictability and highly cyclical aspects of development with the comprehensive ordinance and the implementation of significant limitations to the quantity of available building permits.

During the 1980s several important civic building renovation projects occurred, including moving the Town offices to the Sam Lake House, erecting the bandstand in the Town center, replacement of the slate roof on the Elkins Library and renovations to the children's room in the basement. In 1987 the Town took a major step toward environmental efficiency and responsibility by opening the Canterbury Recycling Center, operating at the transfer station. In 1989 a meeting room was added to the Sam Lake House.

The 1990s showed a continued commitment to the community with the completion of a new soccer field and a building expansion of the Canterbury Elementary School. During the same year as the passing of the last Shaker sister in

1992 came a celebration of the Shaker's achievements during the 200th anniversary of the Shaker Village that included its designation as a National Historic Landmark in 1993. Cable TV was introduced in the Town in 1992. Conservation projects such as the Intervale Boat Launch in 1994, The Riverland Walk and Observation Platform in 1996, and the addition of the Kimball Pond and Spender Meadow protected areas in 1997 was evidence that the property owners of Canterbury were committed to an investment in their town and protecting its heritage and environment.

The opportunities for progress and conservation continue into the new century. Since the arrival of the new millennium, approvals by the Town's majority to erect a multi-million dollar public safety building (to house the Police, Fire and Rescue, and Highway departments) and library/meeting house complex in 2003, the purchase of 590 acres along the Merrimack River doing business as the Gold Star Farm in 2004, the purchase in 2008 of two contiguous lots, known as Hildreth Field, near town center totaling 45 acres, are excellent examples of Canterbury townspeople's commitment to responsible conservation and improved public services.







# **CHAPTER 4: CANTERBURY COMMUNITY PROFILE**

In order to create a useful and relevant Master Plan, it is important to understand changes and trends occurring within the community. This chapter presents demographic, social, economic, and governmental profile information about Canterbury. As the Town evolves, patterns in population, development, and economic conditions emerge that can help predict what the future may hold and allow opportunities for planning to guide change.

Much of the most recent data available for this chapter comes from the 2000 US Census. Although now nearly ten years old, census data can still be useful to look at trends over recent decades. More current data from the New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning (NH OEP) relies on projections based on census and state-gathered data.



## **Population of Canterbury**

Canterbury's population reached an all-time high in 2000 at 1,979 residents – nearly twice as high as the population of 1,038 at the initial census in 1790 and four times the lowest count of 505 people at the 1930 census. The current population represents a 17.3% increase over the 1990 count of 1,687 people. The New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning estimated that the 2005 population was even higher at 2,240 and projects further increases over the next decade.

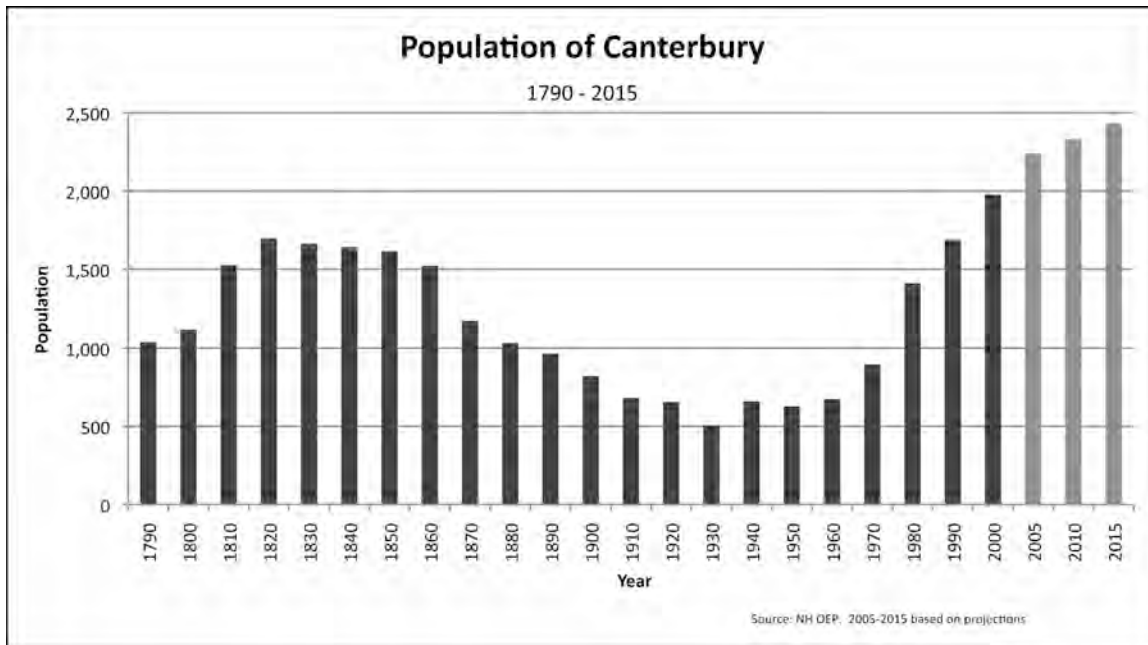


Figure 4 - 1

**Population of Canterbury Compared to Neighboring Towns**

Figure 4-2 depicts Canterbury’s population in relation to neighboring towns over the past fifty years. Canterbury has remained the smallest community throughout the period, even as significant growth has occurred.

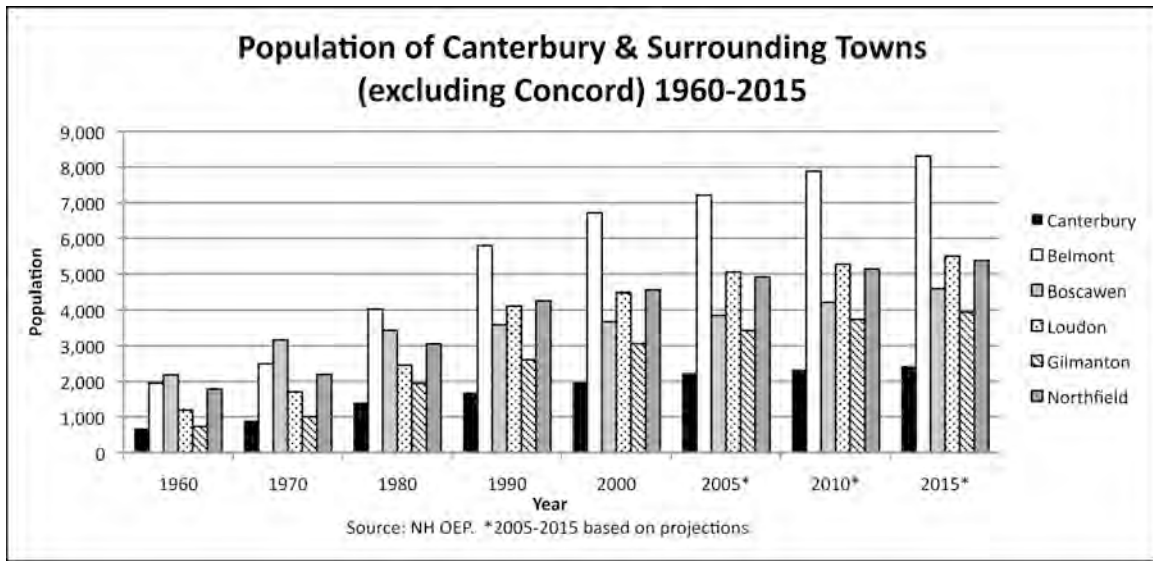


Figure 4 - 2

### **Canterbury Resident Births and Deaths**

Canterbury’s population increase has been a result of new families moving to the Town as well as from the net increase from births. Between 1990 and 2000, there were 244 births and 131 deaths among Canterbury residents for a net increase of 113 people. Figure 4-3 shows that births have outnumbered deaths in recent years, contributing to the growing population but accounting for only part of it.

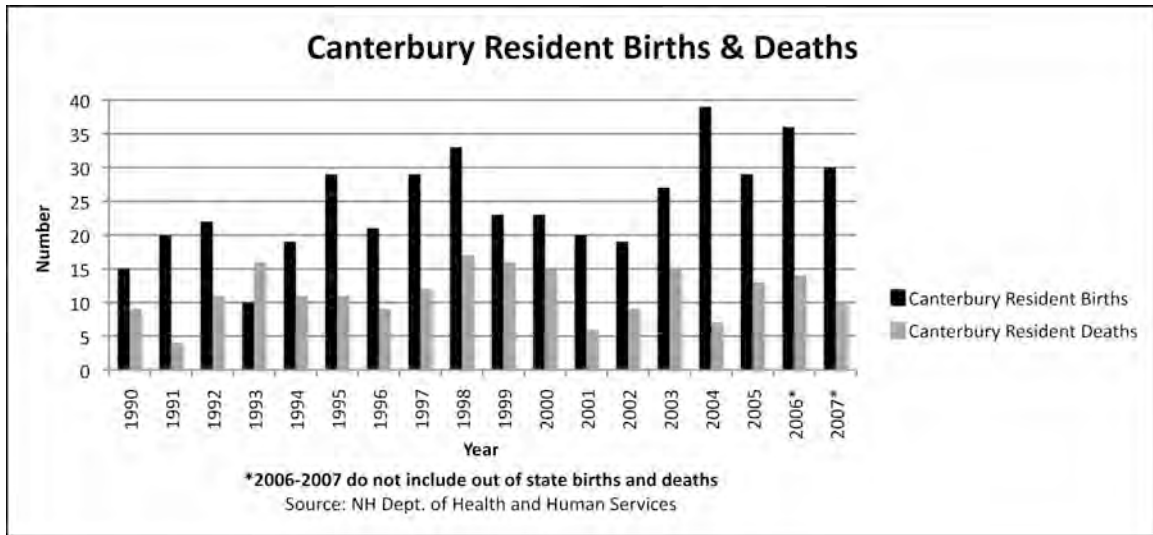


Figure 4 - 3

**Education of Canterbury Residents**

Canterbury residents are well educated compared to the statewide average. Figure 4-4 demonstrates that a greater proportion of the Town’s population hold bachelor’s or higher degrees than the New Hampshire population. In fact, a full 20% of Canterbury residents hold graduate or professional degrees – twice as high as the statewide average of 10%. Fewer Canterbury residents stop at high school than the statewide average. A comparable percentage of Canterbury residents and New Hampshire residents overall have some college education or hold an associate degree.

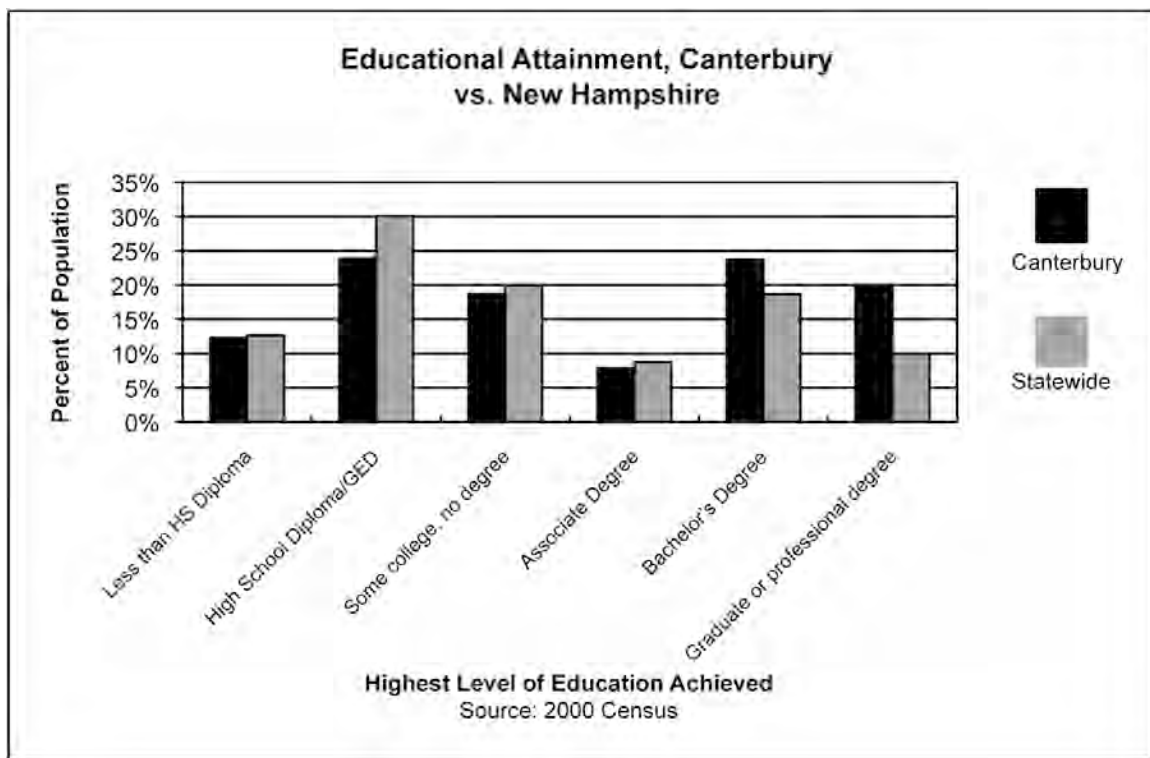


Figure 4 - 4

**Canterbury Median Household Income**

Canterbury’s median household income rose in nominal dollars between 1989 and 1999 from \$45,724 to \$58,026, and a markedly higher proportion of households reported incomes in upper brackets in 1999 compared to 1989. However, as Figure 4-6 demonstrates, when accounting for inflation, the real median income actually declined over the decade from \$61,432 in 1989 (expressed in 1999-inflated dollars) to \$58,026. What a household earning the median could buy in 1989 was actually greater than what it could buy in 1999.

Despite this real decline, in 1999, Canterbury’s median income was still higher than that of neighboring communities. Figure 4-7 shows that only Loudon had a similarly high median income of approximately \$55,000, while nearly all other surrounding communities’ median incomes were below \$50,000. Merrimack County and statewide median household incomes were also below \$50,000.

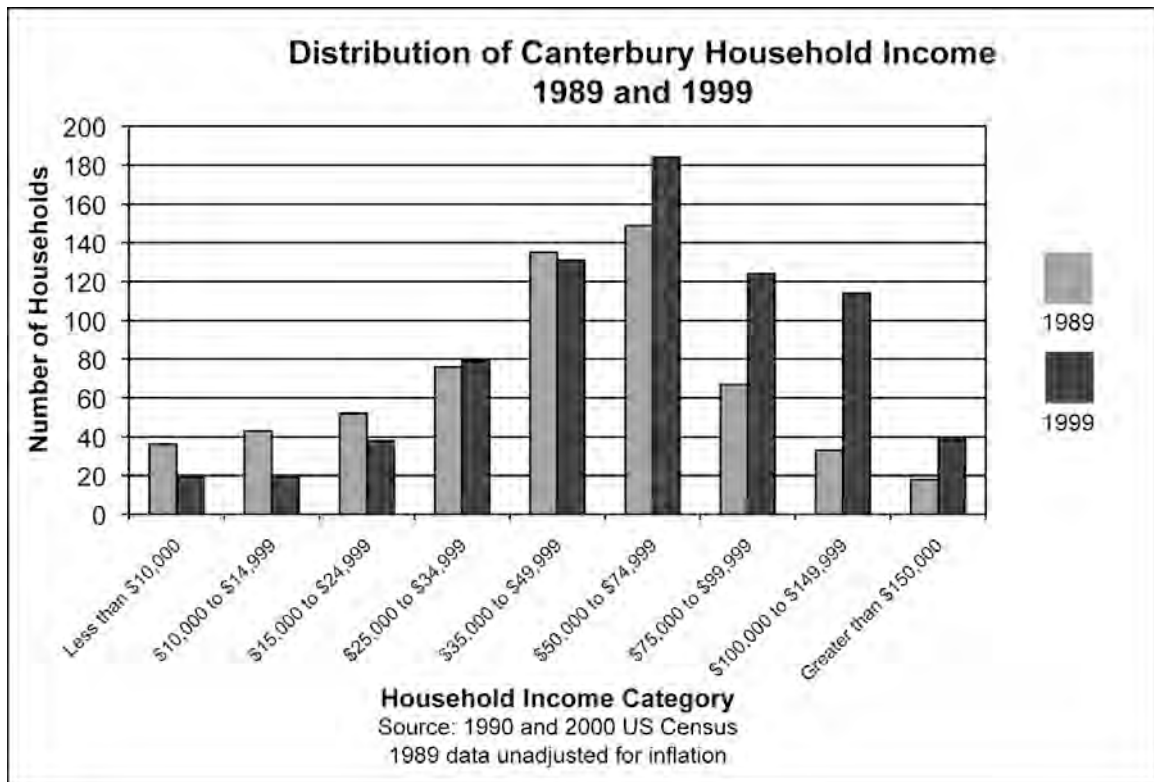


Figure 4 - 5

**Canterbury Median Household Income**

1989 Median Household Income	\$45,724 (\$61,432 in 1999 Dollars)
1999 Median Household Income	\$58,026

Source: 1990 and 2000 US Census. Inflation adjustment from US Bureau of Labor Statistics CPI Inflation Calculator.

Figure 4 - 6

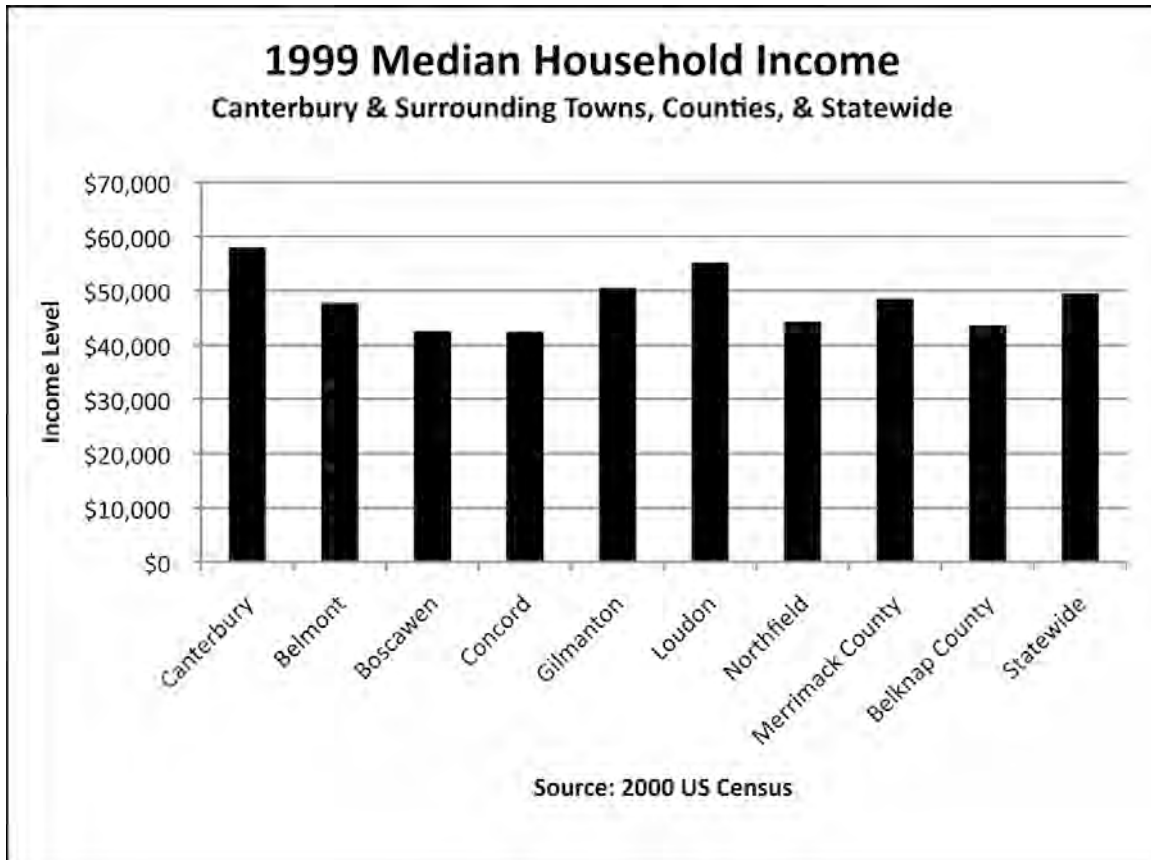


Figure 4 - 7

### **Place of Work for Canterbury Citizens**

Canterbury remains a “bedroom community,” with 81% of workers commuting to towns outside of Canterbury, according to the 2000 US Census. The most popular destination is Concord, with 469 Canterbury commuters, or 42%, traveling to the capital to work. The map in Figure 4-8 shows the most frequent commuting destinations for Canterbury workers.

Commuting time is less than thirty minutes for the majority of Canterbury workers. Thirty-four percent of commuters reported their commuting time to be greater than half an hour in the 2000 Census, as shown in Figure 4-9. This is slightly lower compared to 1990 data, when 31% of commuters reported travel time greater than 30 minutes. More Canterbury residents are working at home: 10% in 2000 compared to just 4.5% in 1990.

The most popular mode of travel to work is the automobile. As Figure 4-10 demonstrates, 81% of Canterbury commuters drove alone in their cars to work in 2000. Another 5.5% carpooled, while only 3% used another means of transportation.

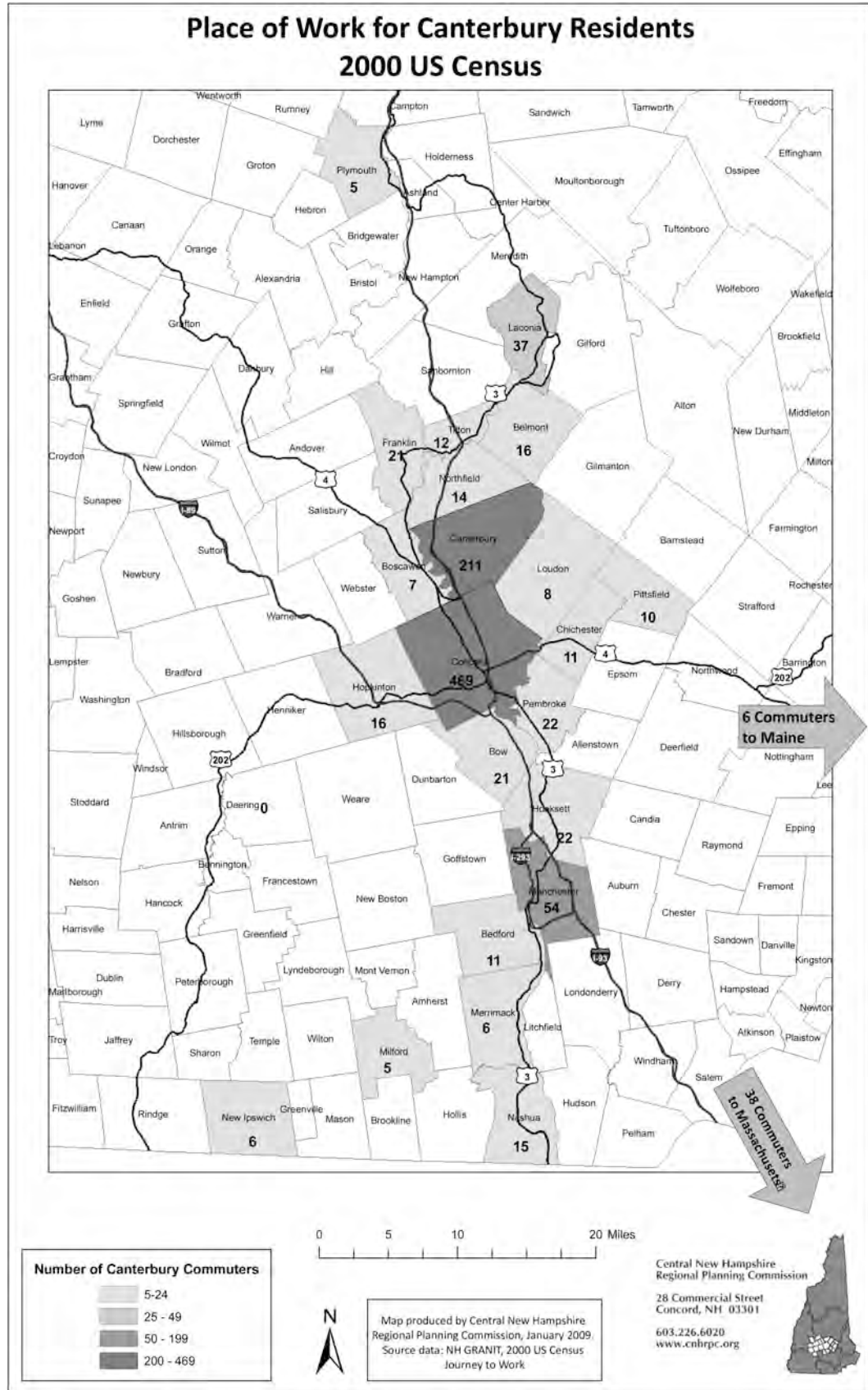


Figure 4 - 8



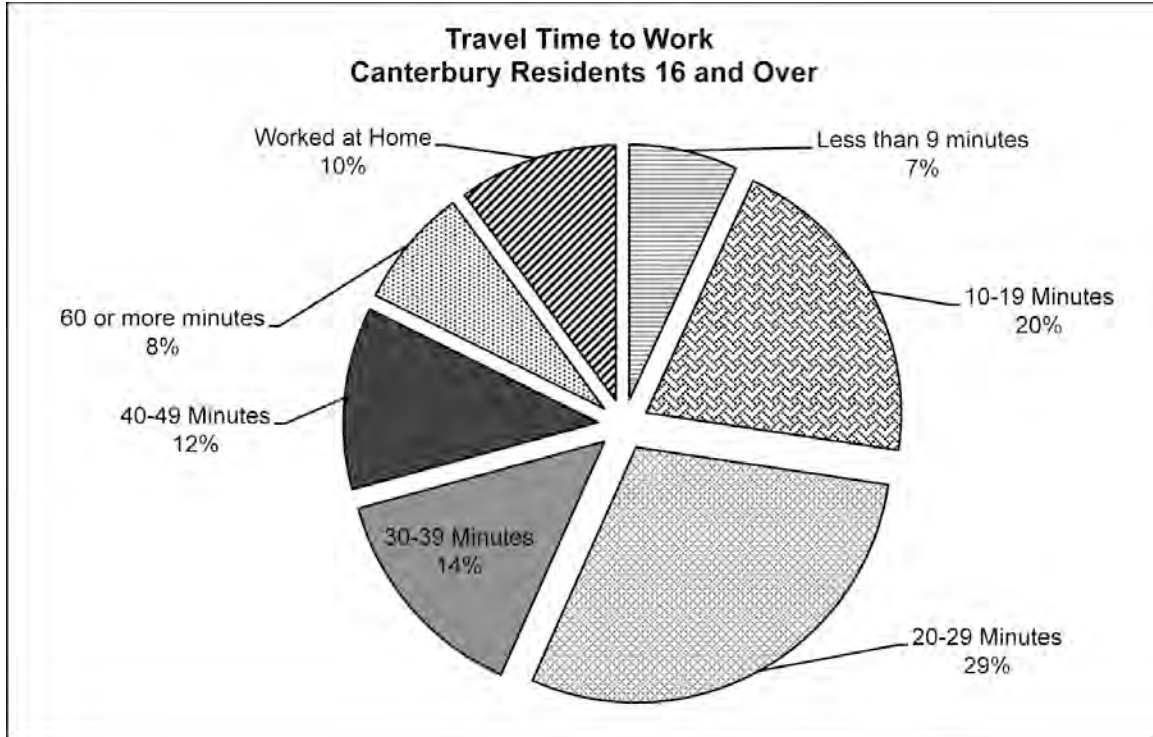


Figure 4 - 9

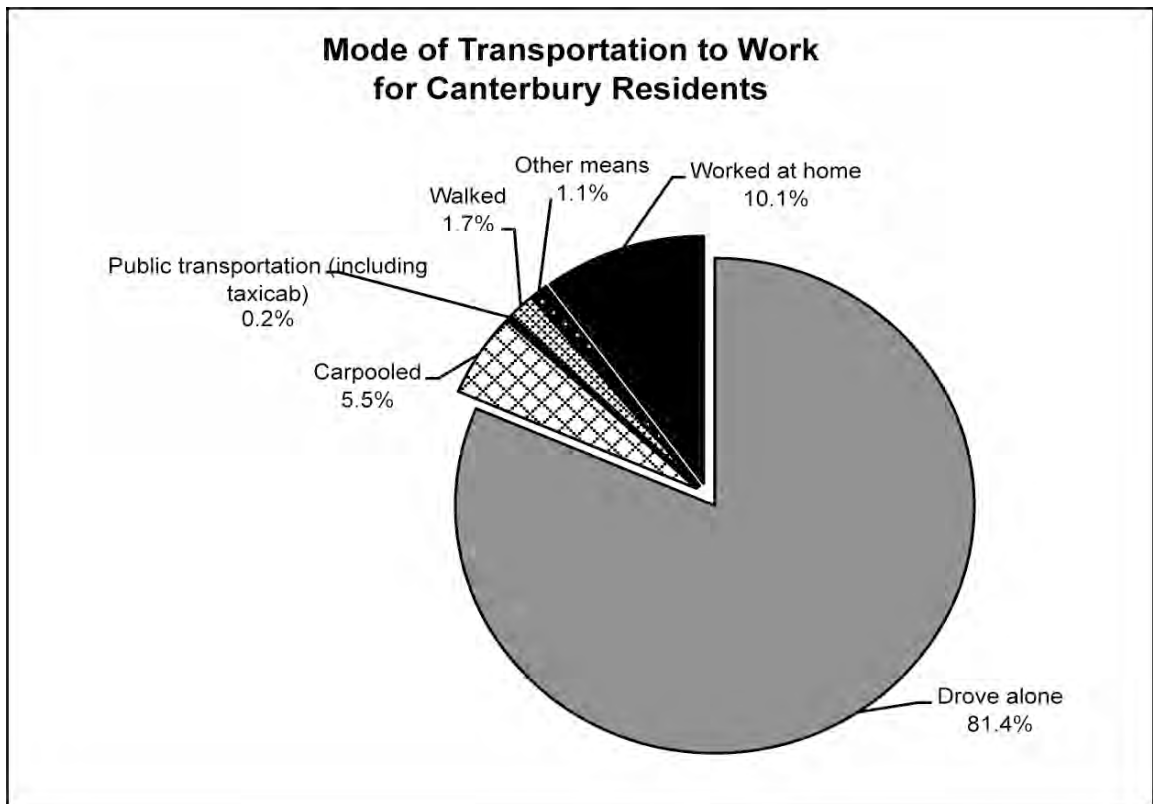


Figure 4 - 10

**Building Permits, Housing, Building Activity**

The rate of new home building in Canterbury has fluctuated over recent decades, from a low of four in 1993 to 34 new homes built in 2003. Notably, following the boom in 2002-2004, building permits for new homes have sharply declined to a 16-year low as homebuilders and families react to the recent economic downturn.

Canterbury’s predominant housing type is the single-family home. In fact, 95% of the Town’s housing stock falls into that category, while 4% is multi-family housing and only 1% of homes are manufactured or other types. Compared to surrounding towns shown in Figure 4-12, Canterbury has the most homogenous housing distribution. Gilmanton shares a very similar housing profile, while Concord is the only municipality with multi-family dwellings representing over half of its housing units.

The map in Figure 4-13 shows the distribution of building permits in town in recent years. While development has occurred throughout the Town, the most concentrated area of development has been in the northeast corner of town in the Sherwood Forest development.

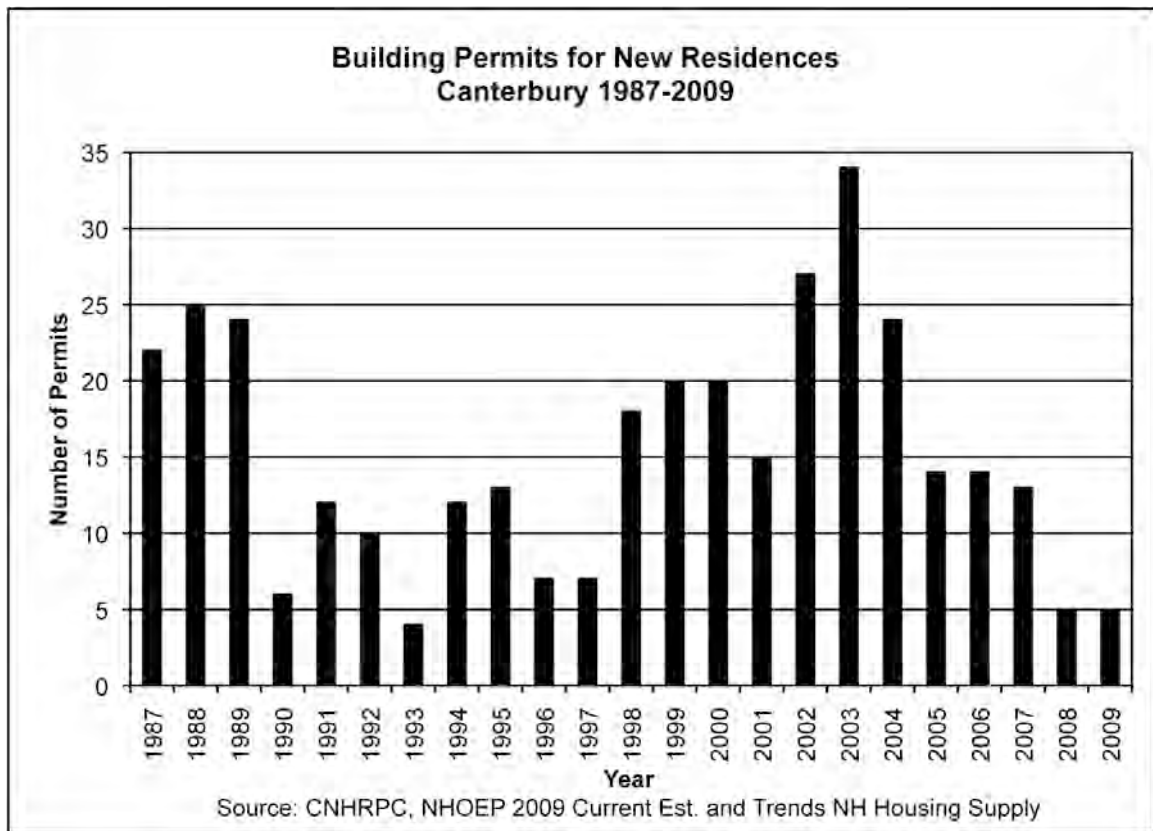


Figure 4 - 11

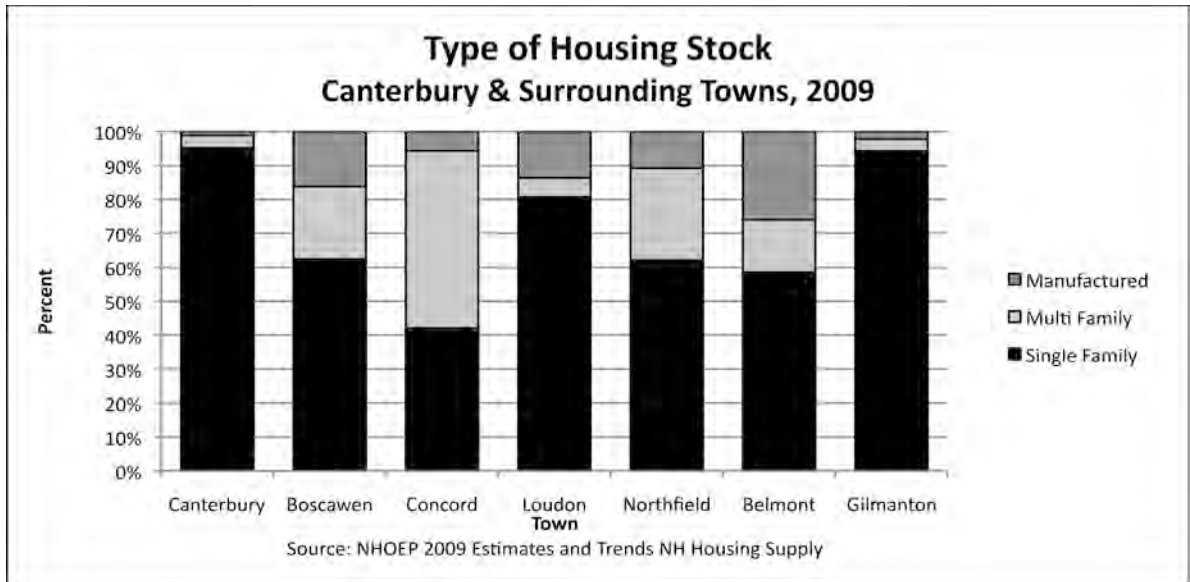


Figure 4 - 12



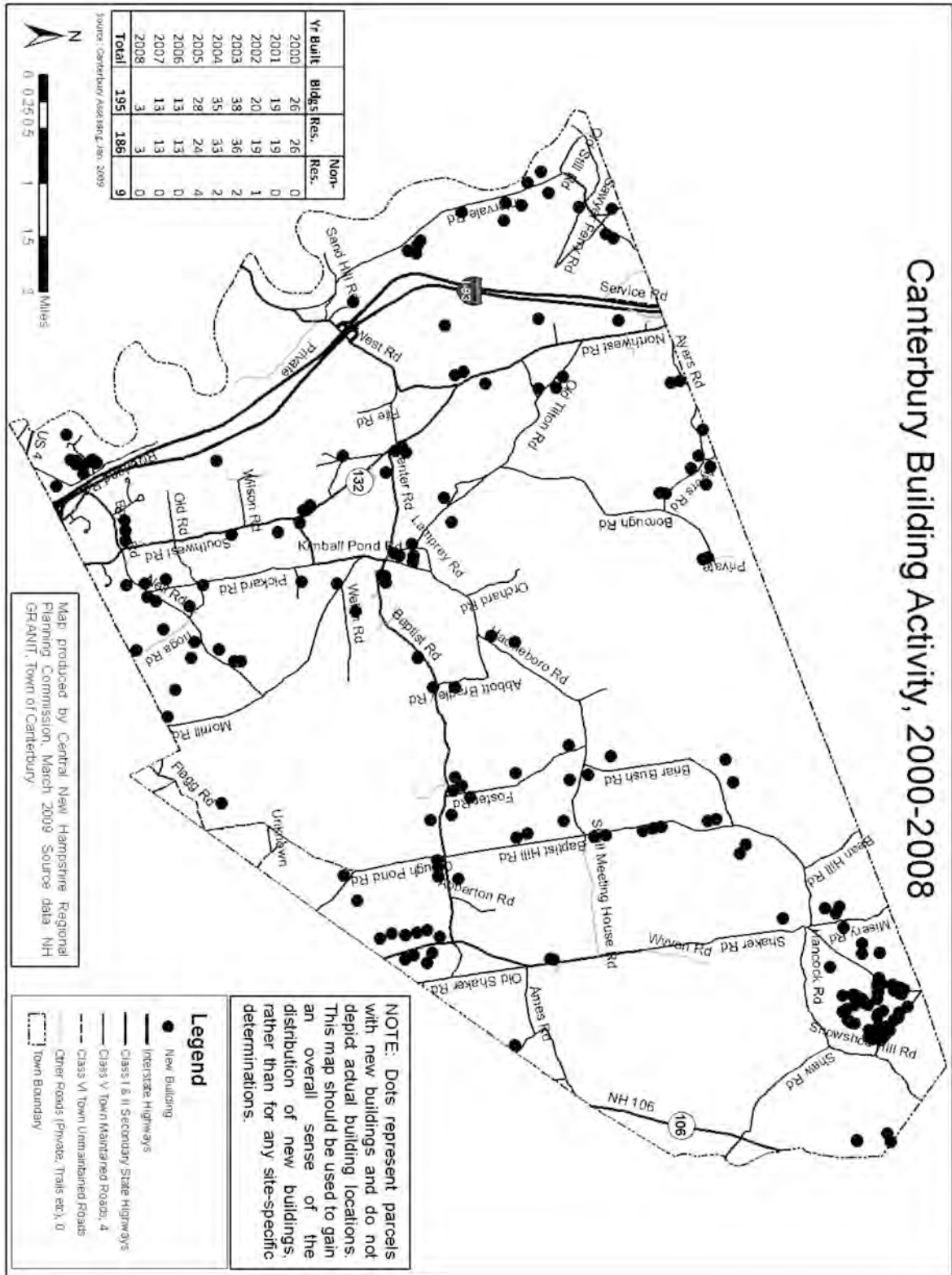


Figure 4 - 13

**Distribution of Property Values**

Figure 4-14 shows the distribution of property values in Canterbury in 2008. The Town’s median assessed value is \$289,050, reflecting that the majority of homes are currently valued at between \$200,000 and \$350,000. Since the last Master Plan was produced in 1998, many more very high-value properties exist in town. In 1997, according to the previous Master Plan, only approximately five properties were valued at over \$300,000. In 2008, 442 properties in town meet that description, including 76 properties valued at more than \$500,000 according to the Canterbury Assessor’s Office.

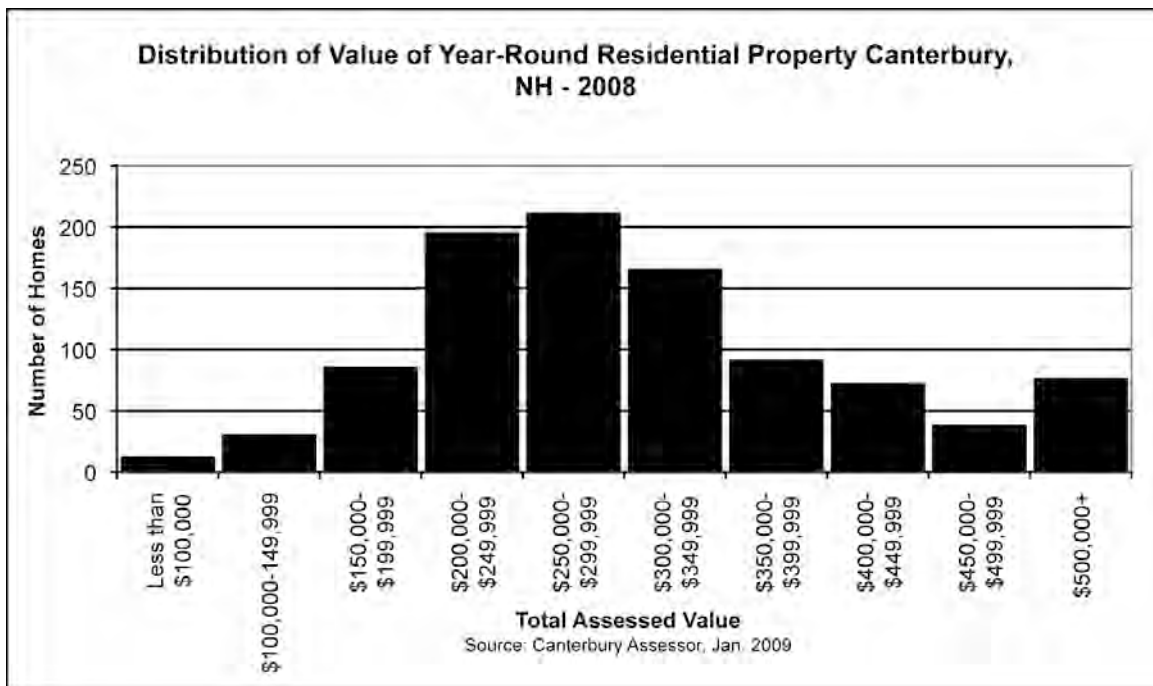


Figure 4 - 14

### **Tax Rate and Town Budget**

The bulk of Canterbury's revenue derives from local property taxes. In 2009 (see Figure 4-15 below), just over half of residents' tax dollars supported the school system, while 23% was dedicated to town operations, 14% went to Merrimack County, and 12% was paid into the state education tax fund.

Figure 4-16 shows how the 2009 town budget (\$2,440,942) was allocated. Spending allocations were similar to the 1997 budget presented in the previous Master Plan, with the exceptions of Debt Service and Payments to the Capital Reserve, General Government and Solid Waste. In 2009, Debt Service and Payments to the Capital Reserve (which represents four bonds the town is paying off) accounts for nearly 17% of the town's budget, while twelve years earlier in 1997 it did not exist. In 2009, General Government represents 20% of the town's budget, down from 26% in 1997. Similarly, Solid Waste is down to 5% of the 2009 budget compared to 8% in 1997.

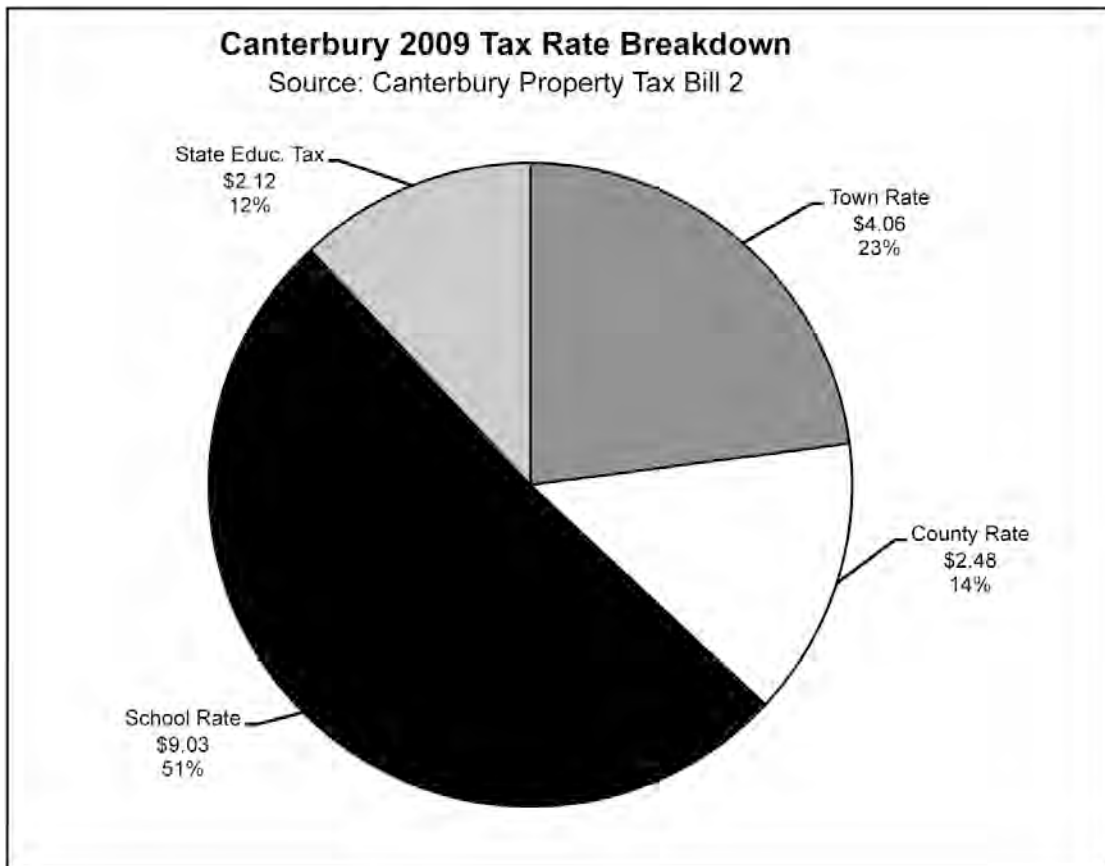


Figure 4 - 15

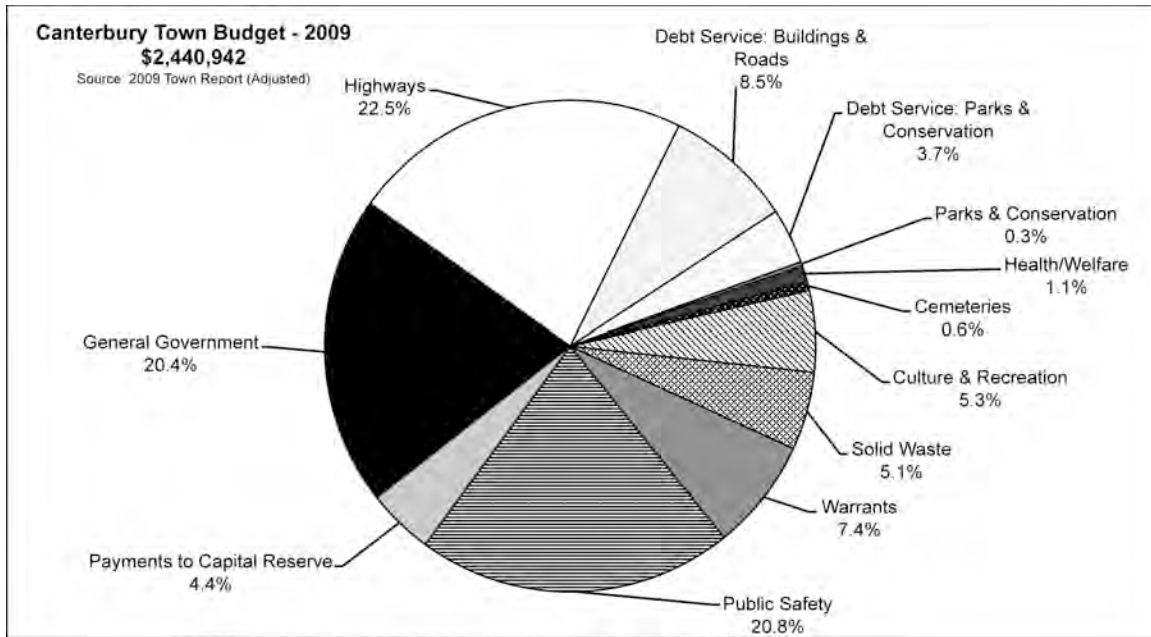


Figure 4 - 16

### **Shaker Regional School District**

Shaker Regional School District enrollment has remained stable over the past twenty years. In 1989, total enrollment was 1,300 students. In 2008, enrollment had increased to 1,468 students. Canterbury has historically accounted for approximately twenty percent of the student population (245 students, or 19% in 1989 and 292 students, or 20% in 2008), while Belmont students constitute the majority.

## **Agricultural Production**

Every five years, the United States Department of Agriculture conducts the Census of Agriculture to gather data on farming and ranching operations. Figure 4-17 shows the reported number and size category of farms in the Canterbury Zip Code Tabulation Area from the 1997 and 2007 Censuses of Agriculture. In 1997, there were a total of 24 farms, including 13 under 50 acres and 11 that were over 50 acres in size. Ten years later, there were 45 farms, with 18 under 50 acres and 27 over 50 acres in size. The jump in farm numbers may be explained in part by a statewide increase in diversified farms selling products in local markets. According to the USDA Census of Agriculture reporting form, any operation that sells \$1,000 or more in agricultural products per year, or would normally sell at least that amount, is considered a farm. Because of the relatively small sample size and inconsistencies in survey return rates, this chart should be used only as very general indicator of farming in Canterbury.

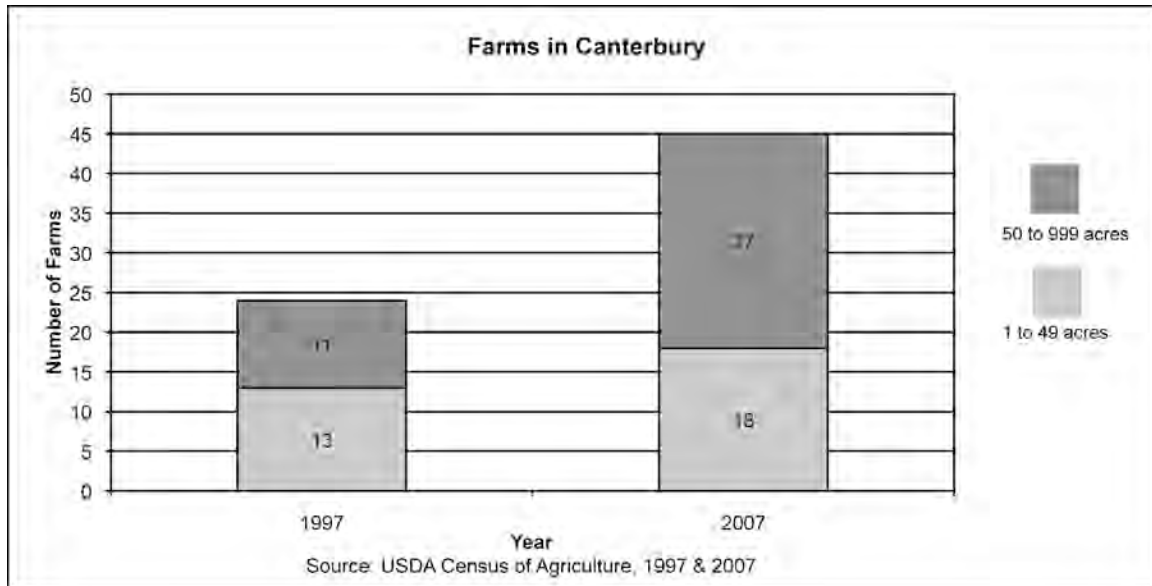


Figure 4 - 17





# **CHAPTER 5: LAND USE**

## **Introduction**

The goals and policies for the use of Canterbury land established in this chapter are consistent with historical patterns and with the residents' desire to preserve Canterbury's rural and residential character. Future development should be evaluated by its impact on the character of the Town, as well as by its impact on both the cost of Town services and the general quality of life in Canterbury. The experience of other towns demonstrates that unplanned, uncontrolled growth leads to a change in the Town's character along with higher taxes. Once begun, neither trend can easily be reversed.

## **Traditional Land Use in Canterbury**

When the first settlers reached Canterbury in the late 1700s, their primary concern was to clear enough land so they could pasture their cattle and produce crops and enough food for their families. Given the rocky nature of Canterbury's hillsides and the fact that many settlers built their log cabins high in the hills, agricultural activity was a constant struggle. Land use in those days was focused on meeting basic needs. It is not likely that those early farmers visualized a time when most of the land in Canterbury would be used for other purposes. Until the 1950s, Canterbury land was used almost exclusively for agriculture, not only for raising livestock and crops, but also for the harvesting of timber and making maple syrup. Land values were determined by agricultural productivity. Beginning slowly in the 1930s and continuing more rapidly since the 1950s, non-farm primary residences began to appear. Land became a commodity bought and sold for residential development; development and agricultural and forestry uses have coexisted since then. As in most rural New Hampshire towns, land sold for residential development has had a cash value higher than land kept in agricultural use. Non-agricultural home occupations have gradually expanded during the past forty years. During the past 25 years, the proliferation of the Internet and computer technologies has enabled many service related/consulting businesses to thrive as home occupations.

## **Land Use Today**

The distribution of residences, many of which were built before the turn of the 20th century, traditionally followed the suitability of land for farming. These structures and others that have been built more recently are the principal use of land in Canterbury. Single-family residences are widely distributed across the community. The Town Center, Sherwood Forest development, and the southwest

corner of the Town form the primary centers of population. There are a few small commercial establishments located in the center of Town and near Exits 17 and 18 of I-93.

Agricultural uses are scattered across the community and are a principal feature of the Town's rural character. At present agricultural land is an important resource of the Town. This land provides a variety of values and uses including the preservation of open space, historic character, recreation, and local sources of food. Some of the agricultural uses in the Town include, but are not limited to, maple syrup production, apple orchards, sod farming, livestock production, dairy production, fiber production, produce, horticulture, equine industries, forage crops, and timber harvesting.

### **Private Lands**

Privately owned lands constitute the largest percentage of the lands in town. Landowners have traditionally opened their lands to hunting, fishing and recreation. Landowners provide this public good for free and are proud to do so as stewards of the natural processes of their land and the greater good of providing environmental and aesthetic benefits to the public. Current Use taxation greatly reduces the property taxes on privately owned land.

### **Public and Public Access Lands**

Land open for public access in Canterbury includes land owned by the State of New Hampshire, land owned by the Town and land owned by private parties with deeded or customary access by the public.

The State of New Hampshire owns four properties in Canterbury:

1. The Shaker State Forest is located on Route 106, just north of the New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon, and Shaker Village in the northeasterly part of the Town. The Shaker Forest contains 250 acres and is accessible from Route 106.
2. The Ayers State Forest is located along the Northfield town line in the northwest part of Town. It contains 50 acres.
3. Morrill Mill Pond is located along Morrill Road in the southern portion of the Town. It contains about 70 acres.
4. The Muchyedo Bank wildlife management area (the Canterbury Oxbow) on the Merrimack River, north of exit 17, owned by NH Fish and Game. It contains 294 acres.

The Town owns the following properties:

1. Town Center land includes a covered gazebo on the Town green, the historic Town Hall, the new Elkins Library, and the Elizabeth Houser Museum, a parking area shared by the three buildings, the Elkins Memorial Building (former library) and adjacent lot, the Town offices located in the Sam Lake House, and a fire pond adjacent to the Sam Lake House.
2. The Municipal Center Complex on Baptist Road, just up the hill from the Town Center and across from the Canterbury Elementary School. The property houses the Police, Fire & Rescue, and Highway Departments in a large, multi-use building.
3. The Refuse Transfer Station site east of Town Center on Baptist Road. The Station has an enclosed recycling and transfer station; a garage building houses the refuse transfer truck and has bays for salt and sand used by the Town road crew.
4. Approximately sixty acres at Exit 18, just west of Interstate 93. The land is available for industrial use. The 1996 Town Meeting authorized improved access to the land.
5. The Kimball Pond Conservation Area plus Hildreth Field gives the Town 94 contiguous acres of conserved land off of Kimball Pond Road, one of the main approaches to the Town Center.
6. The Goldstar Sod Farm, on the Merrimack River, near Exit 18 of Interstate 93, contains about 600 acres and 5 miles of river frontage.
7. The Peverly Meadow, on the north side of the east end of Baptist Road, contains 9.8 acres.
8. The Riverland Conservation Area is located in the southwesterly part of Town along the Merrimack River. This 68-acre area contains two "oxbow" ponds, wetlands, shrub, field, forest, beach and river.
9. The canoe access ramp is 6.35 acres on the Intervale Road.
10. The Schoodac Conservation Area is approximately 140 acres and located on Welch Road.
11. A number of parcels of undeveloped land in remote locations (see Town Report for a current list).

Privately owned land with public access:

1. The Shaker Village complex contains approximately 700 acres. Much of the property is available for walking and nature viewing.
2. The Society for Protection of New Hampshire Forests owns and manages 88 acres located off of Route 132, plus an abutting 20-acre parcel. Mary

and Quentin Hutchins of Canterbury donated the 88-acre parcel to the Society in 1988. The 20-acre parcel, the Paul and Thelma Ambeau Memorial Forest, was donated in 1997. The Society maintains a trail system on the land for public use.

### **Management of Development and Growth**

The form and presentation of the zoning ordinances and the regulations were changed in 1990, with substantive amendments made since then. These tools are used to ensure that land use is consistent with the land's ability to support human activity, and to ensure that development takes place in an orderly and harmonious way.

The Town's Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision and Site Plan Review Regulations and the Plan for Tomorrow have been developed to foster the following goals:

1. To preserve to the maximum extent possible the natural features, historic buildings and districts, rural qualities and diversity of population that makes Canterbury special to those who live here.
2. To provide for orderly population growth and development at a rate consistent with long-term growth rates in the surrounding region.
3. To encourage growth and development in those areas of the Town, which are most suitable for development and most accessible to existing and planned services.
4. To provide for orderly expansion of Town services to accommodate reasonable growth.
5. To maintain and extend the present balance and diversity in Canterbury's housing stock by providing a broad range of housing opportunities.
6. To protect and enhance property values by assuring that development is compatible with neighboring properties and is generally conducive to the economic well-being of the Town.
7. To preserve and encourage agricultural use of the land by adopting agricultural friendly ordinances and policies.

Based on 146 responses to the 2007 Planning Board Survey, 97% of the respondents preferred to have Canterbury preserve its small town atmosphere and uncrowded, quiet living conditions, and 91% wanted the Town to have a "primarily residential atmosphere". Clearly there is an overwhelming desire to preserve Canterbury's rural small town character and to manage growth through a

wise land use policy. The traditional rural landscape of some towns in this part of New Hampshire has given way to types of development which destroy the historic rural character, such as building houses and condominiums in the center of open fields, or by dividing land so that it can never again be used for agricultural or forestry uses. These other towns have also discovered that rapid residential growth can dramatically increase property taxes. Under current tax laws, residential development does not pay for itself unless the homes are very expensive or are vacation homes.

Residential development has not overwhelmed Canterbury. This is partially a result of zoning and subdivision regulations enacted in the 1970s, which discouraged large-scale development of residential tracts, and encouraged the preservation of open space. In the late 1970s, Canterbury was among the first communities to enact an annual limit on building permits for new residential construction. This limitation, commonly referred to as the “building permit cap,” is re-examined by the Planning Board no less frequently than every two years so as to insure that the cap adequately addresses regional housing needs and population trends (see Article 11 of the Canterbury Zoning Ordinance). The annual permit cap for new, single-family residential construction is currently set to 3% of the existing single-family housing stock. There is a separate permit cap for new multi-family residential construction. The building permit cap has had the beneficial effect of enabling Canterbury to largely avoid the “boom and bust” building cycle endured by many of our neighboring communities in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Significantly, only during the ill-fated residential building boom of the late 1980s did the demand for single family building permits exceed the then 4% building permit cap. Since the early 1990s, the number of building permits issued for single-family dwellings has never come close to reaching the annual building permit cap. If, in the future, single-family dwellings were constructed at the rate currently allowed by the building permit cap, the number of single-family dwellings would double in about 23 years.

Local zoning, subdivision, and site plan review regulations are not the only factors affecting the amount and type of development in Canterbury. Other restraints to development include such physical limitations as steep terrain, soils unsuitable for septic systems, State wetlands regulations, conservation easements, and public land. However, it should be noted that perhaps the most important factor impacting growth in Canterbury is the one over which the Town exerts the least control — the health of the regional and statewide economy.

Since Canterbury's growth has been slow in recent years, why should the Town be concerned with the possibility of increased growth in the future? Six factors which could create a significantly higher rate of development in Canterbury in the future are:

1. Higher taxes on undeveloped land could force the sale of this land.
2. A strong regional economy creating more demand for housing.
3. A monetary appreciation of land values so that traditional uses such as agriculture and forestry are less feasible.
4. Outdated and inadequate zoning and subdivision regulations.
5. High estate taxes forcing subdivision or sale of large parcels as a result of poor estate planning.
6. Widening of I-93.

### **New Challenges And Concerns**

No town or community is an island unto itself. There are economic, technological, demographic and social changes that continue to affect our entire nation and the State of New Hampshire. Canterbury is not immune to these changes. Among the issues that have arisen nationally and regionally are issues relating to workforce housing, transportation, energy usage, and rising property tax burden.

### **Goals, Policies, Objectives And Recommended Actions**

We must remain aware of potential changes in our community and what those changes could mean to the rural character, tax structure, and quality of life in Canterbury. There is a need for widespread public understanding of how development forces can exert tremendous pressures to subdivide larger properties. Without this awareness, we will not be able to preserve the unique and extraordinary beauty of this Town nor assure our children the opportunity to live in a town such as we now have. We need also to identify steps the community can take to guide the future development of the Town in order to preserve its rural character and scenic beauty, and to control the cost of local government.

The following long-range goals accommodate diversity of land use consistent with high regard for the environment and the natural beauty of our Town. They will help us fulfill the expressed wishes of a large majority of Canterbury residents

### **Long-Range Goals**

1. Preserve the rural character and scenic beauty of Canterbury.
2. Encourage the preservation of open space for current or future agricultural use of all types, and for the preservation of natural resources, wildlife habitat, and wetlands.
3. Preserve the peace and quiet of the Canterbury.
4. Limit density of development to the physical capacity of the land to handle the development without degrading the environment.
5. Ensure that the rate of development does not exceed the ability of existing and planned Town services and facilities to support it.
6. Promote traditional agricultural activities and encourage new ones. These agricultural activities should include the use of tillable land, pasture land, and all kinds of forestland.

### **Policies and Objectives**

1. Manage growth so it does not detract from the rural character of Canterbury.
2. Maintain an inventory of agricultural land and review all development on prime agricultural land to minimize the impact of such growth.
3. Develop Town ordinances and regulations that encourage agricultural activities and may enhance the value of agricultural land above its development value.
4. Support State and local tax policies that encourage the preservation of agricultural and other open space.
5. Allow residential and non-agricultural commercial development which will utilize existing farm structures, preserve existing agricultural land, and which will not detract from Canterbury's rural character.
6. Encourage residential development contiguous to existing residential development, or in areas identified as capable of sustaining development due to topography, soils, access to good roads, and other factors.
7. Limit development density in areas where the capacity of the land is limited by shallow soils, wetlands, limited access, or other factors.
8. Continue to allow and facilitate flexible development of residential and commercial land to preserve open space for agriculture, preservation of natural resources, and to maintain the rural character and scenic beauty of the Town.

9. Review development projects with regard to their effect on the planned rate of growth of municipal facilities, services, and infrastructure.
10. Retain and enhance scenic vistas within and along approaches to the Town Center.
11. Preserve the viability and mobility of wildlife and the integrity of open space in agricultural, forested, and undeveloped areas by encouraging the contiguous connection of such similar areas within and across property boundaries wherever possible.
12. Adhere to traditional settlement patterns when locating municipal and public buildings.

### **Recommended Actions**

1. Continue efforts to identify, inventory, protect and maintain features which make up the rural character of the Town, such as dirt roads, stone walls, open land, the trail system, and old farm buildings. *(Conservation Commission and Historical Society)*
2. Survey current agricultural and forestry activities in Canterbury. *(Conservation, Planning Board, and Agricultural Commission)*
3. Identify land that should be conserved for agricultural activity, forestry, wildlife habitat, water quality and recreation. *(Conservation, Planning Board, and Agricultural Commission)*
4. Continue to periodically reevaluate the existing “building permit cap” and adjust a rate of growth that will enable Canterbury to assume its regional responsibilities while not unduly straining existing and planned Town services, schools, and roads. This growth rate should not lead to an adverse impact on the quality of life in Canterbury or unreasonable increases in Canterbury's property taxes. *(Planning Board and Selectmen)*
5. Consider possible changes in the Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations to direct development away from cleared fields and prime agricultural land to those areas that cannot be put to agricultural uses. *(Planning Board and Agricultural Commission)*
6. Consider possible changes in the Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations to separate the Agricultural/Conservation zoning district into two separate zoning districts in order to reflect the different characteristics of the land as well as its present and future uses of the two zoning districts. *(Planning Board and Agricultural Commission)*
7. Consider possible changes in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to meet the goals, policies and objectives described in the



- Master Plan by utilizing but not being limited to the Innovative Land Use Controls granted by New Hampshire law to the Towns under RSA 674:16.II. and the methods contained in RSA 674:21. (*Planning Board*)
8. Consider possible changes in the Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations to adopt a noise ordinance. The promulgation of a noise ordinance must not impinge on agriculture's ability to carry out necessary functions. (*Planning Board Selectmen and Agricultural Commission*)
  9. Consider possible changes in the Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations to support accessory apartments, elderly housing, bed and breakfasts, and outdoor recreation businesses. (*Planning Board*)
  10. Share information with landowners regarding techniques to preserve open space and reduce taxes using such methods and programs as conservation easements, the State Current Use Program, restrictive covenants, and innovative estate planning. (*Conservation Commission and Agricultural Commission*)
  11. Encourage landowners to make their agricultural land available for others to farm and maintain a list of those landowners willing to participate in such a program. (*Conservation Commission and Agricultural Commission*)

Note: These goals and actions are not intended to be comprehensive and exclusive, nor unchanging and unchangeable. Additions and revisions will be necessary in the future, but these goals, policies and objectives, and recommended actions establish a framework and direction for action and further thought that will ensure that Canterbury remains a place where harmony between the built and natural environments is demonstrated through appropriate land use.





## **CHAPTER 6: NATURAL AND SCENIC RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACES**

Canterbury's residents have consistently expressed their desire to protect and preserve the Town's natural resources, rural character, and scenic beauty for the health, safety, and enjoyment of current and future generations. Many of these resources are irreplaceable, and, if not preserved, will be gone forever. The town's extensive undeveloped areas provide residents with clean air, clean water and a healthy environment to live in. They also provide a source of locally grown food, forest products and other benefits. Care and a concerted effort should be taken to conserve these valuable resources before they are gone forever. The areas of greatest conservation values should be identified so that as the Town grows, these areas might be protected for the general well being of future generations.

Canterbury's natural resources display the influences of both man and nature. The hills, valleys, soils, slopes, water resources and plants and animals that live there are our natural resources. The impacts of working the land for farming and forestry over many generations have had a profound effect upon the fields and forests we see today. Properly managed working lands are consistent with many of the conservation goals of this Master Plan. Certain conservation goals may be best achieved by retaining some unmanaged natural areas. The tapestry of fields, forests, ponds, wetlands streams and rivers will continue to evolve and hopefully through careful planning, we can ensure that future generations experience the natural world as we and our predecessors have.

Within this plan the term "open space" refers to the land that has not been impacted by human development for transportation, housing, business or developed recreational activities. We also recognize that well planned developed outdoor recreation areas such as golf courses, swimming beaches and play fields, while not natural open space, contribute to the quality of life in Canterbury. This open space is the forests and fields that surround our homes and that provide the natural resources that serve our residents and the natural world around us.

These elements of Canterbury's character may be significantly affected by the patterns and type of development that occur in Canterbury. Due to the strength of this interrelationship, cross-references to the Land Use chapter will occur throughout this chapter of the Master Plan. This chapter will explore the past and present state of Canterbury's natural and scenic, resources and suggest how they should be treated in the future.

It is divided into four sections:

- Section 1: Conservation and Open Space Goals
- Section 2: Natural Resources: Land, Water, Air, Plants, Wildlife Habitat and Natural Communities
- Section 3: Benefits and Uses of Natural Resources: Quiet Enjoyment, Agriculture, Forestry, Rural Character, Scenic Beauty, Gravel and Other Mineral Extraction, Outdoor Recreation, Ecosystem.
- Section 4: Objectives and Recommended Actions

### **Section 1: Conservation and Open Space Goals of the Master Plan**

Note: The following goals are not listed in order of priority.

The conservation goals of the Canterbury are to:

- Conserve natural resources and habitats for people, plants and animals.
- Conserve working landscapes for agriculture and forestry.
- Provide and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation for the health and enjoyment of current and future generations
- Conserve scenic resources and rural character for the enjoyment of current and future generations.
- Protect current and potential future drinking water sources and water quality
- Protect and conserve the attributes that contribute to a healthy place for healthy people to live including clean air and clean water

### **Section 2: Natural Resources**

#### **Land**

- Topography and Soils

Canterbury's land is diverse as a result of the various land forms and the impacts of glaciers. As the glaciers crossed our town 10,000 years ago they exposed ledge outcrops and distributed soil in various ways. Sandy soils deposited by moving water after glacial melt down dominate both the low and higher

elevations along the Merrimack and Soucook Rivers. Soils shift to glacial tills at the higher elevations. On the hills in the north, soils are generally shallow with numerous ledge outcroppings. Rocky soils are common throughout town as are hard pans and poorly drained soils. Selected areas with more productive soils and fewer stones have been cleared for agricultural fields. The level, stone free soils along the Merrimack River are some of the finest agricultural soils in the state. Excellent soil data is available and can be used to guide both conservation and development decisions. Much of the Town was historically cleared for agriculture. Some fields remain though many areas have reverted to forest. Many areas of steep slopes, shallow soils, abundant ledges and numerous wetlands define the Town and have presented constraints for development in the past. This may not be the case in the future.

## **Water**

### **• Surface Waters**

Canterbury's waters are divided into three watersheds that eventually drain to the Merrimack River:

- From the highest hills in the north, the eastern slopes drain towards the Soucook River
- The western slopes drain directly towards the Merrimack River
- The central area of town drains south towards Concord in several streams

The higher hills provide the source waters for the numerous streams and ponds throughout town. The larger water bodies and streams are identified in Table A at the end of this chapter. There are many wetlands both large and small along the streams and bordering several ponds. There are also numerous isolated wetlands and vernal pools.

The Merrimack River is the most significant water resources and has been identified as a conservation priority by the Town's people. Great progress has been made by the Town in conserving river frontage and adjacent agricultural land including, but not limited to, the Gold Star property.

Canterbury's brooks, streams and ponds contribute water to wetlands and recharge the ground water supply that provides all our residents with drinking water. Undisturbed natural vegetation in the hills and along the banks of streams provides erosion control, which enhances water quality. The riparian corridors along streams are highly prized by many creatures large and small.

Many of Canterbury's ponds are in a mostly natural state due to their isolated location, land protection or both. The notable exceptions are Lyford and New Pond, which have been seriously adversely impacted by intensive development along, and in close proximity to the shores.

The primary sources of pollution are non-point sources. These include siltation from soil disturbance and highway maintenance as well as runoff from home sites and other developed areas.

Note: Best management practices exist to minimize these impacts and should be followed.

- Wetlands

The importance of wetlands to the whole ecosystem and to the health, safety and welfare of the general public has been recognized in both Federal and New Hampshire legislation and by the general population. In addition to providing important support for wildlife habitats, wetlands protect drinking water supplies by filtering out excess toxins and nutrients and by helping to recharge aquifers. Wetlands also play an important role in minimizing flood damage by storing excess runoff.

Wetlands can be defined in different ways. The Town uses classification by soil type. The State and Federal Government use a three-component system relying upon soils, hydrology and vegetation. Site-specific evaluation is required for determining actual wetland boundaries.

The main types of wetlands in Canterbury are swamps, shrub thickets, emergent marshes and meadows, aquatic beds and some bogs and fens. Each corresponds to different drainage and flooding characteristics. Major wetlands in Canterbury are identified in Table A at the end of this chapter.

Note: There are numerous threats to wetlands including filling, dredging and alteration to drainage, sediment inputs, and point and non-point pollution runoff. There are potential actions the Town can take to conserve these precious resources, which are identified later in this plan.

- Ground Water and Drinking Water Supply

All Canterbury households depend on ground water for domestic use. Most residents rely upon individual wells while there are several small community public water supply systems. Ground water is present in the fractured bedrock and in the soils above it. Older dug wells draw water from the shallower soils while

most new wells are drilled in bedrock. The sands of the river valley are generally too fine to be suitable for a large capacity municipal well. Water derived from bedrock in Canterbury is generally abundant but commonly contains high iron and manganese components in metamorphic formations. There are small areas of granite bedrock that provide lesser amounts of high quality water. Shallow dug wells are increasingly susceptible to contamination and drought.

- Note: Generally, Canterbury has adequate uncontaminated quality groundwater. Because residents obtain water from their own wells, efforts to protect groundwater quality should remain a Town wide priority. The Town needs to be aware of, and where necessary promote action to abate sources of groundwater pollution such as septic leach fields and petroleum storage. There are potential actions the Town can take to conserve these precious resources that are identified later in this plan.

### **Air Quality**

Air quality problems in New Hampshire are mostly created elsewhere and must be solved at a state, national, or international level. The abundant forest cover in Canterbury has a positive impact upon our local air quality. Local sources of air pollution include domestic wood stoves and furnaces, brush burning, transportation and numerous small engines powering everything from lawn mowers to recreational vehicles.

Note: Care should be taken that wood heating devices are the most efficient and clean burning available and that brush burning be limited to avoid adversely affecting neighbors. Reducing our energy use will have a positive impact upon our air quality.

### **Plants, Wildlife Habitat and Natural Communities**

The undeveloped and agricultural areas of Canterbury consist of various types of plant and wildlife habitats. Habitat protection is critical to the conservation of plants, animals and the general quality of life in Canterbury for people. Undeveloped areas of open space both large and small not only encourage and protect species diversity; they also enhance aesthetic enjoyment, recreation, and education.

Natural communities are different kinds of plant and wildlife habitats that correspond to particular physical settings. Broad upland types in Canterbury include hardwood, softwood and mixed forests on upland slopes, while pine barrens, dunes and dry sandy river bluffs occur along the Merrimack River.

Wetland types include swamps and marshes connected along drainages by streams, bog fringed natural ponds and small isolated vernal pools. Cleared land whether actively farmed, grazed or idle provides critical habitat and is generally in short supply. Canterbury has several large areas of contiguous open space that provide a wide range of habitat types that are critical for large mammal species and those which are intolerant of human influences. These areas also provide sources for clean water and forest resources.

Note: Two of these large undeveloped areas cross into our neighboring communities of Northfield, Loudon and Concord, which suggests cooperation in their conservation.

Canterbury has some unique natural communities, some of which contain fragile habitats for rare and endangered species including along the Merrimack River and other places in town. Fragmentation of large blocks of open space into smaller tracts has adverse impacts upon wildlife, forestry and other conservation values. Through the years some areas have been placed under permanent protection through acquisition by the Town, the State and private conservation groups, while other land remains privately owned and has been protected through conservation easements.

Note: To protect additional habitats it is necessary to continue updating natural resource inventories, reviewing development plans that may impact these habitats, and encouraging landowners to arrange for permanent protection of important habitats. Wildlife habitat and corridors should be given consideration in each decision to build in or change the natural environment. The cumulative effect of scattered development on larger contiguous wildlife habitats is an important issue to be considered as part of zoning and subdivision regulations.

### **Section 3: Benefits and Uses of Natural Resources**

#### **Quiet Enjoyment**

Quiet enjoyment of a rural lifestyle is a major reason people live in or move to Canterbury as confirmed in both past and recent surveys of residents. Canterbury experiences noise generated on both sides of town.

On the west, I- 93 can produce traffic noise as well as undesirable air quality. It is expected that traffic volumes will increase over time. The benefit



of I-93 is that Route 132 will remain local in nature and most likely never be expanded to accommodate increased regional traffic.

The Town also faces increasing noise issues associated with the development and expansion of the New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon. The noise from the track can be heard throughout much of the Town not only on race days but also during numerous practice sessions. New ownership of the track may have an effect upon this impact. Traffic on race days is an issue.

Note: The Town should continue efforts to assure that regional issues such as noise and traffic are reviewed and addressed in local and State approvals of further expansion of the track. As stated in the Land Use chapter of this Plan, the Town should investigate adoption of noise control ordinances.

### **Agriculture**

Agricultural lands are critical resources to Canterbury for their ability to produce food, provide wildlife habitat and offer scenic vistas. The agricultural heritage of the Town is evident in the numerous fields located along most of the roads. Decades ago these fields provided food for people and farm animals. With the industrialization and globalization of our food supply, the need for these fields for agricultural production has waned. Many of these fields have been subdivided into residential house lots. This fragmentation has limited the ability to produce traditional agricultural products. Some of these fields remain mowed for hay while others are no longer in production. The town has lost at least two orchards, though one commercial orchard remains active. There remains one commercial dairy farm in town.

Agriculture has changed in recent years. Many residents have farm animals on their property ranging from chickens, to horses and many in between. Vegetable production is common through town with many producers selling through farm stands and a farmer's market. In the spring, maple production occurs throughout town. There is a community appreciation for locally grown agricultural products. The Town's acquisition of the land formerly owned by Gold Star Sod Farms was a major step in ensuring continued agricultural production on our best soils.

Note: Efforts should be made to encourage protection of the remaining large fields for continued agricultural use and their contribution to the rural character of the Town. The town should explore ways to support and encourage agriculture in its many forms for the production of food, fiber and the economic stimulus to the Town.

## **Forestry**

Forestry has been an essential part of Canterbury's economy in the past and should remain so into the future. The forested hillsides have provided wood for fuel and construction for generations. Many townspeople have earned and continue to earn their living in the woods. There remains one active sawmill.

Use of local wood supports our economy and reduces our demand on the rest of the country and world for a material readily available here. The forested lands also support clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities. Fragmentation of woodlots into smaller tracts and residential development remove portions of this land base from future timber production.

Note: Efforts should be made to conserve the remaining large blocks of unfragmented forest to support the multiple beneficial roles they play. Forestry should be conducted in a sustainable manner utilizing best management practices.

## **Rural Character and Scenic Beauty**

The 2007 Planning Board Survey asked residents the question, "What aspects of Canterbury would you most like to see remain the same?" The top three responses, with at least 97% of the respondents agreeing were: Small town atmosphere, Uncrowded quiet living conditions and Scenic natural environment. The visual elements of rural character in Canterbury are the traditional working landscape and land use patterns relating to our agricultural and forestry heritage, the open fields, undeveloped hillsides, and the scenic roads lined with mature trees and old stone walls. A small population in combination with large lots has traditionally supported the quiet living conditions and scenic natural environment. As the Town has grown, increased residential development has diminished these qualities. .

Respondents to the survey were concerned about preserving the scenic beauty of Canterbury as well as its rural character. High priority should be given to preserving specific "scenic vistas" and "scenic roads" and their rights-of-way that may be bordered by stone walls and mature trees. These roads need to be protected from efforts to widen and "improve" them to accommodate development. State statute provides that for designated scenic roads, cutting of trees, widening, or any other activity that may change the character of the road should be subject to review by the Planning Board at a public meeting.

“Scenic vistas” or “viewsheds” are areas of scenic beauty as viewed from Town roads that are enjoyed by many residents and visitors. Conservation of these views, which are generally on private land, will require sensitivity, resources, planning and cooperation. The challenge is to adopt a method for protection using both qualitative and quantitative criteria. A balance between scenic considerations, private property rights and practical needs is achievable.

Note: Our conservation and open space goals should work together to achieve protection of key properties for their open space, agricultural or aesthetic qualities.

### **Gravel and Other Mineral Extraction.**

Sand, gravel and bedrock mineral extraction can have a profound and permanent impact upon the landscape and the natural resources of the Town. These impacts may include changes to the quantity and quality of water leaving the site, destruction of wildlife habitat, adverse scenic impacts.

Mining is also a commercial land use that can benefit the local economy and private landowners. Proper erosion control and reclamation techniques used in the extraction of gravel and other minerals can reduce the impact on the environment and the land can later be returned to other productive uses. Mineral extraction may often precede conversion of land from an undeveloped state to a more intensive commercial or residential use.

Note: Mining activities may have adverse impacts upon the quiet enjoyment of the residents due to heavy equipment traffic, noise and dust. The town should take actions to ensure that the extraction of minerals does not conflict with the goals, policies, or objectives of this plan.

All commercial excavation of earth such as sand, gravel and construction aggregate must be conducted under permits issued by the Town pursuant to RSA 155-E. Mining minerals and block granite is regulated by the State.

### **Outdoor Recreation**

Outdoor recreation is an activity that takes many forms and has many positive attributes for the Town. Outdoor recreation not only increases the personal health of individuals who become more active, it often has positive benefits to the community by having residents meet and form bonds with their neighbors, the community in general and the natural world. Outdoor recreation in this section of the Master Plan may include non-motorized activities such as

walking, hiking, bike riding, horseback riding, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, cross country skiing and snow shoeing as well as motorized activities such as snowmobiling and riding ATVs. These activities all rely upon access to the outdoors that may include the existing trail system.

Much of the outdoor recreation in Canterbury occurs on privately owned property that land owners leave open for public enjoyment. The increasing population and development of the Town will place an increased demand upon these resources. If landowners post their property in the future, increased public use will be concentrated in less available land. Sensitivity by the recreating public to private property concerns will have a positive effect upon the willingness of landowners to continue the tradition of leaving land open. Securing trail privileges from willing landowners will help ensure their continuing availability.

Note: The residents of town have identified securing rights to use the existing trails, which usually cross private property, and to extend or expand the trails to accommodate increased use as a conservation priority.

The survey of Canterbury residents supports expanding access to the Merrimack River. This may include development of improved access at the recently acquired Gold Star property. Consideration should be given to development of small parking areas and trailheads at a few selected locations throughout town to improve visibility and access to the trails.

The town must also consider and address concerns of private landowners for the quiet enjoyment of their property and potential adverse impacts of over use including trail erosion, conflicting uses and noise. It may be appropriate to site temporary toilet facilities at town properties that receive a high level of public use.

Developed recreational facilities such as ball fields and golf courses add to the mix of outdoor recreation. These facilities support many of the same community goals. Their development and management is discussed in the land use chapter.

## **Ecosystem**

The ecological services provided by our natural resources include clean air and clean water. These services are difficult to quantify but are meaningful and important.

Two tables are included at the end of this chapter:

- Table A identifies the Water Resources in town. This includes lakes, ponds, rivers, streams and major wetlands.
- Table B identifies existing Conservation Lands in town. This includes State lands, town lands and privately owned land that has been conserved.

## **Section 4: Objectives and Recommended Actions**

**Objective 1:** The town should identify areas of greatest conservation value and consider protecting them, in cooperation with willing landowners, so that as the Town grows, these areas will remain undeveloped for the general well being of future generations.

Recommended Actions:

- A. The town should continue updating the natural resources inventory to identify those areas of highest conservation value and priority for future conservation efforts. (*Conservation Commission, Agricultural Commission*)
- B. The town should develop an Open Space Plan (Conservation Plan) to guide land protection actions. An Open Space Plan will identify the specific areas of highest conservation value that should be conserved and/or managed to support a variety of open space uses. Although this task will take considerable time and effort by many residents, there are several key components that are presented in this plan as a framework from which to begin. (*Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Agricultural Commission*)

These include:

1. Advance a complementary mix of tools to conserve open space including protection of privately owned land by conservation easements, acquisition of key parcels by the Town for public ownership, utilizing innovative land use planning tools and ensuring a continuing adequate source of funding for land conservation.
2. Encourage proper management of open space to support a variety of conservation goals and reduce potential adverse impacts of land management.
3. Focus land conservation on areas of highest conservation values including, but not limited to:
  - a. Large contiguous areas with limited residential development and high conservation values such as the Sunset Hill/Bean Hill Highlands north of Hackleboro Road; the rolling terrain, wetlands and water bodies near the Schoodac Conservation Area south of Baptist Road and east of Morrill Road; the working landscapes surrounding Shaker Village,
  - b. Water resources and riparian corridors such as the Merrimack River and adjacent lands; numerous streams and riparian corridors that connect open spaces; undeveloped or sparsely developed ponds; significant wetlands; aquifers.
  - c. Farm lands both large and small considering the present and potential future agricultural productivity, scenic attributes and soil characteristics.
  - d. Scenic vistas that define Canterbury's rural character.
  - e. Land and trails that support the traditional outdoor recreational activities.
4. Preserve and improve the interconnected network of trails providing public access to a variety of open space areas of different characteristics for different uses ranging from wildlife observation to motorized recreation. This may include development of trailheads with limited parking and toilet facilities.
5. Provide access for the Town's residents to utilize the conserved open spaces and trails, including parking and toilet facilities as appropriate.

- C. The town should review development plans that impact priority habitats and natural areas. Plant and wildlife habitat should be given consideration in each decision to build in or change the natural environment. *(Planning Board, Conservation Commission)*
- D. The town should evaluate the cumulative adverse effect of scattered development on larger contiguous wildlife habitats as part of zoning and subdivision regulations. *(Planning Board, Conservation Commission)*
- E. The town should consider the potential impact of development on prime agricultural lands and consider regulations to ensure that the ability to produce food locally is protected for the benefit of local residents and the local economy. *(Planning Board)*
- F. The town should encourage landowners to arrange for permanent protection of important habitats, natural areas and scenic resources. *(Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Agricultural Commission)*
- G. The town should continue to dedicate 100% of the Land Use Change Tax funds to future land conservation efforts. *(Selectmen)*
- H. The town should evaluate the most effective means to protect open space resulting from development set asides. *(Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Selectmen)*

**Objective 2:** The town should manage the property it owns to support multiple benefits for the Town and to demonstrate proper stewardship

Recommended Actions:

- A. The town should develop a plan for management of all town owned lands. *(Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Selectmen)*
  - 1. The town should identify and inventory the attributes and resource values of each property it owns.
  - 2. The town should consider development of small parking areas and trail heads at a few selected town owned properties to improve visibility and access to the trails. The town should consider implementing improved management and maintenance of existing trails and development of new trails where appropriate.
  - 3. The town should continue and enhance oversight of the Gold Star property including development of a plan to guide future management and use of the property. The recent survey of Canterbury residents supports expanding access to the Merrimack

River. The Town should consider developing improved access at the Gold Star property.

4. The town should consider developing a stewardship plan for each town owned property to ensure that they are properly managed to enhance their value to the Town for various purposes that might include: outdoor recreation, wildlife habitat, agriculture, forest management, scenic enjoyment, hunting and boating
5. The town should consider the appropriateness of siting temporary toilet facilities at town properties that receive a high level of public use.
6. Funds received from management of town owned lands should be reserved in a dedicated fund for land protection, maintenance and enhancing facilities for the public at conservation areas consistent with the management purposes.

**Objective 3:** The town should support agricultural activities.

Recommended Actions:

- A. The town should explore ways to support and encourage agricultural endeavors in their many forms for both production of food, fiber, and other products for local consumption and also for economic stimulus to the Town. (*Agricultural Commission*)
- B. The town should encourage landowners to consider protection of the remaining fields for agricultural use and their contribution to the rural character of the Town. (*Conservation Commission*)
- C. The town should acknowledge and accommodate the changing trends in agriculture. (*Public*)
- D. The town should encourage landowners to conduct agriculture operations in a sustainable manner utilizing best management practices. (*Agricultural Commission*)
- E. The town should support the continuance of Current Use taxation (*Selectmen*)
- F. The Planning Board should consider the unique needs of agricultural operations, especially very small-scale operations. (*Planning Board*)



**Objective 4:** The town should support the continuance of forestry activities.

Recommended Actions:

- A. The town should support efforts to conserve the remaining large blocks of unfragmented forest to support the multiple beneficial roles they play including wood production, wildlife habitat, clean water, outdoor recreation and also for economic stimulus to the Town. (*Conservation Commission*)
- B. The town should encourage forest land owners to conduct forestry operations in a sustainable manner utilizing best management practices to protect the land's capacity to produce forest products while protecting unique wildlife habitats and water quality.
- C. The town should support the continuance of Current Use taxation.

**Objective 5:** The town should consider supporting efforts to preserve the scenic rural character of the Town.

Recommended Actions:

- A. The town should consider taking steps to maintain and protect the scenic qualities of town roads through designation of "scenic roads" and through cooperation between the conservation commission, planning board, road agent and selectmen.

**Objective 6:** The town should consider supporting efforts to enhance the use, enjoyment and appreciation of the natural world by Canterbury residents including educational activities.

Recommended Actions:

- A. The town should make efforts to secure rights, or permission, to use the existing trails, which usually cross private property, and to extend or expand the trails to accommodate increased use. (*Conservation Commission*)
- B. The town should consider establishing a town wide trail committee to address all trail related issues. (*Selectmen, Conservation Commission*)
- C. The town should consider the status and future of all Class VI roads for recreational use. (*Planning Board, Conservation Commission*)
- D. The town should consider implementing a continuing public education and outreach effort to inform and educate town's people about our natural

resources, the opportunities that exist in Town to enjoy them, and efforts that can be taken to conserve and protect our water resources, rare plants, natural communities and control the introduction and spread of exotic invasive species. (*Conservation Commission*)

- E. The town should consider and address potential concerns of private landowners for the quiet enjoyment of their property that might be adversely impacted by extensive recreational use including trail erosion, conflicting uses and noise.
- F. The town should consider publishing informational brochures on the Town properties including information on trails, scenic and historic resources. (*Conservation Commission*)

**Objective 7:** As many residents rely upon ground water for clean potable water, the Town should encourage the protection of surface waters, ground waters and watersheds.

**Objective 8:** The town should consider embarking on the process of enhancing protection of our wetlands beyond the state regulations by means such as wetlands buffers and designated prime wetlands.

**Objective 9:** The town should encourage the use of best technology and other methods to promote clean air.



**Table A: Canterbury Water Resources**

Canterbury has numerous lakes, ponds, streams, wetlands and the Merrimack River. These could be categorized by type or by watershed. This grouping is by watershed but these resources could easily be re-organized by type.

1. Merrimack River with several horseshoe ponds
2. Burnham Brook
  - a. Morrill Pond (at Hackleboro Orchard)
  - b. Kimball Pond and adjacent wetlands
  - c. Wetlands east of Rte 132 across from Wilson Road
  - d. Wetlands north of new Road near Pickard Road
  - e. Brook from below Morrill Pond draining west towards the Big Meadow
  - f. Horseshoe Pond which drains to wetlands and to Burnham Brook
3. Hazelton Brook with major wetlands
4. Forrest Pond Brook
  - a. Forrest Pond
  - b. Water falls on Forrest Pond Brook
5. Bryant Brook
  - a. The Big Meadow
  - b. Water falls and old mill site behind historic house west of 132
6. Hayward Brook
  - a. Crane Neck Pond
  - b. Morrill Mill Pond
  - c. Mill site below Morrill Mill Pond
  - d. Spender Meadow
  - e. Schoodac Wetlands
  - f. Wetland along Hayward Brook south of New Road
7. Pickard Brook
  - a. Several major wetlands and minor water falls along brook
8. Brook east of Baptist Hill Road and West of Shaker Road
  - a. Pond at headwaters north of Baptist Hill Road
  - b. Major wetlands along brook including Shaker meadow
  - c. Peverly Meadow
  - d. Peverly Falls below the Meadow
9. Shaker Ponds

- a. Runaway Pond
  - b. Long Pond
  - c. Carding Mill Pond
  - d. Two ponds at the village
  - e. The long ditch
10. Gues Meadow Brook
- a. Lyford Pond
  - b. New Pond
  - c. Wetlands along Gues Meadow Brook
  - d. Pond east of Snowshoe Hill and brook below it
11. Soucook River
- a. Rocky Pond
12. Flag Hole Marsh

**Table B: Canterbury Conservation Lands**

1. State Lands
- a. Ayers State Forest, fee owned
  - b. Shaker State Forest, fee owned
  - c. Morrill Mill Pond, fee owned (NH Fish and Game)
  - d. Muchyedo Bank, fee owned (NH Fish and Game)
2. Private/Non-Profit lands
- a. Hutchins Forest (SPNHF), fee owned
  - b. Ambeau Forest (SPNHF), fee owned
  - c. Brill Easement (SPNHF)
  - d. Burroughs Easement (SPNHF)
  - e. Shaker Village (State LCHIP), conservation easement
  - f. Meeh/McCullough (State LCHIP and Town), conservation easement
  - g. Speedway mitigation west of 106, NH DES conservation easement
  - h. Speedway mitigation tract east of 106, NH Fish and Game conservation easement
  - i. Residential tracts adjacent to Riverland Conservation Area, LCHIP, conservation easements
  - j. Emerson Easement (Fiver Rivers Conservation Trust)

- k. Briggs Easement (Five Rivers Conservation Trust)
- l. Blackmer Easement (Five Rivers Conservation Trust)
- m. Nelson Easement (Five Rivers Conservation Trust)

3. Town Lands and Easements

- a. Riverland Conservation Area (with LCHIP easement)
- b. Gold Star Farm (with SPNHF easement)
- c. Kimball Pond Conservation Area (two tracts with SPNHF easements)
- d. Hildreth Field addition to Kimball Pond Conservation Area
- e. Schoodac Conservation Area
- f. Peverly Meadow Conservation Area
- g. Hannah Moore Lot
- h. Town Forest
- i. Foster Road conservation easement (Town)
- j. Intervale Road conservation easement (Town)
- k. Boles conservation easement (Town)
- l. Thunberg conservation easement (Town)
- m. Hoffman conservation easements (Town)
- n. Metters conservation easement (Town)
- o. Several town owned wood lot tracts





## **CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORTATION**

The predominant means of transportation within Canterbury is the use of private automobiles on public roads. Public roads are essential to Canterbury for commercial and private transportation, the delivery of emergency services, and in the case of catastrophic events, evacuation.

- With the exception of school buses, there is no regularly scheduled public transportation to or within the Town, but an interstate bus terminal is conveniently located in the neighboring City of Concord, approximately ten miles away.
- There is currently very little pedestrian activity, and only very limited use of bicycles.
- There are no plans for converting the existing freight rail line that parallels I-93 for passenger rail use.
- Concord Municipal Airport, approximately 12 miles from Town, features a 6,000-foot runway and a crosswind runway, full navigation support systems; Jet Fuel and AVGAS, aircraft maintenance, storage and tie-down capacity. It is considered the best General Aviation airport in the State. It is primarily a corporate general aviation facility - there are no regularly scheduled commercial flights.
- The Manchester Boston Regional Airport, located approximately 25 miles from Canterbury, provides commercial airline service to most major American Airports. There is currently no direct transit service from the Canterbury/Concord area to the airport, but there is some discussion of a transit link from the Manchester Bus Terminal.
- Approximately 75 miles from Town, Logan International Airport in Boston provides airline service to all parts of the country and some international flights. Direct transit links are available from the Concord Bus Terminal.

### **Regional Transportation Context and Issues**

The Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) issued its Regional Transportation Plan on March 28, 2008. This plan makes the following recommendations:

- Towns in the region need to focus on Smart Growth and create town centers for public transportation hubs. Member towns should enact policies that support the principals of smart growth, including mixed uses, infill development, and growth in and around village centers.

- A Transportation Management Association (TMA) is needed in the region. CNHRPC will continue to work with Concord Area Transit, Concord 20/20, and potential bike/pedestrian task forces from individual towns to initiate a Transportation Management Association in our region. The TMA would promote ridesharing, transit, and land use policies that have a positive impact on transportation.
- Park and Ride facilities are being utilized and should be expanded. The CNHRPC will continue to support Towns' expansion of park and ride facilities where they are well used and the creation of new ones based on projected demand.
- Corridor studies are needed throughout the region to maintain connections. Through the use of corridor studies that involve local municipalities and businesses, CNHRPC and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) should research and enact innovative and cost effective ways to maintain adequate mobility and safety in existing corridors.
- Efforts to establish passenger rail should be encouraged.
- Airports should develop long range plans to ensure smart growth.
- The public ought to be involved in transportation changes.
- Programs enabling children to walk or bike to school should be encouraged.
- Support the Coordinated Transit Study. CNHRPC will encourage municipalities to support the Coordinated Transit Study efforts by working with transit providers and potential TMA to identify transit options that would serve commuters, elderly, disabled, low-income, and underage population.

## **Roads**

### **• Public Roads**

The Canterbury road system includes the entire range of road types, from interstate highway to unmaintained dirt roads.

- The system is dominated by Interstate Highway 93 (Styles Bridges Highway), the major north-south corridor for the State of New Hampshire. Its two exit/on-ramps (Exits 17 and 18) give Canterbury excellent access to the neighboring employment center of Concord and further south, Manchester, and to the retail shopping area in Tilton to the north.



- State Route 132, formed by North West Road and South West Road, provides a north-south corridor on the western side of town.
- The major East/West passage is created by the linkage of West Road, Carter Hill Road, Baptist Road, and Shaker Road. Portions of this route are in disrepair. Shaker Road provides a north-south passage on the eastern side of town, and a short portion of north-south State Highway 106 (Rocky Pond Road) touches the eastern side of town.

Maintenance of the Town-maintained portion of the system costs about 20 percent of the Town's annual budget. With continued maintenance and repair, the existing road system appears generally adequate, however, there is room for improvement of portions of the roads to increase vehicular and pedestrian safety, and there may be opportunities to expand the use of roadways for increased pedestrian and bicycle use. For example:

- The Town is currently working with the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Agency to get several frost-damaged state owned roads on the State's 10-year repair and replacement list. Badly damaged roads include Baptist Road, Kimball Pond Road, Center Road, and North West Road.
- As these roads are rebuilt, consideration should be given to building wider shoulders that would be usable as pedestrian walkways and possibly bicycle paths. If adequate space is available, consideration should be given to striping these roads for bicycle lanes.
- There is a clear need for a stop sign or traffic calming at the intersection of northbound Kimball Pond Road and Morrill Road. This is a dangerous blind intersection with many near misses.

- Non-maintained and Private Roads

Canterbury's Hazard Mitigation Plan, approved by the Board of Selectmen in 2005, addresses evacuation procedures and systems for emergency situations. It does not currently address emergency services access to locations with non-maintained or private roads. This has been an ongoing issue at the Sherwood Forest neighborhood, which was originally developed as a seasonal community with roads not meeting Town standards. The CNHRPC will be working with the Town this year to revise the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

*Recommendations:*

- Conduct a Town-wide "Road Safe Maintenance System" (RSMS) inventory of road conditions as needed to support the Capital Improvements Plan. Costs for the study may be supported by NHDOT.
- Conduct a Town-wide "Road Safety Audit Review Program" (RSAR) including analysis of speed and traffic issues, including the Morrill Road/Kimball Pond Road Intersection - Costs for the study may be supported by NHDOT.
- Conduct a study of potential pedestrian and bicycle routes on state roads, and communication with CNHRPC and NHDOT on the recommended actions.
- Work with CNHRPC Hazard Mitigation Planning group to address emergency access to non-maintained road areas.

**Transportation Alternatives**

The Town continues to support alternative methods of transportation, both for citizens who cannot drive or do not have access to an automobile, and more generally, to promote energy conservation and sustainable use of materials. The Planning Board recommends study and consideration of the following initiatives:

**Car/Van Pooling**

Park and ride facilities can help to encourage the shared use of private vehicles and the development of local and intra-regional shuttle/transit services. Park and ride lots can also help to catalyze some types of commercial development.

*Recommendations:*

- Study the desirability of park and ride facilities, consider Exit 18 and other possible locations, and investigate availability of land for park and rides.
- Investigate the availability of funding sources for park and ride facilities

## Transit

Although there are no current plans for regular transit service to Canterbury, through its membership in the CNHRPC, Canterbury belongs to Region 3 of the New Hampshire State Coordinating Council, which plans to assist non-drivers with transportation needs for critical services, such as medical appointments and grocery shopping. The goal of the coordinating council is to "coordinate transit and human services" already provided by public, private, and non-profit agencies in the region. This is a newly formed agency that welcomes input on community needs and resources.

### *Recommendation:*

- Participate in the activities of the Coordinating Council in identifying community transportation needs and resources

## Pedestrian Pathways

There is currently a limited amount of pedestrian activity primarily on the sides of public roads, mostly consisting of recreational walking and jogging. The benefits of well-designed pedestrian pathways include improved health from physical activity, improved sense of community fostered by face-to-face encounters, improved sustainability from substituting some automobile trips with walking, and increased mobility for non-drivers.

The rural nature of Canterbury's development pattern makes concrete sidewalks financially unfeasible in most places, but wider shoulders can be provided along many roads to improve pedestrian safety. In some special areas, such as along Baptist Road between the Town Center, elementary school, and Town Municipal Complex, lighted sidewalks are appropriate and would enhance the pedestrian connection of the Elementary School and Town Center for students, and enhance the safety of residents using the school for evening activities (including the Town Meeting, sports, etc. and parking at the Town Center and Municipal Complex). The Safe Routes to Schools Committee is currently discussing this idea.

### *Recommendations:*

- Monitor and support Safe Routes to Schools Committee activities
- Develop a Town-wide strategy for pedestrian pathways
- Investigate use of snowmobile trails for hiking/pedestrian use

## **Bicycle paths**

There is a small amount of bicycle activity along the public roads. There are no dedicated bicycle paths, but some of the state roads have lane striping (usually too narrow) for bicycles. Most bicycle use is recreational.

### *Recommendations:*

- Develop a Town-wide strategy for bicycle paths
- Study linkage opportunities with adjacent towns
- Investigate use of rail lines for bike and hiking trails
- Participate in CNHRPC "PATH" committee

## **Rail Systems**

The introduction of passenger rail service to Central New Hampshire would dramatically affect development patterns in the region.

### *Recommendation:*

- Although it currently seems unlikely, the Planning Board should continue to monitor ongoing NHDOT studies of the issue. There may be opportunities to partner with the railroad for beneficial use of the rail corridors for activities such as bicycle/pedestrian/ snowmobile/ cross-country skiing trails and park-and-ride facilities.



## **CHAPTER 8: TOWN SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

Town services, and the facilities to provide them, are provided for by the collection of taxes placed on property owners. Currently, of the total property tax collected, 20.4% is used to provide Town government, highway maintenance, fire and police protection, disposal of solid waste, planning and zoning, and recreation. The balance of the taxes collected go to the support of Merrimack County (12.7%) and the Shaker Regional School District (67.0%). Care should be taken in planning that increased demand for services does not grow at a disproportionately faster rate than the tax base.

### **Town Government**

A three-member Board of Selectmen serving staggered three-year terms governs Canterbury. The Board elects its own Chairman annually. Selectmen are currently paid \$2,000 annually, with the Chairman receiving an additional \$100. The Selectmen are, with the assistance of the Town Administrator, Selectmen's Secretary and the Town Clerk, charged with the responsibility of carrying out the decisions made by townspeople at Town Meeting and the administrative responsibilities of routine Town business.

Demands on the Board of Selectmen's time have grown as State and Federal regulations continue to create more mandates to be carried out by local governments. Compliance with these mandates means that Town officers must occasionally attend conferences to keep up-to-date on requirements and be available for daytime meetings with State officials or contractors. Canterbury has been fortunate to have Selectmen able to meet these obligations during normal working hours. In recognition of the increased demands of these duties the Town, in 2008, hired a part time Town Administrator to assist the Selectmen's Secretary and the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk/Treasurer, and anyone else working on Town business, share space in the cramped Town Office located in the Sam Lake House, and the Town's records are stored there in a fireproof vault. The Selectmen and other Town boards and committees meet in "The Meeting House," which was created specifically for this purpose by renovating the former Police Station in 2004.

#### *Recommendations:*

- More attention should be given to the Sam Lake house, as increased regular activity will require additional and upgraded office space. The Town should

address these space issues now, and should plan for accommodating and utilizing technology in administration of Town government.

### **Solid Waste Disposal**

The Town participates in a regional “refuse-to-energy” plant in Penacook. Trash is collected at the Refuse Transfer Station on Baptist Road, which is open all day Saturday and on Wednesday evenings. The Station also collects paper, plastics, aluminum cans, scrap metal, clean textiles, glass and used motor oil for recycling. A roll-off container is provided for the collection of construction debris, and clean lumber and brush are burned at the Transfer Station in a burn pit. Currently there are two workers at the Transfer Station. A “Treasure House” for the display and storage of reusable items, staffed by volunteers, is also maintained at the Transfer Station.

### **Water and Sewer**

Residents of Canterbury presently depend on individual wells and sewage disposal systems and no change in this independence is contemplated. Most of the wells are deep artesian wells. A state approved septic system is required before a building permit can be issued. Poorly functioning or failed sewage systems represent the biggest threat of contamination of drinking water in the Town. Expansion of Town facilities in the Center is restricted by sewage limitations. There are several ‘small community’ public water systems in the Town, primarily serving schools and senior housing.

### **Schools**

Canterbury and Belmont comprise the Shaker Regional School District. The Canterbury Elementary School is located near the Town Center on Baptist Road. The public Middle and High School facilities are located in Belmont. There are also a number of private schools located in Town that provide instruction from pre-school through the middle grades. Education issues are addressed further in Chapter 10.

### **Police Department**

The Police Department consists of the Police Chief, one full-time Sergeant, and four part-time officers. The Department scheduling allows for both weekday and weekend coverage for the Town. The State Police and the Sheriff’s office provide additional police services. The Town has three fully equipped Police

cruisers. The Police station is part of the new Municipal Complex located on Baptist Road, near the Town Center and across from the Elementary School. It meets current standards for security, privacy and efficiency.

### **Fire Department/Rescue Squad**

Canterbury has a volunteer Fire Department, which meets every week to train and conduct business and planning sessions. The Department is housed in the Municipal Complex on Baptist Road, opened in 2005.

- The Department has three pumper/tankers, two forestry vehicles and two rescue vehicles.
- The Department consists of approximately sixteen volunteers, five of whom are national and state certified EMTs, and has one full-time paid employee at this time.
- The Department also responds to medical emergency calls, requiring firefighters to have advanced medical training. One quarter of these calls are responses to emergencies on I93. The Penacook Rescue Squad provides primary ambulance service, with additional support provided by towns in the mutual aid compact.
- In addition to fire and emergency services, the Department provides fire prevention talks, performs woodstove inspections, and holds special meetings to coordinate with the mutual aid compact towns, state and federal agencies.
- Through a mutual aid compact, the Department receives assistance from neighboring towns in case of a major fire.

### **Highway Department**

The Highway Department has the responsibility for the maintenance of over 85 miles of Town roads. The Department has 12 major pieces of equipment, including two road graders, multi-purpose dump/snowplow trucks, refuse packer truck, backhoe, pickup truck with plow, Farmall Tractor, utility trailer and front-loader.

The Department currently has a full-time Road Agent appointed by the Selectmen, three full-time employees and one part-time employee. The Department and its equipment are housed in the new Municipal Complex on Baptist Road.

### **Health Officer**

The Town is required, under RSA: 147, to have a Health Officer. The Health Officer is nominated by the Board of Selectmen and appointed by the State Department of Health and Human Services to enforce the State public health laws. The Health Officer serves as a liaison between the State and the Town and its residents in public health matters and performs a variety of functions, including inspections for licensing of child care facilities, family day care, foster homes, public and private schools, health facilities (elder care, massage therapy, etc.), and investigations of complaints of substandard rental housing, failed septic systems, and groundwater contamination. With the Department of Environmental Services, the Health Officer investigates cases of lead and radon contamination, drinking water contamination, and contamination of public swimming areas.

The Health Officer also participates with the State in the management of outbreaks of communicable diseases, such as rabies, water or food borne illness, and meningitis.

The Health Officer is a volunteer, and there is no money budgeted by either the Town or the State to support his or her activities. For the past few years the Town has appointed two Health Officers — one to handle all issues dealing with septic systems and ground water contamination, and one to handle all other issues.

### **Code Enforcement Officer**

The Code Enforcement Officer is compensated on an annual basis, appointed by the Board of Selectmen, and is responsible for coordinating the permit process and inspecting construction. The Town requires a permit for all residential, commercial, or industrial building construction, including decks, porches and swimming pools. Accessory buildings smaller than 144 sq. ft. generally do not require a permit. The Town has adopted the BOCA National Building Code and also operates under State-mandated provisions of the 2006 IRC to reduce potential hazards for current and future users of buildings and to provide consistent standards in construction.

#### *Recommendations:*

- Currently, the Code Enforcement Officer works from his home or by sharing space with the Assessing Clerk in the Sam Lake House, with records stored on the second floor of the Sam Lake House. As part of planning for the improvement and expansion of the Sam Lake House, suitable office/work space for this important town official should be considered.



## **Planning and Zoning Boards**

The administration of planning and zoning in Canterbury is the responsibility of the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment are volunteer boards. The Town is a member of the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission, and pays a yearly assessment from Town Funds.

### **Planning Board**

Volunteers perform planning Board work with paid assistants and consultants as needed. The present planning and zoning systems function adequately with little cost to the taxpayers. Should additional administrative help become necessary; fees comparable to those of other towns in the area could be increased to cover that expense without using tax money.

The Planning Board prepares and adopts the Plan for Tomorrow after receiving and considering public input and comments. The Planning Board also prepares zoning ordinance amendments for consideration at the Town Meeting. It adopts, after public hearing, amendments to subdivision and site plan review regulations. Any changes in Town zoning or subdivision regulations should take into consideration the cost of administration, both for the Town and the subdivider or developer. The planning Board also sits as a quasi-judicial board to hear and review applications for subdivisions and site plans for commercial and multi-family development within the Town. .

At the 1996 Town Meeting the voters authorized the Planning Board to prepare a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 674:5-8. A CIP is a schedule that projects future municipal expenditures for necessary services and capital improvements over a 5 to 10 year period to accommodate changing needs of residents and businesses. It is an advisory document which can (a) guide the Selectmen and the Budget Committee in the annual budgeting process, (b) contribute to stabilizing tax rates by spreading out major capital expenditures, (c) aid in the coordination of various municipal improvements, (d) inform residents, business owners and developers of planned improvements and (e) provide an important and statutorily required basis for collecting impact fees. Using recommendations outlined in this updated Plan for Tomorrow as a reference, the CIP is required to be updated annually.

## **Zoning Board**

The Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) is a quasi-judicial board that hears and reviews applications for special exceptions, requests for variances and appeals of administrative decisions made by the Board of Selectman , and/or the Code Enforcement Officer and of provisions of the Building Code.

## **Social and Recreational Facilities**

The major capital improvements to municipal buildings begun in 2003 and completed in 2005 have resulted in vastly improved facilities for the meeting and assembly of various Town committees and organizations.

- The Town Hall was raised and placed on an appropriate granite foundation. An attractive ell was constructed creating necessary handicapped accessibility. In addition, two bathrooms and a small kitchen were built. The roof was re-shingled, hardwood floors were refinished, the walls and ceiling insulated and the building painted. Since completion it has again been used for all elections, giving convenient access to all, and relieving the need to hold elections at the elementary school. It has been made available for private events, such as weddings or family receptions, and has also proven useful during the annual Canterbury Town Fair.

Note: Energy efficient windows should be installed and some minor repairs remain.

- The Meeting House (the former Police Station and original Fire House) is located in the Town Center next to the library. With convenient parking, it hosts meetings of the Selectmen, Planning Board, Zoning Board, various town committees and social groups.
- The new Elkins Library (formerly the Town Garage and Fire Station) has a small meeting room available to town groups on an “as available” basis.
- The former Elkins Library, now known as the Elkins Memorial Building, has been turned over to the care of the Historical Society for their meetings and display of historical items.
- The Houser Museum has been restored to its appearance as a one room school house and has been used by the Elementary School to teach students what school life was like in a former time.
- The Municipal Complex also has a meeting room, which is available. This room can be used without granting access to the remainder of the building, or can be opened for use in conjunction with training or work sessions of

the Fire Dept., Police Dept., and Highway Dept. The building is also designed to work as a “Command Center” in time of Area emergencies, and indeed was so used just months after opening during the severe floods in the Spring of 2005.

- Other meeting rooms, large and small, are available at the Elementary School, and the Church Parish House.

### **Social and Recreational Opportunities**

A variety of social events are held throughout the year, sponsored by the Town, the Church, the Library, the Historical Society, private organizations, and by Shaker Village. The largest events, Independence Day, the Canterbury Fair and the Halloween celebration, are run by volunteers using little or no Town funds. The popularity of these events with attendees and sponsors indicates that they are an important part of community life. The Canterbury Fair benefits the Church and the Canterbury fund, which is available to provide grants and loans to individuals and for community projects.

The Town’s recreational opportunities are numerous and varied. Hiking, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing and horseback riding are favorite activities on Town and privately owned trails. Hunting, fishing, and swimming are popular seasonal activities. A number of ponds are stocked by the NH Fish and Game Department to support local fishermen. Organized sports, such as softball, soccer and basketball, are enjoyed by youngsters and adults on the fields and courts at the elementary school.

A major recreational resource for the Town is the Merrimack River and its shoreline. The Town Conservation Commission has done a great deal of work on the shoreline to provide easy access and pleasant surroundings. The Town, along with other Merrimack River Corridor towns, monitors and carefully regulates development along the river to maintain its recreational and aesthetic qualities. The purchase of the Merrimack River Intervale/Gold Star Property was a significant step by the Town to satisfy present and future recreational needs. A Recreation Plan for this site was completed in March 2005, and should be developed and implemented as needed.

The acquisition of The Hildreth Field in 2008, when combined with the Kimball Pond Conservation Area, provides a unique 90-acre site adjacent to the Town Center for trails, nature study and other recreational activities. The Conservation Commission has developed and is implementing a management plan for this property.

Note: The existing recreational facilities located at the school are barely adequate for present needs. The Town should continue to plan for future recreational needs, which may include expansion of present facilities, or which may involve facilities owned and operated by the Town or other entities. The Town should also consider innovative ownership and operation of recreational facilities to expand their availability at reasonable costs to the Town.

### **Town Buildings**

- The **Town Hall** building is an historic structure dating back to 1754. It should continue to be improved and maintained for full use and enjoyment by the Community.
- The **Municipal Complex** houses the Fire Department, the Police Department and the Highway Department. Completed and opened in 2005, it should continue to serve the needs of the Canterbury Community for many years to come. It provides for inside storage of all Town equipment and vehicles, and training and work facilities for the various departments.
- **The “New” Elkins Library** is an outstanding facility for a community of Canterbury’s size. Located directly in the Town Center with good parking facilities, it provides an active hub for local residents. A children’s area displays a unique “tree art” feature provided by local artists. The Librarian has a private office, computer stations are available, the adult area has a comfortable fireside reading area, and there are worktables for students and others. A humidity-controlled workroom for use by the Historical Society is also located in this building. The Library is governed by a Board of Trustees and has three part-time employees.
- The **Meeting House**, also located in the Town Center, sees much activity, as mentioned earlier.
- The **Elizabeth Houser Museum**, a former schoolhouse, is one of the few brick buildings in Canterbury. The building is owned by the Town and maintained by the Canterbury Historical Society with Town Funds. Currently set up to appear as it did in its “schoolhouse” days, many of the artifacts from Canterbury’s past are now on display at the former Elkins Library.
- The **Elkins Memorial Building** (the original Elkins Library) is another brick building in the Town Center. A small, architecturally appealing building, it has been assigned to the Historical Society for their meetings

and the display of Canterbury historical items. Volunteers from the Society have made many recent cosmetic improvements.

Note: The building is not handicapped accessible, and there are other repair items that should be addressed. A small parcel of land on Kimball Pond Rd., adjacent to the building, was acquired a number of years ago to be developed as a parking lot. This could be done as activities increase, and to eliminate an unsafe situation with the present parking.

- The **Sam Lake House** currently houses the Town Administrator, the Selectmen's Secretary, the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, the assistant Town Clerk and the Town Assessor. The Code Enforcement Officer also utilizes space there when available and needed.

Note: The older, original portion of this building, with its half basement and poor drainage, creates conditions for dry rot and mildew. The basement of the newer portion no longer houses historical items as it often is affected by water and dampness. The second floor currently houses records and other storage. This space should really not be used due to the absence of a sprinkler system, access and egress by means of unsafe stairways and load bearing capacity of the floor. Plans should be developed to drain the site properly and address foundation and space issues.

- The **Bandstand** was constructed on the Town green in 1983, and dedicated on Memorial Day, 1984. Built by volunteers, it is used for weddings, Memorial Day ceremonies, Fair Day functions, band concerts, 4th of July celebrations and for the general enjoyment of the community and visitors. The roof was replaced by the Town a few years ago, but no policy exists for ongoing care and maintenance, and much is done by public minded members of the community.

## **Cemeteries**

Canterbury has 33 documented family and community cemeteries, of which the Town maintains 27. Only one of these cemeteries, Maple Grove, has available space. Several hundred burial sites are available. Canterbury's burial rate remains fairly consistent at six to eight per year, and it is expected that there will be enough burial space for many years into the future.

Note: The possibility of memorial space somewhere within the center cemetery should be explored, where cremated residents can be remembered without the necessity for additional plots.

## **Long-Range Goal**

To provide Town services and facilities that meets the established needs of residents in a cost effective manner.

## **Objectives**

1. Base planning for future services and facilities on conservative growth estimates that reflect the desire of the community to grow at a slow rate.
2. Continue Town Government as a volunteer effort to the greatest extent possible, but utilize technical and administrative assistance when necessary and cost effective.
3. Plan for and provide adequate offices and technology for Town officers and administrators.
4. Establish priorities for addressing the present and future needs of the various Town departments.
5. Continue the recycling efforts of Canterbury to reduce waste and provide for reuse of materials in Town where feasible, such as mulching.
6. Where feasible, encourage installation of approved hydrants in new and existing ponds. Such water sources should be accessible to fire trucks in all parts of the Town.
7. Utilizing input from committees, department heads and community members, consider the cost and complexity of implementation and enforcement when creating new zoning, subdivision, and other land development regulations.
8. When appropriate, continue and expand regional cooperation in solid waste disposal, emergency services, and recreational facilities as the most effective way to provide quality services.
9. Retain Town rights-of-way as recreational trails. When offered, the Town should accept new rights-of-way, after consideration of any added liability or expense, for permanent recreational trails
10. Continue to maintain and develop the Elkins Library, The Elizabeth Houser Museum, the Town Hall and the Elkins Memorial Building as resource and gathering places for residents of the Town.

**Recommended Actions**

1. Study the short and long term needs of Town Government operations, including facilities and their maintenance, administrative help, and technology and make specific recommendations to the Town. *(Planning Board, Selectmen)*
2. Develop and implement a plan to address the technological needs of the Town departments, boards, and facilities. *(Canterbury Computer Committee)*
3. Develop and maintain an official Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) using data and planning objectives stated in this Plan and create a mechanism to implement this Plan. *(Planning Board)*
4. Develop specific population and household growth projections based on information gathered for this Plan. Update these projections as new information becomes available so they can be used for planning future services and facilities. *(Planning Board)*
5. Develop a maintenance policy for the ongoing upkeep, repair and improvement of town buildings and properties. *(Planning Board, Selectmen)*
6. Develop a job description for town maintenance. This work can be done by creation of a new full or part-time town employee or by hiring competent contractors on an “as needed” or ongoing basis. (This work is now often assigned to highway personnel on a “when available” basis, when their time should be spent on highway maintenance. Much work is not done in a timely manner, or not done at all resulting in additional costs to the Town.) *(Planning Board, Selectmen)*







## **CHAPTER 9: HOUSING**

As the Town has evolved from a primarily agriculture-based community to one that is predominantly residential, and, to some degree, a bedroom town for regional employment centers, there has been a marked change in the ownership and cost of housing. Housing is a primary need of all citizens of the State and a balanced supply of housing that is affordable for those of low, moderate and high incomes benefits the citizenry of Canterbury. At the same time, the current tax base and enrollment and space problems within the Shaker Regional School District combine to result in burdensome property taxes which make all levels of housing less affordable for Canterbury's residents.

SB 342 (enacted as Chapter 299, Laws of 2008) amends the planning and zoning statutes of the state by including that all municipalities must provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing, including rental and multi-family housing. To determine if such opportunities exist in Canterbury, the collective impact of all local land use regulations were considered by the Planning Board and a Workforce Housing Zoning Ordinance was proposed and enacted by the voters of Canterbury in 2010. This ordinance encourages workforce housing in a majority of Canterbury's land area where residential uses are permitted. Importantly, reasonable restrictions may still be imposed for environmental protection, water supply, sanitary disposal, traffic safety, and fire and life safety protection in the Ordinance.

A Housing Commission was also authorized to periodically account for the existing housing stock of the community and determine if the Town is providing its "fair share" of current and reasonably foreseeable workforce housing.

The ultimate success of any efforts to refine zoning and subdivision regulations to encourage the development of affordable housing in Canterbury will be affected by the Town's success in developing and expanding its commercial tax base. Under current State policies, the property tax burden will make all housing less affordable and the need to accommodate additional numbers of students into the current school facilities will only add to those burdens.

### **Long-Range Goals**

Manage housing growth through Canterbury's zoning and subdivision ordinances in a way that...

1. Recognizes the importance of an adequate and balanced housing supply to Canterbury's economic well-being and ensure that planning, zoning and land use regulations and practices permit and encourage the development of

- a range of housing types that will adequately meet the region's and state's housing needs and;
2. Preserves the rural character and scenic beauty of Canterbury and complies with the other Long Range Goals outlined in the Land Use Chapter of this Master Plan

### **Objectives**

1. Review development for compatibility with planned rate of growth of Town facilities and services.
2. Encourage housing plans that provide for dwellings clustered on the periphery of open land, serviced by common facilities. The remaining land will then be available for agricultural purposes, conservation of natural resources and open space.
3. Encourage residential development in areas identified as being capable of sustaining development based on soil types, topography, accessibility and other considerations.
4. Where possible, new housing should set aside a reasonable percentage of new homes or units for families with lower and moderate incomes.
5. Meet the need for housing for families with moderate and low incomes.
6. Ensure that Canterbury's ordinances and regulations shall provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing, including rental and multi-family housing.

### **Recommended Actions**

1. Evaluate on a continuing basis the need for housing for families with moderate and lower incomes, including elderly residents, in order to maintain the Town's diverse social and cultural interests. (*Planning Board*)
2. Evaluate current lot size and frontage requirements to see if changes would enhance affordability of low-income housing. (*Planning Board*)
3. Review road-building standards to assess their impact on the costs associated with new home development. (*Planning Board, Board of Selectmen*)
4. Residential building development, particularly of affordable housing, should be encouraged to locate in those areas where residential development is currently located to avoid incurring unnecessary and potentially duplicative costs of infrastructure and the costs of maintenance thereof. (*Planning Board*)

5. With specific care to meeting the requirements of the newly created Canterbury Workforce Housing Zoning Ordinance, the board shall annually determine if current Canterbury housing is in compliance with “fair share” and Consider additional zoning amendments that would encourage workforce housing. (*Planning Board*)





# CHAPTER 10: EDUCATION

## Public Schools

Since Canterbury's earliest years, one room schoolhouses have arisen on an as-needed basis to serve pockets of residential settlement. In the 1950s it became apparent that a central school facility would better serve the Town's needs. The construction of the Canterbury Elementary School was in large part due to the volunteer efforts of the community.

The school budget has the single largest impact on our tax rate yet is the one aspect of the Town that cannot be adequately addressed by the Planning and other Town Boards.

In 1971 Canterbury voted to join the Shaker Regional School District with Belmont. Growth of both towns in the district resulted in unmet facilities needs and gradual facility crowding during the 1970s and continuing into the 1980s. In 1985 a new elementary school was built in Belmont, and in 1991 a new addition and renovated classroom space at Canterbury Elementary School were completed. The Shaker Regional School District student population continued to grow and efforts to address space needs were met in 1997 when the district voted funds to build a new high school and renovate the old high school for use as a middle school. The new high school opened in September of 1998, and significant renovations were done to the old high school to make it into a suitable middle school. During the last decade, student population generally leveled off.

The ADM or average daily membership for the 2008-2009 school year was 275 or 20% for Canterbury and 1121 or 80% for Belmont. Under the formula that was established when the district was formed, each town is responsible to pay average of the ADM percent and the percent of the prior year's equalized property valuation. Under this formula, the calculation for 2009-2010 is Canterbury 24%, Belmont 76%.

With the manufacturing base in New Hampshire and New England declining, future employment opportunities for Canterbury's schoolchildren are likely to be found in other sectors of the economy. To become more employable in today's technological society, to be self-supporting and to qualify for higher wages, it is vital that we strongly encourage our children to seek education beyond high school.

## **Continuing Education Resources**

The Town has the opportunity to supplement the education of not only our children but also all citizens in many ways. Historical resources such as Shaker Village and the Historical Society should be utilized to provide the link to the past so vital to a community's sense of tradition. The Conservation Commission can help to increase the environmental awareness of our citizens by further developing the scenic and natural areas under their control.

The Police and Fire Departments could be a valuable resource for Public Safety education. Bicycle safety programs and CPR training are examples of the educational opportunities in those areas.

Informal educational/informational opportunities exist such as the Friday Night Forums and Historical Society programs. The Town Library and school facilities have been expanded to provide computer access and continuing education for all citizens within the Town.

## **Long-Range Goals**

1. Provide supplemental educational opportunities to children and adults.
2. Ensure cost-effective public education resources.

## **Recommended Actions**

1. Review capabilities of all Town resources to provide supplemental educational opportunities to Canterbury's citizens of all ages.
2. Facilitate community-wide broadband Internet access and enhance educational opportunities for all citizens. (*Selectmen*)



# **CHAPTER 11: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Unplanned economic growth may create adverse conditions that negatively impact communities. Therefore, Canterbury should plan for economic development in a manner that creates a range of employment opportunities, produces rising incomes, and raises citizens' living standards while considering the impact of such growth on the Town. The following economic development plan provides for economic growth consistent with the goals and policies of Canterbury as set forth in other sections of the Master Plan.

## **Past and Current Economic Activity**

Historically, most of the economic activity in Canterbury has been related to agriculture and forestry. Only one active dairy farm remains. To the extent that Canterbury has a "business base" it has shifted to largely home-based service industries: retail, crafts, and technology-related professions. Tourism is an important part of the Town's economy, with increasing numbers of visitors to Shaker Village and the Speedway in Loudon.

Approximately 80 percent of Canterbury's work force commutes to jobs outside of Town. See Table 4-8. For this reason, the state of the regional economy has become the relevant basis on which to judge job opportunities and economic growth in Canterbury.

Future developments in Greater Concord's overall economy and its economic expansion will continue to affect Canterbury significantly in several ways. Expansion in regional commercial, industrial, and government sectors will provide more employment opportunities for Canterbury residents. Any significant economic slowdown in the Concord area could force some Canterbury residents to move away from the Town in search of employment elsewhere, as occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

## **Industrial/Commercial Development Possibilities**

The only portion of Canterbury that is zoned industrial is located on the west side of Interstate 93 at Exit 18. The site is irregular in shape and is accessed from West Road. The site has some limitation, but is well suited for development. The Town purchased the site from the State in the late 1960s for a nominal amount, but conditioned on the Town's agreement to use the property for commercial/industrial purposes. Given the long-term consequences of site development and its impact on the community's goals for land use, tax base and

employment, development of a long-range plan is considered an essential first step in the development of the site.

At the March 1996 Town Meeting, the Town established an eight member Economic Development Committee. Since its inception, the Committee has collected and reviewed site data and also considered uses of abutting properties.

Concurrent with these tasks, the Committee surveyed communities throughout the region to better understand how they have approached similar development. Included as part of this analysis was an assessment of the types of users that may be likely to require space and typical site requirements. By developing a better understanding of the amount of competing space available in the region and current demand, optimal site configurations and absorption projections could be developed.

The Committee is also examining the uses allowed by the Zoning Ordinance to assess whether additional or alternative uses should be permitted and will consult with the Planning Board to make recommendations to the voters.

The Committee is also undertaking a review of funding sources that are available to assist the Town with the development of the site. Funds for infrastructure development and financing for businesses that want to construct facilities on the site are being researched.

The results of these analyses will be combined to create a plan for development of the site. The plan will include the sequence and timing of events associated with the development of the site, financing of the development, proposed uses and dimensional requirements and configuration of individual lots as well as the proposed management structure for the development of the property.

The Planning Board's recent survey shows that approximately eighty percent of Canterbury's residents have a strong desire to maintain and preserve the Town's rural character. This is reflected in the goals and objectives stated in other sections of this Master Plan. Most of Canterbury's businesses are evenly distributed throughout the Town, and it is not the intention of this Plan to create additional industrial/commercial districts now or in the foreseeable future, but rather to encourage development in existing districts. Responses to the Planning Board survey strongly support this position.



### **Long-Range Goal**

The Town's long-range goal will be to continue to encourage resourcefulness in the development of small businesses, professional services, and agriculture-related activities that will be consistent with the goals and policies in other sections of the Master Plan.

### **Objectives**

1. In developing criteria for evaluation of economic development in Canterbury, consideration should be given to how businesses affect neighbors and the community as a whole. The primary criteria for judging such impact will be performance standards detailed in Town ordinances, with special consideration given to such aspects as public safety, potential danger to community health, pollution, adverse impact on the water table and other natural resources, drainage and water run-off problems, increases in traffic volume and traffic hazards, noxious fumes, obtrusive lights, and noise pollution.
2. Equally important criteria will address the impact of commercial development on Town facilities and services, and on its tax structure, and the potential for adverse effect on Canterbury's scenic beauty and rural character.

### **Recommended Actions**

1. Encourage the development of small businesses, professional services recreational uses, tourism and agriculture-related activity in a manner that conforms to overall goals of keeping Canterbury rural and residential and which will minimize new Town expenditures on infrastructure.
2. Encourage development of land currently zoned commercial and industrial uses in order to expand Canterbury's tax base.
3. Encourage the growth of home occupations, craft/artisan businesses, and bed and breakfasts, which do not detract from Canterbury's rural character and improve and diversify the Town's economic, recreational and intellectual resources.



## **CHAPTER 12: REGIONAL PLANNING**

As stated in the Introduction to the Plan, Canterbury does not exist in a vacuum. Despite the philosophy of local control, which many feel is the “right” of any town in New Hampshire, the reality is far from that. Not only must we consider the impact of our planning on neighboring towns, but also we must be aware of the influence that both state planning activity and planning activity in other towns will have on Canterbury. To that end, we are a member of the Central NH Regional Planning Commission, which allows us to discuss matters of regional importance with 18 other towns in the region and take advantage of the expertise of the CNHRPC planning staff.

Two examples of such activity are the New Hampshire Motor Speedway in Loudon and the Concord Regional Resource Recovery Refuse-to-Energy Plant in Penacook. Both developments are relatively large by Canterbury standards. Each of these major facilities is on or near the Canterbury Town line.

### **New Hampshire Motor Speedway**

At the time of the last Plan for Tomorrow (1998) the approved and anticipated seating capacity of the Speedway was 80,000. The Speedway presently has a capacity of approximately 105,000, the largest sports venue in the northeast. The major tangible impacts of the Speedway are increased noise and traffic.

- The noise occurs not just on major race weekends but also on practice days and smaller races from April through October. Eastern portions of Canterbury, including Shaker Village, are more affected by the Speedway noise than western portions of Town.
- Major Canterbury roads, such as Route 132, Morrill Road, Baptist Road, Center Road, and Shaker Road, have become increasingly used by Speedway related traffic.

The more intangible, but perhaps more significant, impact of the Speedway, relates to its (in)compatibility with other land uses such as Canterbury Shaker Village, and the potential impact on property values in Canterbury as well as Loudon.

Careful consideration to the views and opinions of local residents as well as protracted litigation resulted in certain Site Plan Agreements with the Town of Loudon and Deed Restrictions being placed on the Raceway that have limited the seasons of operation to the summer months and forbidden night racing as well as other venues and activities.

The Canterbury Planning Board should work closely with the Loudon Planning Board and the ownership of the Raceway to maintain these agreements while recognizing the value of the ongoing success of the Raceway to the economic viability of the region.

### **Concord Regional Resource Recovery Refuse-to-Energy Plant**

The Refuse-to-Energy Plant is open 24 hours, and processes refuse from Canterbury and 28 other towns. In addition, the Plant accepts loads from private refuse haulers. The large numbers of vehicles using Exit 17 to get to the Plant create noise and air pollution. The future of the plant in its present form is uncertain. A significant expansion and/or single stream recycling operation is being contemplated.

Note: The recent Planning Board Survey shows that the two characteristics most valued by the Townspeople are the quiet atmosphere of the Town and the tranquil and inspiring ambiance of Shaker Village. Both of the above major facilities have the potential to put these valued characteristics at risk.

The Speedway and the Plant have a significant impact on the local economy because they create jobs and generate substantial revenue. However, they also create traffic, noise and air quality problems that must be studied and addressed. Taking an active role in planning future “regional” projects such as these is important in order to maximize the benefit and minimize the harmful impact any new development may have on Canterbury and its neighbors.

### **Long-Range Goal**

Work with neighboring towns to address issues as they arise and participate in regional planning in a cooperative and constructive manner under RSA 36:54.

### **Objectives**

1. Ensure that the Planning Board continues to comply with the regional development impact statute (RSA 36:54-57) and assure that the Town is afforded notice and opportunity for input from other towns in the region as required by that statute.
2. With neighboring towns, exchange planning information that will have an impact on development trends and conservation efforts.

3. Continue to participate actively in the Regional Planning Commission to assure that Canterbury's goals, objectives, and policies are considered in regional plans.

**Recommended Actions**

1. Review the Master Plans and zoning ordinances of neighboring towns as they are readopted or rewritten to determine their potential impact on Canterbury's future. (*Planning Board*)
2. Review State agency planning documents and actions that might affect Canterbury. (*Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Agricultural Commission.*)





## **APPENDIX: 2010 ZONING MAP**

The following maps show the various Zoning Districts in Canterbury. There are two versions for clarity where the Workforce Housing Overlay District would otherwise obscure the underlying Zoning Districts. Color versions of both maps can be seen in the electronic copy of the Master Plan on the Canterbury Web Site ([www.canterbury-nh.org](http://www.canterbury-nh.org)).

Those contemplating purchasing and/or developing property in Canterbury should pay careful attention to the zoning requirements on their land parcel prior to investing time and money in a project. These maps are for general information purposes only. Please refer to the Town Office to confirm the exact zone for a particular land parcel and refer to the Canterbury Zoning Ordinance to look up the restrictions that go with it. Additional limitations and covenants may also be found on the Deed. If you are uncertain, a pre-conceptual consultation can be scheduled with the Planning Board.

An “Overlay District” is a regulatory tool that creates a special zoning district, placed over existing base zones, which identifies special provisions in addition to those in the underlying base zone. The overlay district can share common boundaries with the base zone or cut across base zone boundaries. Regulations or incentives are attached to the overlay district to protect a specific resource or guide development within a special area.

The Workforce Housing Overlay District covers over 50% of Canterbury land. It allows for certain incentives to build housing affordable to individuals whose income is at or below the mean average income of a family of four in Canterbury. Please refer to the Workforce Housing section in the Canterbury Zoning Ordinance for details.

