



## **TOWN OF LINCOLN**

# **COMPREHENSIVE LONG-RANGE PLAN**

**Draft Issues, Goals, & Major Recommendations  
State of the Town Meeting  
November 8, 2008**

**Comprehensive Long-Range Plan Committee**

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*Photographs by CLRPC Housing and Built Environment Subcommittee,  
Dodson Associates, and Community Opportunities Group, Inc.*

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# OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES

## *Open Space*

Lincoln is “an oasis compared to other areas.” Its abundant open space, safe drinking water, trails, and rural character are critically important to the quality of life that residents enjoy. Active farming still thrives in Lincoln, and the town has lost very few acres of agricultural land in the past 30 years. Residents appreciate the chance to buy locally grown produce and eggs, and many people hope the town has even more agricultural activity in the future. Lincoln people care deeply about the quality of the natural and built environment, and they have



traditionally been willing to invest in land acquisitions and stewardship. As one resident said when responding to an open space survey in 2007, “Protecting conservation land is vital – and we should expend our resources there.”

Lincoln has a long history of public and private actions to protect open space. The town and its two partner organizations, the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust (LLCT) and the Rural Land Foundation (RLF), have protected numerous parcels of conservation land through outright purchase, donations, and the development review and permitting process. In addition, the LLCT owns several properties and helps to protect privately owned land by holding conservation restrictions. Today, Lincoln has impressive tracts of open space, well-preserved agricultural landscapes, and non-profit institutions that own large amounts of land. The open space that endures in Lincoln today speaks to a culture of conservation that generations of residents have shared and passed down to newcomers. The same culture influenced private land owners to make charitable gifts of land to the town and the LLCT. It also contributed to Lincoln’s decision in 2002 to adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

Despite its efforts, Lincoln still has privately owned land that could be developed. Many of the parcels are forested, used recreationally, or in active agricultural use, while others are simply vacant land holdings that meet the needs of private property owners. It also has public land that could be converted to other uses, including land owned by the town. As the remaining tracts of unprotected land become available for purchase, Lincoln may find it more difficult to build consensus about the best course of action. Residents value open space, but the town has competing needs: more types of housing, municipal and school facilities, and tax revenue to pay for the services that people expect town government to provide. Further, while Lincoln has an outstanding conservation record, it has not been as successful in addressing the wide

variety of recreation interests identified by its own population. People appreciate having access to open space and passive recreation in Lincoln, yet their access to active recreation activities is limited.

### ***Natural Resources***

The natural beauty of Lincoln – its hills and valleys, ponds, forests, swamps and fields – are largely a product of the shape of its land. Its topography resulted from glacial scouring of the land, modified by the ceaseless action of water. Lincoln’s landscape may be thought of as a blanket of soil overlaying ancient bedrock, with vegetation and surface waters serving as other character defining features. Lincoln’s major landforms include the hilly, generally high terrain that extends across its geographic center, the pattern of ridges and valleys found throughout the town, the large wetland areas off



Route 2 and in Lincoln’s southeast quadrant, and the Stony Brook, which drains roughly two-thirds of the community. Lincoln’s topography ranges from a high of about 380 feet above sea level on the Reservoir on Bedford Road to a low of about 112 feet above sea level on the Sudbury River.

Lincoln has open bodies of water, several brooks, and extensive wetlands, but it is not a river town. The absence of rivers or major streams crossing through Lincoln has a great deal to do with the town’s rural-agricultural appearance today, for unlike towns such as Concord and Acton, Lincoln never attracted early industries and their attendant village settlement patterns. Lincoln’s surface waters nonetheless have profound importance to local and regional drinking water supplies and the wildlife diversity that endures in town, in addition to contributing to its scenic beauty. The town’s wetlands offer aesthetic and recreational value, and they are integral to the diversity and beauty of Lincoln’s landscape. Approximately 1,417 acres of wetlands, or more than half of all wetland acres in Lincoln, are protected by conservation deeds, conservation restrictions, and the City of Cambridge’s watershed land.

The amount of open space in Lincoln clearly contributes to the high quality of its land and water resources and plentiful wildlife habitat. However, it takes many strategies to protect the quality and quantity of natural resources: a strong regional planning framework, open space acquisitions, environmental regulations systematically and competently enforced, zoning and transportation policy decisions informed by natural resource interests, and everyday actions by citizens to place resource protection ahead of their own convenience. Lincoln’s own conservation brochure, *Community Conservation in Lincoln*, says that residents should “accept membership in that larger community – of soils, of water, of animals, of plants – and that we must, in good conscience, always weigh the consequences of our individual and collective decisions as humans upon the rest of the community.”

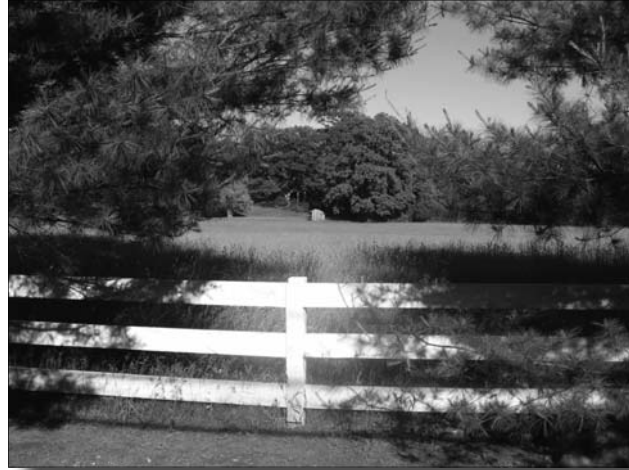
OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS		
Issue or Problem	Master Plan Goal	Major Recommendation
Potential loss of existing open space and natural resources.	Preserve Lincoln's natural resource, agricultural and active/passive recreational values.	<p>Prepare a list of current Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Standards that are applicable to local building projects and create an avenue for reviewing such projects.</p> <p>Establish a local bylaw which regulates the use of chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers on private properties.</p> <p>Establish a local bylaw which regulates noise and chemical pollution from landscape equipment.</p> <p>Protect new lands of conservation and active/passive recreation interest.</p> <p>Maintain and expand agriculture in Lincoln.</p>
Limited resources to manage existing conservation land.	Promote active stewardship of existing agriculture and conservation land.	<p>Establish policies to guide the use of chemical pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers on public lands.</p> <p>Maintain baseline inventory and monitoring program.</p> <p>Encourage best land management practices.</p> <p>Acquire funds and resources for long-term land stewardship and scientific study.</p>
Increased pressure on existing conservation land and trails for transportation & recreation use.	Balance conservation, active/passive recreation and transportation needs on recreational and conservation land.	<p>Maintain the character of Lincoln's conservation land and trails in the face of increased local development and regional pressure</p> <p>Investigate the possibility of improving and expanding the trail network to enhance non-motorized, multi-modal transportation both within Lincoln and between Lincoln and neighboring towns.</p> <p>Encourage multiple and diverse uses on recreation and conservation land.</p> <p>Evaluate maintenance needs and expansion opportunities of roadside paths and trails.</p> <p>Provide new facilities and maintain current facilities as appropriate.</p>

OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS		
Issue or Problem	Master Plan Goal	Major Recommendation
Increased pressure on Lincoln's remaining developable land.	Foster coordination, education and outreach regionally and locally.	<p><b>Identify criteria and priorities for evaluating the best use for available, developable land with multiple land use possibilities.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate with boards and organizations to evaluate the priorities of each board and/or organization.</li> <li>Partner with regional organizations to promote conservation and active/passive recreation goals.</li> <li>Foster a long-term stewardship ethic among all property owners in Town.</li> <li>Provide opportunities for community-building.</li> <li>Develop and retain professional and highly competent staff.</li> </ul>
Support active recreational space needs.	Create bridge between active recreation and conservation groups in town.	<p><b>Recognize active recreation space as a desirable form of open space.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with recreation department to develop a mutually acceptable, proactive maintenance plan for active recreation facilities.</li> <li>Coordinate with Facilities &amp; Services efforts to develop long-range plan for new or modified active recreation facilities.</li> </ul>

# LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Land Use

Lincoln is nationally recognized for its open space initiatives, and particularly for its partnerships with the Rural Land Foundation and the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust. While other towns have relied almost entirely on zoning to steer their fate, Lincoln has taken a coordinated approach to planning, regulation, and land disposition to save large amounts of open space and still create great places for people to live. As a result, Lincoln is different from other towns around Boston. Beyond its sheer beauty, Lincoln has benefited from its unique political culture, born from the collaboration of mainstay wealthy families with the academics, architects, engineers, and other professionals who made Lincoln their home more than three decades ago.



Farming has shaped Lincoln's landscape since the town was first settled. For almost 200 years, farming was a major social and economic activity in Lincoln; it defined the way of life for its residents. Preserving significant tracts of farmland and managing it as working farmland have helped Lincoln avoid the destruction of its agricultural landscape heritage. One of the town's key draws today – a quality that has much to do with its very high home values – is the enduring presence of agricultural land and open space in most parts of town. Still, while Lincoln looks open and largely undeveloped from the road, about half of its land is developed.

Land Use by Acres (2008)			
Residential Uses	Acres	Institutional Uses	Acres
Single-Family Dwellings	3,478.4	Charitable, Education, Religious	394.6
Multi-Family Housing*	101.5	Public Uses (Municipal, Other)†	882.8
Mixed Uses	6.6	Undeveloped Land	
Commercial		Vacant Land	799.6
Retail	6.3	Chapter 61A, 61B Land‡	337.5
Other	35.5	Conservation and Park Land§	3,194.1
Public Utilities	33.4	Total	9,270.3

Source: Town of Lincoln FY 2008 Assessor's Parcel Database, Lincoln GIS Parcel Map.

\*In most cases, "total acres" includes land set aside for open space.

†Includes facilities owned or controlled by the Town of Lincoln, Hanscom AFB, and Massport.

‡Includes Chapter 61, 61A parcels with an existing residence or farm stand.

§Conservation land and park land owned by the Town, the federal government, and non-profit organizations. Excludes privately owned open space reported in other categories of land use; also excludes land used for town facilities.

Lincoln has institutional uses of regional and statewide significance within its borders. Some of its renowned non-profit charitable organizations include the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park on Sandy Pond Road, located on land originally gifted to the town, the Massachusetts Audubon Society's headquarters on South Great Road, and the Carroll School on Baker Bridge Road. Lincoln also is home to the Walden Woods Project, an education and conservation advocacy organization on Baker Farm Road. In addition, the town has two other small private schools, three churches, and the Farrington Memorial, a non-profit organization that specializes in educational, recreational, and agricultural activities for urban children. Many of Lincoln's non-profit institutions are also some of its largest employers.



### ***Economic Development***

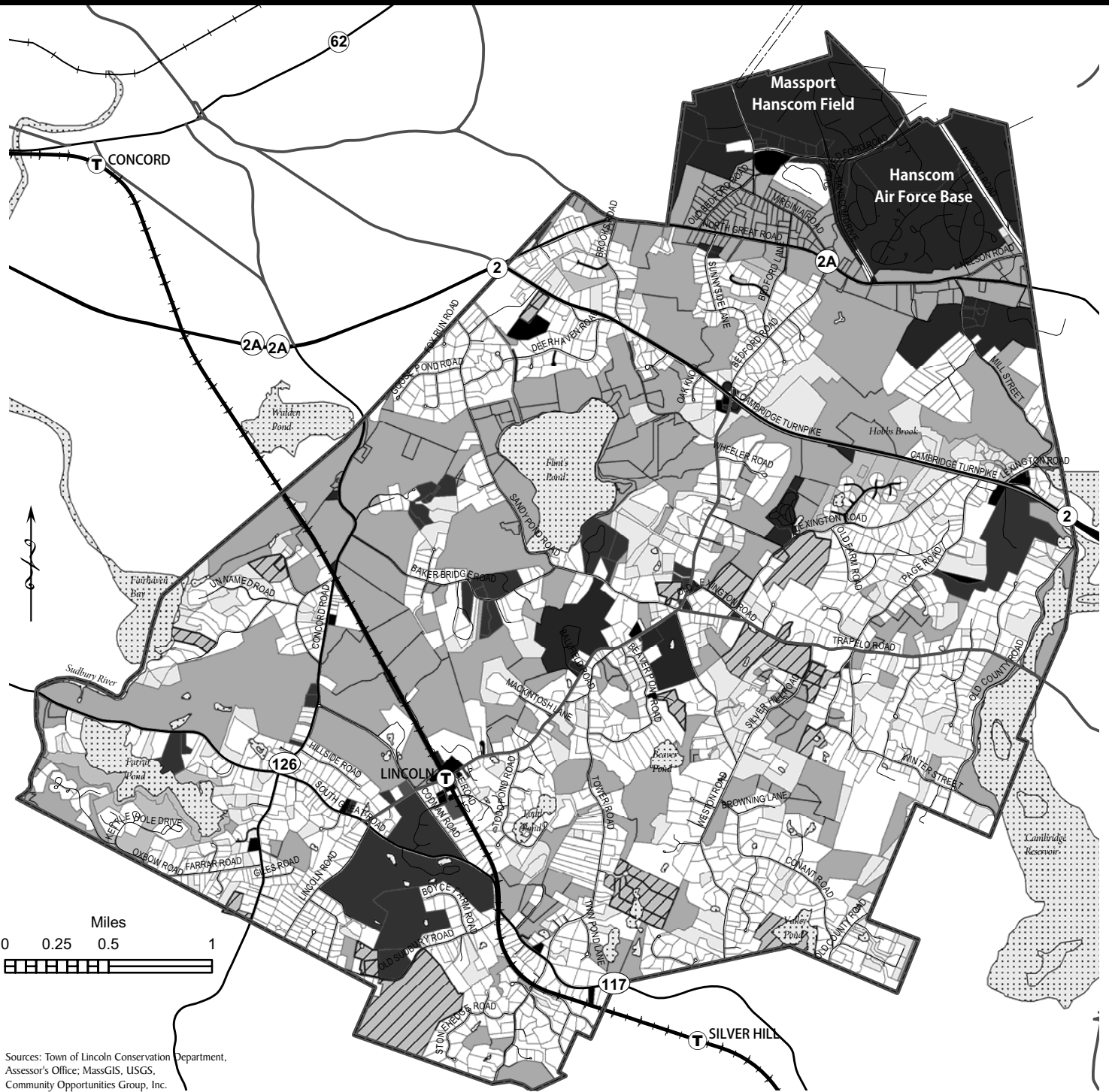
Lincoln's economy is part of the larger Boston regional economy which employs the vast majority of local residents. The regional economy is a major asset for the town and at the same time constrains its options as firms and households choose between Lincoln and other locations in the region. Lincoln has a history of spirited debates about commercial development, but has never pursued economic development in the sense of an active policy of recruiting firms to the town.

Today, Lincoln has a very limited amount of land devoted to commercial uses. Non-agricultural business development exists on 20 parcels with a combined total of about 44 acres of land. Less than seven acres are devoted to retail uses. Most of the town's businesses are concentrated around the train station in South Lincoln, a mixed-use center that has the potential to accommodate more housing and services. Lincoln's former town hall on Lincoln Road is zoned for retail and service businesses, too, but the largest commercial facility, a 140,000 sq. ft. office building in North Lincoln, occupies land the town acquired in the 1980s. A few pockets of business activity exist along South Great Road (Route 117) and Concord Road, but these are largely non-conforming business uses.

Lincoln's small commercial base, lack of industrial development, predominantly single-family home neighborhoods, and unique multi-family developments all relate to zoning requirements. Lincoln has four residential use districts and three nonresidential districts, but 96 percent of the town lies within the R-1 District, which limits growth with a minimum lot size of 80,000 sq. ft. and other requirements. Over time, Lincoln has created several overlay districts in order to allow unique developments to proceed, such as Battle Road Farm in North Lincoln and more recently, The Groves and the South Lincoln Mall. Through Lincoln's overlay district process, projects that require different zoning undergo a rigorous review by the Planning Board and other town boards before town meeting is asked to make any changes to the Zoning Bylaw. Due to Lincoln's prestige, its scarcity of developable land, and the existence of properties that could become candidates for redevelopment and reuse, the town may be asked in the future to consider more types of developments that need an alternative to the R-1 District.

LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS		
Issue or Problem	Master Plan Goal	Major Recommendation
<p>From time to time Lincoln is faced with proposals for change in the intensity or type of land use which raise questions of neighborhood impacts, threats to the Town's rural character, economic costs/benefits, increased traffic, etc. Proposals may emerge at any time from locations that are hard to predict. Current procedures for considering change leave room for improvement in terms of a clear planning process, communications, and evaluation criteria.</p>	<p><b>Institute a comprehensive planning process for all land use changes</b> that is considered fair, open, and systematic.</p> <p><b>Establish criteria that can be used as a guide</b> by Town boards as well proponents <b>in evaluating proposals for change.</b></p>	<p>Create a <b>"Phase One" step in the Town's planning process</b> that informs proponents, relevant Town Boards, and Town citizens as to the procedures and content required for considering a change in land use.</p> <p><b>Focus requests for land use change on the Planning Board</b>, with the Board convening other town boards with an interest or role in the proposal early in the process.</p> <p><b>Adopt a table of "Assessment Criteria"</b> for use by Boards and proponents in considering proposals for change. "Assessment Criteria" should reflect the full range of community concerns and goals.</p>
<p>While Lincoln Station's transit access, services, and diversity of housing choices benefit the Town, the area lacks an overall organization of land uses, pedestrian circulation, and open spaces that create the sense of a community center. Opportunities exist to expand housing choices and to increase the viability of services to residents.</p>	<p><b>Create a compact, dense, and walkable Lincoln Station neighborhood</b> that provides services to residents, opportunities for social interaction, and new housing choices.</p>	<p><b>Develop a comprehensive plan for the Lincoln Station neighborhood</b> that establishes goals for development/redevelopment, pedestrian circulation, open space, and vehicular circulation/parking.</p> <p><b>Develop plans for infrastructure.</b></p> <p>Create a Lincoln Station planning subcommittee of the Planning Board charged with bringing a <b>master plan before Town Boards/Town Meeting</b> for review and adoption.</p>
<p>Lincoln's economic base is diverse and includes service and commercial activities, non-profit organizations, home-based businesses, among others. However, reliance on residential property taxes to finance the Town's operations increasingly puts pressure on finding new sources of revenues to meet Town financial needs.</p>	<p><b>Promote economic development within the Town that protects our rural character, adds to the vitality of residential life,</b> encourages human interaction at Lincoln Station, and maintains/improves the delivery of services to residents.</p>	<p><b>Establish a task force to think creatively about economic development opportunities and revenue streams that are consistent with the assessment criteria</b> developed to guide land use decisions.</p>

# LINCOLN COMPREHENSIVE LONG-RANGE PLAN



Sources: Town of Lincoln Conservation Department,  
Assessor's Office; MassGIS, USGS,  
Community Opportunities Group, Inc.

## Legend

- |                                 |                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Open Water                      | <b>LAND USE</b>              |
| MBTA Stations                   | Residential                  |
| <b>ROADWAYS</b>                 | Commercial, Mixed Use; Other |
| Limited Access Highway          | Public, Institutional Use    |
| Multi-Lane (Not Limited Access) | Chapter 61A, 61B             |
| Other Numbered Highway          | Vacant Land                  |
| Major Road, Collector           | Open Space                   |
| Local Streets                   |                              |

## Existing Land Uses

April 2008

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES GROUP, INC.  
Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.  
Dodson Associates  
Community Planning Solutions

LINCOLN PLANNING BOARD  
COMPREHENSIVE LONG-RANGE PLAN COMMITTEE

## HOUSING & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

### *Housing*

On one level, Lincoln has the signature characteristics of Boston's affluent west suburbs. Its homes tend to be spacious, expensive, and designed for traditional families, and Lincoln has many historically significant residences. On another level, Lincoln is quite different from neighboring towns. For example, its housing inventory includes fairly diverse architectural styles. Lincoln also has recognizable neighborhoods and a development pattern with relatively few conventional subdivisions. The types, ages, and styles of homes in Lincoln tell a story about the town's physical evolution and culture. The same qualities shed light on Lincoln's place in the suburban housing market and the types of households that find Lincoln an attractive place to live.

Most people outside of Lincoln think of it as a model of creative ways to save open space, but Lincoln also has been an innovator in housing policy and affordable housing development. Housing serves as a community's socio-economic gatekeeper because the cost of housing largely determines who can live in a town. However, Lincoln has worked for many years to reduce housing barriers. Battle Road Farm still brings Lincoln acclaim both statewide and throughout the country, but Battle Road Farm is part of a larger story that began decades earlier, before Massachusetts adopted the comprehensive permit law, Chapter 40B. In fact, Lincoln has done more than most Massachusetts towns to create affordable housing and elderly housing, and choices for market-rate homebuyers, too. While efforts to allow an increase in density have been as controversial in Lincoln as in every community in Eastern Massachusetts, the town has recognized controlled density as a tool for preserving threatened land and resource areas and for meeting other local planning objectives.

Today, Lincoln has approximately 2,100 housing units, or 160 units per sq. mi., which is about 27 percent of the average housing density for Middlesex County as a whole. Since 2000, Lincoln has experienced intense demand for very large single-family homes, and the town's built fabric is changing. The extraordinarily high cost of land in Lincoln all but assures that new homes will sell at the high end of the regional housing market, and that older homes will be altered or demolished and rebuilt to make way for the large residences that affluent homebuyers expect. Many residents are concerned about losing the town's older housing stock to "mansionization," or the replacement of small, older homes with new, very large houses that often change the visual character of neighborhoods. Lincoln has taken steps to address this by adopting demolition delay and a large house review bylaw, and more recently, a neighborhood conservation district bylaw.



### ***The Built Environment***

Lincoln's built environment is inextricably linked with open space and the underlying natural environment, and for the most part it is thoughtfully integrated into the town's natural setting. In general, properties have few if any visible delineations, thereby giving the land a communal sense. The boundary demarcations that do exist are composed mainly of low stone walls that still allow vistas into and from each property. Front and rear yards are open, demonstrating less concern



with protection of privacy than is seen in many other communities. Instead of erecting six-foot stockade fences, Lincoln residents seem more likely to rely on shrubs and trees to distinguish between public and private land and seasonally screen properties from view.

Lincoln is a remarkably scenic place, set in a varied and beautiful natural landscape that has been enhanced by human design and stewardship. Unlike many "traditional" New England villages, the visual character of Lincoln is defined more by the relationships of its buildings to the landscape and less by any specific style of architecture, building, or building pattern. Lincoln's built environment consists of a varied architectural palette that ranges from the vernacular architecture of rural barns to houses built in the International Style. While this rich mosaic of form and style is reason enough for intrigue and admiration, of equal or greater note is the interplay between Lincoln's predominantly residential buildings and the land, which together define and articulate the overall visual character of the town.

Natural landscape patterns knit together Lincoln's architecture with a composition of fields, meadows and woodlands. This relationship between building and setting is the foundation for the town's pastoral nature, and in it can be seen two key aspects of Lincoln's history: its agricultural patterns and its country estates. While Lincoln is no longer rural in the traditional sense, neither is it urban. The predominant patterns of its past persist even though the ways of life they originally served do not. Thus, Lincoln's built environment and natural landscapes represent a mix of new, old, formal, and informal architectural styles and building-to-space relationships.

Lincoln has always understood that new development is a challenge more than a threat. While large, available undeveloped sites are rare because of Lincoln's existing development pattern and land preservation efforts, it is important to realize that Lincoln is by no means built out to its maximum capacity under current zoning. As population and development pressures increase, sites currently developed at lower-than-allowed density and back lots could be redeveloped. Furthermore, some adjoining low-density properties could be assembled into one larger development site. The need for continued vigilance will be important for continuing Lincoln's past success in managing land development into the future. Otherwise what were thought to be stable, rural neighborhoods could transition into poorly planned and designed new developments.

HOUSING & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS		
Issue or Problem	Master Plan Goal	Major Recommendation
<p><b>HOUSING</b></p> <p>Driven by land values, increasing housing prices are leading to reduced economic and demographic diversity in Town's population.</p>	<p><b>Maintain a housing</b> stock with price <b>diversity</b>, including housing that is affordable to lower and moderate income families, while preserving rural character.</p> <p>Maintain a housing stock with a diversity of size and configurations suitable for households of differing sizes and life stages.</p>	<p><b>Add higher-density housing in the Lincoln Station area, near transportation and commercial center, and plan for the infrastructure to support it ("smart growth").</b></p> <p><b>Encourage accessory apartments</b> and conversion of single-family to multi-family dwellings in certain areas <b>through adjustments to bylaws and review processes.</b></p> <p><b>Discourage replacement of lower-price housing units with higher-price homes</b> by adjusting the review process for demolition/replacement, and explore possible <b>incentives (e.g., property tax relief).</b></p> <p><b>Assess the nature of unmet needs and policy options to meet them.</b></p> <p><b>Seek service arrangements that might meet residents' needs in individual homes rather than in centralized facilities.</b></p> <p>Apply accessible design requirements broadly in new construction and renovation.</p>
<p>Housing needs of elderly and adult disabled persons are not well met.</p>	<p><b>Provide more housing for diverse needs.</b> Ensure that Lincoln's housing stock and services can meet the needs of special populations such as the elderly and disabled.</p>	<p><b>Assess the nature of unmet needs and policy options to meet them.</b></p> <p><b>Seek service arrangements that might meet residents' needs in individual homes rather than in centralized facilities.</b></p> <p>Apply accessible design requirements broadly in new construction and renovation.</p>

HOUSING & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS		
Issue or Problem	Master Plan Goal	Major Recommendation
<p><b>BUILT ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>New development, tear-downs, and/or significant renovation may threaten Lincoln's historic rural character.</p>	<p><b>Preserve key aspects of Lincoln's rural roots:</b> prominence of natural land forms and growth, buildings respectful of landscape, varied architecture, agrarian viewscaapes.</p> <p>Preserve character of homes and groups of homes deemed to have special historical or aesthetic value.</p> <p>Ensure that building and landscaping in Lincoln employ the most <b>environmentally sensitive practices</b> feasible.</p>	<p><b>Create a Visual Preference Document</b> illustrating building-to-land relationships and other key visual characteristics of Lincoln as guidance for developers and newcomers.</p> <p><b>Integrate, coordinate, and clarify the review of all proposed tear-downs.</b></p> <p><b>Strengthen public review of development adjacent to conservation lands, key viewscaapes, scenic roads.</b></p> <p><b>Encourage citizen development of neighborhood conservation districts, historic districts.</b></p> <p><b>Integrate environmental sustainability standards (e.g., LEED) into bylaws, zoning, and approval processes.</b></p>
<p>Building and land management practices may adversely affect the environment as well as Lincoln's rural character.</p>		

# LINCOLN COMPREHENSIVE LONG-RANGE PLAN



Sources: Town of Lincoln Conservation Department, Assessor's Office; MassGIS, USGS, Community Opportunities Group, Inc.

## Legend

- Open Water
- MBTA Stations
- ROADWAYS**
- Limited Access Highway
- Multi-Lane (Not Limited Access)
- Other Numbered Highway
- Major Road, Collector
- Local Streets

- YEAR BUILT**
- 1680 - 1834
  - 1835 - 1923
  - 1924 - 1970
  - 1971 - 2007

## Age of Housing

March 2008

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES GROUP, INC.  
 Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.  
 Dodson Associates  
 Community Planning Solutions

LINCOLN PLANNING BOARD  
 COMPREHENSIVE LONG-RANGE PLAN COMMITTEE



## TOWN FACILITIES & SERVICES, CIRCULATION & TRANSPORTATION

### *Town Facilities & Services*

Town facilities and services represent the majority of Lincoln's annual expenditures. "Town service" includes any local government service that residents expect to receive as taxpayers, rate payers, or fee-paying participants in a municipal program or activity. An evaluation of Lincoln's services and facilities – a form of strategic planning - will be most effective and least divisive when rooted in a shared understanding of the values that residents share. Town services exist to support and enhance the quality of life in Lincoln. At the same time, the quality and responsiveness of municipal services support and enhance the town's sense of community and civic vitality. The more that town services are of high quality and decisions about their delivery respond to evolving citizen needs and expectations, the more that residents will tend to avail themselves of the services, interact with each other, and become more invested in town affairs.

"Community" has long been and continues to be a high-order value for Lincoln. A collective sense of being members of the Lincoln community is based on common enjoyment of activities, buildings, organizations, and the town's beautiful setting. Additional community values, such as high-quality education, economic and age diversity, and land conservation, have evolved, along with the evolution of services to meet the changing needs of a growing and changing population. As the town's values evolved and its service needs expanded, facilities were obtained or constructed, and they need to be maintained. Services and facilities should not be viewed as ends in themselves, but rather as means to achieve higher values such as community, education, diversity, and conservation.

The town has begun to upgrade its long-range facilities planning. The Board of Selectmen recently authorized architectural and engineering reviews of Town Hall, Bemis Hall, Pierce House, and other buildings under the Selectmen's purview. The purpose of these reviews is to identify repairs, renovations, and possible additions that may be necessary for ordinary maintenance, regulatory compliance, or enhanced utilization. The Library, the Schools, and Public Safety have separately conducted similar facilities reviews. Still, long-range planning for facilities and services has tended to be somewhat decentralized, ad hoc, and episodic. Facilities long-range planning remains primarily overseen by staff with more expertise and time for managing the programs they oversee than for facilities management or long-range planning. While Lincoln appears to be moving more toward a rational services-planning process rather than the historical process by which strong constituencies push their case to the floor of Town Meeting, during this increas-

ingly difficult financial time it is critical that the town enhance its capacity to distinguish between core services that are necessary and non-core services which may be desirable but are not absolutely essential.

Many social needs critical to the highest values of the community are delivered by or through non-governmental organizations, e.g., the churches, pre-schools, land-conservation foundations and trusts, farming organizations, museums, and others. Lincoln's strategic planning should include a full understanding of the capabilities of these organizations and the services they offer that enhance the town's core values.

### ***Circulation & Transportation***

Few aspects of life in Lincoln are untouched by transportation. Lincoln is a quiet town surrounded by industrial, financial, and population centers. Its transportation system shows influences from horse and train through post-war highway boom to home work and telecommuting. Beyond availability of transportation for residents, Lincoln's quality of life is strongly affected by noise, safety and fluidity of traffic within and through (as well as over) the town.



Located near Route 128 and traversed by state Routes 2 and 2A and 117, Lincoln is well-connected to the regional highway system. This contributes to Lincoln's desirability and also presents ongoing challenges. L.G. Hanscom Field, a joint civilian airport with military facilities, occupies land in Lincoln, Bedford, Concord, and Lexington. While Lincoln is served directly by commuter rail, it otherwise is remote from public transportation. It has good, improvable, and underused paths for pedestrians and cyclists. The Ride and other special van services are available to eligible individuals and groups, but for less-mobile residents, the main alternative to private vehicles is commercial taxi or limousine. Children depend on foot/pedal power or adult drivers. As seniors move into retirement facilities that offer their own transportation systems, and neighborhood relationships are weakened by social trends, informal collective-assistance mechanisms may be declining.

A related and much-studied issue is the threat posed to safety and quality of life by increasing private-vehicle traffic. Internal traffic shows up mainly at a few places such as the schools, library and town events. However, external traffic exacerbates choke points, loads roads at commuting hours and beyond, and tends to run at higher speeds with less regard for comfort and safety of other road users. The town's ability to calm traffic with road structures, enforcement, or other measures is limited by law. Since the greatest part of this problem lies in use of town roads by non-residents, and especially those transiting the town, it is best handled as a road-use issue rather than an internal transportation issue. Lincoln is preparing for a major road rehabilitation project to upgrade the primary arterial and collector roads under its jurisdiction. Residents have said they want the project to preserve narrow roads wherever possible, minimize the removal of trees, provide safe accommodation for pedestrians and bicyclists, reduce the town's long-term roadway maintenance costs, improve storm water management, slow the speed of traffic, and minimize traffic volume.

TOWN FACILITIES & SERVICES/CIRCULATION-TRANSPORTATION: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS		
Issue or Problem	Master Plan Goal	Major Recommendation
<b>FACILITIES &amp; SERVICES</b> Existing services continue indefinitely without appropriate evaluation of cost-effectiveness, responsiveness to specific needs, coordination with other services, and consistency with community values. Similarly, development of new services tends to occur in response to advocacy and is not preceded by the aforementioned comprehensive evaluation. Services' costs are increasing, while financial resources are limited and potentially inadequate.	<b>Regular assessment of services and consideration of their reallocation.</b>  <b>Increase participation</b> in multi-town and regional arrangements for providing services. <b>Increase coordination</b> of Town and NGO services.	<b>Triennial survey (and similar data-gathering) of residents and staff to assess services.</b> <b>Consider reallocation of services based on analysis of survey and other relevant data.</b>  <b>Identify services which could be shared or coordinated with other towns or regions.</b> <b>Identify services which could be coordinated or shared with local NGOs.</b> <b>Implement appropriate opportunities.</b>
Facilities are aging or aged/historic and new facilities are being proposed, yet facilities management is decentralized and long-term maintenance planning has not been a priority.	Critically and unemotionally examine condition and use of existing facilities. <b>Base</b> continued use of existing facilities, as well as establishment of new or modified facilities, on <b>services needs.</b> <b>Centralize facilities management.</b> <b>Institute and fund a Planned Preventative Maintenance</b> ("PPM") program and other long-term maintenance and replacement strategies.	<b>Evaluate suitability of all Town facilities.</b> <b>Coordinate examination of facilities' suitability with triennial services assessment.</b> <b>Establish Town-wide facilities manager position, overseen by a standing facilities management committee.</b> <b>Institute PPM program.</b>

TOWN FACILITIES & SERVICES/CIRCULATION-TRANSPORTATION: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS		
Issue or Problem	Master Plan Goal	Major Recommendation
<p><b>CIRCULATION &amp; TRANSPORTATION</b></p> <p>Traffic speed and volume are increasing and adversely affecting our safety and peace-of-mind. Our paths and trails are underutilized. Our aging population has less mobility.</p>	<p><b>Mitigate/calm traffic.</b></p> <p><b>Promote usage of train, carpools, and school buses.</b></p> <p>Promote use of <b>trails and paths</b> for intra-Town accessibility.</p> <p><b>Increase sense of community through shared transportation, instead of isolated single-car usage.</b></p>	<p>Use roadway project to install impediments to speed, institute Town-wide 30 MPH limit, and increase enforcement.</p> <p>Expand bike access to trail network, and improve paths and trails for bike usage as well as walking.</p> <p>Institute financial incentives to encourage carpooling, school bus usage, and train usage.</p> <p>Improve transportation options for elderly and disabled residents.</p> <p>Require developers to fund.</p>



## CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES, GOVERNANCE

### *Cultural & Historic Resources*

Lincoln displays a remarkable breadth of historic resources as well as historical and cultural institutions that protect, oversee, and promote awareness of those resources. The town has adopted many of the most effective programs and laws that can ensure the preservation of a community's historic character. However, Lincoln's historic and archaeological resources remain at risk due to intense market pressure, mainly for housing. Further, while Lincoln's cultural institutions are stewards of some of the town's most visible historic properties, in some cases the preservation of those properties reflects the missions of the institutions that own them, which is not the same as having legal mechanisms in place to protect them in perpetuity. Sometimes overlooked is the critical role performed by Lincoln's institutions in supporting and advancing the town's core mission of education and preserving Lincoln's "rural, agricultural character, its small-town heritage, its open space, and its historical legacy."

Lincoln's range of historic and archaeological resources document the history of the town and area. For example, Lincoln has archaeological sites dating from the Middle Archaic Period (8,000-6,000 B.P.), houses and associated buildings and landscapes present during the battle on April 19, 1775, historic landscape features that helped to inspire Thoreau and America's conservation movement, and one of the state's best and most concentrated collections of mid-20th-century modern houses, including the famed Gropius House. Whether a farmhouse, tavern, or outbuilding that predates Lincoln's establishment as a town in 1754, a former summer home or country estate that once stood on substantial acreage, or one of the modern houses built between the 1930s and the 1960s, Lincoln's predominantly residential collection of historic buildings represents every period in the town's historical and architectural development. Historic institutional buildings are present as well, such as the town offices, public library, and a small number of church structures and school buildings. The community's range of historic structures and objects varies widely. All of these resources help to define Lincoln.

Today, many Lincoln properties are part of a local historic district or National Register historic district, or both. Although the town's earlier efforts to inventory its historic resources focused on 18th-century and early-19th-century properties, more recent survey efforts, which have occurred sporadically, have recorded later periods and architectural styles. Lincoln has prepared a list of over 180 buildings dating from 1900 and earlier and a partial listing of 20th-century buildings, but it has not completed a town-wide comprehensive survey to identify all types of historic resources located throughout the community.

Numerous public and private non-profit organizations play a role in preserving Lincoln's historic and cultural resources. They include, in part, the Lincoln Historical Commission, Lincoln Historic District Commission, Community Preservation Committee, Lincoln Public Library, National Park Service, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Lincoln Historical Society, Historic New England, Inc., Walden Woods Project, Massachusetts Audubon Society, DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Friends of Modern Architecture (FOMA), and Lincoln Minute Men.

### **Governance**

Lincoln's government is designed to include residents in all of the major decisions that affect the town. Its local government is participatory and largely decentralized, with powers and duties shared by many officials and a legislative body open to all registered voters. A government with many committees and an open town meeting provides important avenues for citizen participation. Residents perceive community spirit and volunteerism as important features of living in Lincoln. Some say the town is a "model of civic engagement" and that it offers "many places to get involved for many interests." Still, it can be difficult to balance a desire for public participation with a desire for efficiency because a system that accommodates many people in the decision-making process usually works through deliberation, which takes time. Also, in a trend echoed in other towns, Lincoln seems to be having more difficulty attracting broad participation in local government, as suggested by comments in public meetings and surveys, possibly due to its smaller population from which to recruit.

In addition to its large number of elected and appointed officials, Lincoln's local government has a departmental structure. Lincoln's town administrator is generally responsible for day-to-day governmental operations, and the basic functions of administration and finance have full- or part-time staff supporting the work of town boards. Lincoln also has non-profit charitable organizations that provide services or participate directly with town government in matters of general public interest. The Rural Land Foundation (RLF) and the Lincoln Land Conservation Trust (LLCT) are good examples of non-profits that work in partnership with the town on land planning and open space preservation. Other examples of groups that work hand-in-hand with the town include Codman Community Farms, Lincoln's youth sports organizations, the Lincoln Historical Society, and the Lincoln School Foundation. Lincoln is an active community with many functions that depend on civic-minded people. Since the town's population is only 5,500, it is not surprising to find that many residents volunteer for more than one task.

While Massachusetts does not have any formal mechanisms for regional government, Lincoln participates in several regional organizations, e.g., the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and MAPC's subregional arm, the Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC), as well as the Hanscom Field Advisory Commission and Hanscom Area Towns Selectmen (HATS). The Lincoln School Department has been a long-standing participant in the METCO Program as well as the Concord Area Special Education (CASE) Collaborative. In addition, the town has purchased septic system inspection services from Concord for several years in an effort to operate more efficiently and reduce costs. Lincoln residents wonder if the town should do more to cultivate regional relationships and pursue regional services. Sometimes small towns are reluctant to join a regional entity out of concern that they will become entrapped by the interests of the larger entity.

CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES/GOVERNANCE: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS		
Issue or Problem	Master Plan Goal	Major Recommendation
<p><b>GOVERNANCE</b></p> <p>Some citizens think that Lincoln's government is a closed group, not welcoming to new people or ideas.</p>	<p><b>Facilitate opportunities for volunteers, including important but time-limited contributions to the Town.</b></p>	<p><b>Volunteer coordinator to handle outreach functions.</b>                      Create a skill bank/data base for the town's residents.                      Hold welcoming events for newcomers.                      Provide information packet when people register to vote.                      Involve town-based networks for reaching out to citizens.                      Target electronic messages for specific audiences.  <b>Involve long-time participants to mentor and train new residents for potential volunteer positions.</b></p>
<p>Attendance at TM is dropping and attendees are aging.</p>	<p><b>Identify actions for implementation that can make Lincoln's TM format inviting to the maximum number of citizens.</b></p>	<p><b>Institute general outreach to the town's residents.</b>  <b>Use electronic media to enhance TM presentations and provide live TV coverage.</b>                      Pre-establish schedules of warrant article presentations.                      Improve lighting and sound-amplification.                      Provide daycare to encourage younger folk to attend.                      Ensure time-management of the debate by the Moderator.  <b>Provide civic lessons for the town's students to engage both them and their parents in town affairs.</b></p>
<p>It is difficult to find people willing to run for, or be appointed to, major boards.</p>	<p><b>Cultivate volunteers for assuming public office.</b></p>	<p><b>One-on-one outreach.</b>  <b>Create skill banks to entice appropriately qualified citizens to run for town boards.</b>                      Disseminate information about each board's activities.</p>

<b>CULTURAL &amp; HISTORIC RESOURCES/GOVERNANCE: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		
<b>Issue or Problem</b>	<b>Master Plan Goal</b>	<b>Major Recommendation</b>
There is insufficient communication between government and citizens.	<b>Provide enhanced avenues for community outreach.</b>	<p><b>Enhance, the town's website, including expanding electronic communication.</b></p> <p><b>Provide periodic newsletters and/or e-news about town government activities.</b></p> <p>Allow for the creation of town-related blogs.</p>
Serving on major boards is very time consuming, and board members need additional support.	<b>Enhance support for residents serving on town boards and committees.</b>	<p><b>Provide additional staff support as needed.</b></p> <p><b>Provide board training for chairs and members.</b></p> <p>Provide information packets prior to meetings.</p> <p>Set agenda and maintain adherence to time lines.</p>
There is insufficient communication between boards.	<b>Facilitate cooperation and communication between town boards and committees.</b>	<p><b>Re-institute the Moderator's periodic inter-board meetings.</b></p> <p>Enhance chair-to-chair communication on common issues.</p> <p><b>Encourage joint board meetings on common issues.</b></p> <p>Convene joint board meetings to hear applicants' presentations.</p>
Lincoln is not maximizing the use of 21st century technology to communicate with citizens, and assist in the management of the government.	<b>Improve the town's IT capabilities for communication and management.</b>	<p><b>Move forward with the town's strategic IT planning.</b></p> <p>Improve the town's website.</p> <p>Provide an electronic suggestion box for ideas and complaints (ensure responses).</p> <p><b>Create databases accessible to town staff, and for public information, accessible to the public through their home computers.</b></p> <p>Digitize historic records for electronic access.</p>

<b>CULTURAL &amp; HISTORIC RESOURCES/GOVERNANCE: ISSUES, GOALS, MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		
<b>Issue or Problem</b>	<b>Master Plan Goal</b>	<b>Major Recommendation</b>
How to pay for the increasing cost of government.	Increase revenues and/or reduce expenses.	Explore opportunities for regionalization of services. Explore opportunities for increasing revenues in concert with long-term cash-flow requirements.
<b>CULTURAL &amp; HISTORIC RESOURCES</b> Lack of coordination between the town's cultural and historic organizations.	Improve coordination.	Establish a "Selectmen's Council" for cultural and historic organizations. Include on the Town's website, and continually update, a calendar of events of all cultural and historic organization-sponsored activities. Work with institutions like DeCordova towards collaboration on their activities.
Schools could take greater advantage of the opportunities available for interactive learning from cultural and historic institutions.	Develop mechanisms and incentives for cooperation.	Encourage the schools to make time available for collaboration opportunities with these organizations. Integrate into the curriculum materials that could benefit by partnering with more of our rich array of institutions.
How to insure the continued preservation of Lincoln's historic assets.	Identify key elements of our historical assets, set priorities for protecting them for future generations, and establish steps to be taken to protect them in the face of limited resources and competing priorities.	Encourage the town's existing historic boards/committees to respond to the stated goal. Ensure the existence and continuous updating of the inventory of the town's historic assets Reestablish line-item funding in the annual budgets for our historic assets as appropriate Encourage and maximize the seeking of funds through available resources such as the Community Preservation Act

# LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Appendix: Draft Land Use Assessment Criteria

### **The proposed change ...**

1. Is consistent with – and preferably enhances – the rural character of Lincoln and the immediate neighborhood
  - 1.1. Maintains consistency in the overall look-and-feel of the town and neighborhood
  - 1.2. Preserves and enhances traffic-limiting and traffic-calming arrangements already in force, or provides public or shared transit options to neutralize any traffic impacts
  - 1.3. Avoids noxious effects including noise, night-time lighting, and chemical pollution
2. Enhances the performance of Lincoln as a “green town”
  - 2.1. Incorporates “green” designs
  - 2.2. Minimizes impact on limited town resources such as water and waste disposal (and preferably improves capacity)
  - 2.3. Avoids promoting activities that contribute to global warming and environmental damage such as automobile commuting
  - 2.4. Potentially helps improve the green performance of other town businesses, institutions and citizens
  - 2.5. Encourages the reuse and diverse use of currently underused structures
3. Enhances the social and economic diversity of the town
  - 3.1. Provides for low-income and other forms of special-use housing, including homes for those with disabilities
  - 3.2. Provides homes that diversify the price and life-style choices available to citizens, such as co-housing, cottage neighborhoods, cluster housing, and accessory apartments including but not limited to housing that qualifies as low-income housing under the state’s current regulations

- 3.3. Supports residents' ability to age in place
4. Creates amenities that enrich the experience of living in Lincoln
  - 4.1. Provides households in town with local shopping, dining, recreation, education, health care, or services to disabled and elderly
  - 4.2. Promotes Lincoln's home-based and micro-businesses and the entrepreneurs who run them; for example, incubator facilities and business services
  - 4.3. Enhances the viability of Lincoln Station as a village center where scale may be critical to sustainability and rail access is available; for example mixed residential and commercial land uses
5. Enhances the long-term financial stability of town government
  - 5.1. Seeks to offset its direct and indirect costs to the town
    - 5.1.1. To that end, the town may pursue conventional tax revenues, developer contributions to finance needed expansion of public facilities or use of resources, and Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILOTS) from not-for-profit activities
  - 5.2. Provides additional net revenue to the town to fulfill public goals and objectives
6. Maintains Lincoln's long-standing special relationship with agriculture
  - 6.1. Supports current agricultural activities
  - 6.2. Involves Lincoln residents in the future of food and agriculture, including local sourcing, processing, and marketing of food
7. Enhances the educational orientation and resources of the town
  - 7.1. Provides educational resources for Lincoln residents
  - 7.2. Encourages "knowledge businesses" that offer training as well as employment to local citizens
  - 7.3. Encourages businesses interested in entering into private-public partnerships with Lincoln's educational and cultural institutions (schools, library, museums)

8. Promotes the equitable sharing of burdens and enrichment among citizens
  - 8.1. Seeks ways to ensure that positive financial windfalls from rezoning for property owners are used to benefit the town and used to compensate neighbors negatively affected
    - 8.1.1. Compensation could include augmenting local amenities such as neighborhood open space, closure of some roads to outside traffic, traffic-calming strategies, as well as financial compensation or offers to purchase property at market rates
    - 8.1.2. Town government would negotiate vigorously and early to ensure that potential financial windfalls are recognized and addressed
9. Maintains Lincoln's strategic use of open space
  - 9.1. Facilitates recreation and exercise as well as connections among citizens by creating a seamless network of open space and trails
  - 9.2. Protects water sources
  - 9.3. Provides habitat for wildlife
  - 9.4. Uses open space when necessary to create buffers between different types of land uses
10. Enhances social connection and civic engagement among citizens and among neighborhoods
  - 10.1. Preserves and enhances unique neighborhood resources, capabilities, and character
  - 10.2. Creates opportunities for spontaneous social interactions among citizens
  - 10.3. Provides opportunities for healthy out-of-school socializing and activities for the town's children of all ages
  - 10.4. Reinforces the identity of the Lincoln community as a whole
  - 10.5. Promotes involvement of the community in town government
11. Helps the town contribute positively to the region
  - 11.1. Creates assets that meet regional needs

- 11.2. Improves regional relations
- 11.3. Fosters regional health and sustainability