

Henniker 2015 Master Plan Update September 9, 2015 - Adopted



Chapter One

A Vision for Henniker

The Visioning Process

RSA 674:2, which sets forth the purpose and description of a master plan states that, at a minimum, a master plan shall include a vision and land use section. Section (a) states “*a vision section that serves to direct the other sections of the plan. This section shall contain a set of statements which articulate the desires of the citizens affected by the master plan, not only for their locality but for the region and the whole state. It shall contain a set of guiding principles and priorities to implement that vision.*”

A number of outreach efforts have been taken of the last few years to engage the public in the master plan process. In April 2009, working with the UNH Cooperative Extension, a Community Profile event took place involving many stakeholders and some 60 residents partaking in the two day event. This step involved engaging Henniker’s citizens and getting their input to develop community supported components such as: Informed Citizen Participation, Fostering Healthy Families, Community Service, Economic Vitality, Sense of Community and Working Landscape. To obtain additional community input, the Planning Board developed a comprehensive survey which was mailed to over 1,100 residents, as well as being made available on the town’s website. The surveys were collected over a 6 week period and resulted in 483 responses; a 41% response rate!

Visioning Process Highlights

From the data received in the various outreach efforts, a few trends emerged that had strong support from the vast majority of the respondents.

When asked “Why do you feel Henniker is a desirable place to live?” the top responses included the following:

- a. Small town/rural atmosphere
- b. Scenic beauty/natural resources
- c. People/community spirit
- d. Proximity to New Hampshire cities
- e. Historic Character

Overall Community Vision

The following points are intended to reflect the vision of the citizens of Henniker regarding the overall growth and development of the town. They are the overarching characteristics that define the quality of life, citizenry and social fabric of the community. The citizens of Henniker want a town with the following characteristics:

Growth and Development

- Henniker residents recognize that growth is inevitable and wish to develop a strong Master Plan and alter the zoning as needed to direct and regulate this growth.
- The historic character of downtown plays a strong role in Henniker’s identity.
- Henniker’s existing growth rate is realistic in relation to other towns in the area.

Economic Vitality

- A diverse, vibrant economy is essential in order to have a diverse tax base.
- Tourism and recreational related businesses should be supported and encouraged.
- The Town's relationship with New England College should be strengthened.

The Natural Environment

- The Contoocook River is an important natural resources that helps to define the Town; 86% of survey respondents feel the River is an important recreational resource.
- Henniker has a wealth of natural assets that should be protected and enhanced, while at the same time supporting economic vitality. They are:
 - Water resources including town aquifers, wetlands and shore land buffers, rivers and streams.
 - Expanded access to open space lands for a variety of passive recreation uses including hiking, hunting, fishing, ATV use and mountain biking.
 - Forests for sources of timber and fuel wood, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, recreation, and education opportunities.
 - Improving access to rivers and ponds should be a priority along with the development of hiking trails

Population & Housing

- The diversification of housing should be encouraged.
- The reuse and adaptation for older housing should be encouraged.

Traffic & Transportation

- Pedestrian safety should be encouraged through sidewalks in residential neighborhoods and well-delineated pedestrian crosswalks.
- A roadway surface asset management system offers an efficient means of keeping Henniker's road network in good condition.
- Key roads and intersections in the community should be analyzed for necessary improvements.

Water Resources

- The protection of aquifers is critical to meeting the current and future needs for water.
- Protecting the contribution areas around the town wells is of paramount importance.
- Areas of possible future water supplies as well as possible new service areas need to be identified and studied.

Historic Resources

- Historic resources are important to Henniker because they provide a tangible link to the past, thereby creating a sense of continuity of time and place.

Chapter Two

Community Survey

In the fall of 2013 1,190 surveys were mailed to town residents. In addition the survey was posted on the town's website and copies were made available at Town Hall. A total of 483 responses were received which was an impressive response rate of 41%. (77% responded with paper surveys and 23% responded digitally.)

The detailed outline of the survey responses are listed below, but the major take-ways from the survey can be summarized as follows:

- A majority of the respondents were over the age of 46, have lived in town 10 years or longer and own a home.
- Only a ¼ of the respondents attend town meeting every year, with a large majority of those residents preferring to have the option to vote privately.
- A clear majority appreciates Henniker's small town/rural atmosphere along with its scenic beauty & natural resources.
- Henniker's existing growth rate is realistic compared to neighboring towns and commercial/industrial uses should be encouraged to broaden the tax base.
- The addition of new business franchises and a major grocery store were not supported as new land uses in the community.
- Housing for those over the age of 55 is supported, along with allowing in-law apartments (which is currently permitted).
- The current level and quality of community services are adequate.
- The Contoocook River is a very important resource to the community.
- Current road conditions are rated as fair.
- Town officials should increase efforts to promote economic development, retail/commercial growth, along with industrial development.
- Further development of hiking trails and improved access to area ponds/rivers and streams is encouraged.
- Residents believe services provided by the Fire Department, Library, Police, Ambulance and snow removal are rated as "good".
- Existing levels of funding for town services are adequate.

Written comments relative to the survey are included in the Appendix.

2013 Master Plan Survey

1,190 mailed
483 total responses (41% response rate)
77% responded via paper
23% responded via online/digital

Part 1 – Demographics

1. What is your age group?

a.	18 to 25	8	2%
b.	26 to 35	35	7%
c.	36 to 45	62	13%
d.	46 to 55	126	26%
e.	56 to 65	139	29%
f.	Over 65	111	23%
	Did not respond	2	0%

2. How long have you lived in Henniker?

a.	Less than 5 years	67	14%
b.	5 to 10 years	67	14%
c.	10 to 20 years	117	24%
d.	Over 20 years	226	47%
	Did not respond	6	1%

3. Regarding your residency in Henniker, are you a:

a.	Home owner	445	92%
b.	Renter	18	4%
c.	Other	11	2%
	Did not respond	9	2%

4. How often do you attend the annual Henniker Town Meeting?

a.	Every year	118	24%
b.	Every other year or less	106	22%
c.	Only when there is a major town issue	114	24%
d.	I never attend Henniker Town Meetings	134	28%
	Did not respond	11	2%

5. Is privacy when voting at a Town Meeting an issue for you?

a.	Yes	157	33%
b.	No	238	49%
c.	No opinion	76	16%
	Did not respond	12	2%

5a. If you answered “yes” to the previous question, would you be inclined to attend more Town Meetings if you could vote privately on issues that concern you?

a.	Yes	114	24%
b.	No	19	4%
c.	No opinion	23	5%
	Did not respond	327	68%

6. Have you attended or been a participant in any of the following Henniker Town Government Meetings within the last 5 years (Check all that apply)?			
a.	Selectmen Meeting	155	32%
b.	Planning Board Meeting	90	19%
c.	Zoning Board Meeting	79	16%
7. Are you involved in any type of community service activity that serves the residents of Henniker such as the Rotary Club, a town committee, Lions Club, Chamber of Commerce, Henniker Food Pantry, etc?			
a.	Yes	180	37%
b.	No	283	59%
	Did not respond	20	4%
<i>Part 2 – Henniker, Henniker Town Services and Economics</i>			
1. Why do you feel Henniker is a desirable place to live? (Please check all that are important)			
a.	Small town/Rural atmosphere	436	90%
b.	Proximity to New Hampshire cities	239	49%
c.	Education system	166	34%
d.	Employment opportunities	21	4%
e.	Effective town government	51	11%
f.	Town services	93	19%
g.	Historical character	226	47%
h.	Business opportunities	26	5%
i.	People/community spirit	271	56%
j.	Town recreational services	100	21%
k.	Privately owned recreational services	42	9%
l.	Scenic beauty/Natural Resources	343	71%
m.	Other	37	8%
2. In your opinion, which statement best characterizes Henniker's growth rate?			
a.	Henniker is growing too fast	45	9%
b.	Henniker is not growing fast enough	66	14%
c.	Henniker's growth is realistic in relation to other towns in the area	214	44%
d.	Growth is not an issue in Henniker	74	15%
e.	No opinion	75	16%
	Did not respond	9	2%
3. Are you in favor of Henniker trying to encourage commercial/industrial uses (non-residential growth) to broaden its tax base?			
a.	Yes	382	79%
b.	No	55	11%
c.	No opinion	32	7%
	Did not respond	14	3%

4a. If your response was “yes”, which of the following commercial enterprises would you like to see more of in Henniker?					
Commercial Enterprise		Like	Dislike	No Opinion	Did not respond
a.	Professional offices	321 66%	10 2%	28 6%	124 26%
b.	Light industrial uses	280 58%	44 9%	29 6%	130 27%
c.	Business franchises (e.g., pharmacy, grocery store, sporting goods store, auto parts store, etc.)	183 38%	115 24%	38 8%	147 30%
d.	Restaurants	297 61%	25 5%	36 7%	125 26%
e.	Outdoor retailers/recreational rental firms	246 51%	23 5%	68 14%	146 30%
f.	Retail businesses	271 56%	35 7%	44 9%	133 28%
g.	A major grocery store	164 34%	141 29%	37 8%	141 29%
h.	Service businesses (e.g., electrical, plumbing, etc.)	250 52%	25 5%	63 13%	145 30%
i.	Home businesses	272 56%	17 4%	56 12%	138 29%
j.	Recreational businesses	291 60%	11 2%	41 8%	140 29%
k.	Tourism-related businesses (e.g., hotel/motel, Bed & Breakfast, etc.)	288 60%	18 4%	44 9%	133 28%
5. Are you in favor of Henniker trying to encourage diversification of available housing (other than single family homes) to broaden its tax base?					
a.	Yes			219	45%
b.	No			172	36%
c.	No opinion			72	15%
	Did not respond			20	4%
5a. If your response was “yes”, which of the following types of housing would you like to see in Henniker?					
Housing Type		Like	Dislike	No Opinion	Did not respond
a.	Manufactured homes on individual lots	91 19%	64 13%	36 7%	292 60%
b.	Two family duplexes	143 30%	36 7%	20 4%	284 59%
c.	Housing for persons over 55 years of age (i.e., an adult community)	188 39%	8 2%	10 2%	277 57%
d.	Condominiums	140 29%	35 7%	19 4%	289 60%
e.	New apartment buildings	83 17%	75 16%	27 6%	298 62%

f.	Cluster developments (single family homes on smaller lots with remaining area as open space)	139 29%	37 8%	18 4%	289 60%
g.	Accessory dwelling units/In-law apartments*	164 34%	14 3%	24 5%	281 58%
h.	Conversion of large homes into apartments	99 20%	61 13%	36 7%	287 59%
* An accessory dwelling unit/In-law apartment is defined as a separate apartment that is part of a property with an existing single family home.					
6. Do you feel that the Town of Henniker has a satisfactory relationship with NEC?					
a.	Yes			260	54%
b.	No			91	19%
c.	No opinion			113	23%
	Did not respond			19	4%
7. Taking into account issues associated with funding, do you feel that the community services currently provided by the Town of Henniker should be:					
a.	Increased			88	18%
b.	Decreased			47	10%
c.	Remain as is			241	50%
d.	No opinion			78	16%
	Did not respond			29	6%
8. Regarding the quality of services already provided by the town, do you feel that the Town of Henniker should:					
a.	Improve the quality of services			91	19%
b.	Cut back on the quality			15	3%
c.	Maintain the current level of quality			272	56%
d.	No opinion			63	13%
	Did not respond			42	9%
Part 3 – Conservation/Recreation					
1. Do you use the Contoocook River for any of the following activities? If yes, how often?					
		Yes, Weekly	Yes, Monthly	Yes, Yearly	No Did not respond
a.	Fishing	21 4%	43 9%	77 16%	202 42% 140 29%
b.	Swimming	20 4%	24 5%	56 12%	227 47% 156 32%
c.	Hiking	73 15%	83 17%	55 11%	154 32% 191 40%
d.	Canoeing, kayaking, boating	19 4%	68 14%	88 18%	177 37% 131 27%
e.	Birding	45 9%	30 6%	20 4%	223 46% 165 34%
f.	Nature observation	132 27%	69 14%	34 7%	133 28% 115 24%
2. Do you feel the Contoocook River is an important recreational resource for the Town of					

Henniker?						
a.	Yes	416	86%			
b.	No	18	4%			
c.	No opinon	42	9%			
	Did not respond	7	1%			
3. Do you feel the Town Forests (there are 3) are an important recreational resource for the Town of Henniker?						
a.	Yes	326	67%			
b.	No	41	8%			
c.	No opinion	99	20%			
	Did not respond	17	4%			
Part 4 – Transportation						
1. In your opinion, what is the general condition of roads and sidewalks in Henniker?						
a.	Good	155	32%			
b.	Fair	217	45%			
c.	Poor	87	18%			
d.	No opinion	3	1%			
	Did not respond	21	4%			
2. Do you have access to broadband internet (DSL, cable) that is adequate for your needs?						
a.	Yes	397	82%			
b.	No	48	10%			
c.	No opinon	25	5%			
	Did not respond	13	3%			
3. At this time, many parts of Henniker do not have high speed broadband internet service. Would you support the Selectmen initiating a town-wide master plan and funding mechanism that would expand high-speed broadband internet service to rural areas of the community, keeping in mind that the service provider may need to add an additional 1 to 2 dollar charge to the current monthly cost paid by existing subscribers in order to provide greater town coverage?						
a.	Yes	199	41%			
b.	No	155	32%			
c.	No opinion	102	21%			
	Did not respond	27	6%			
Part 6 - Town Issues						
1. To help Town Officials direct their efforts to meet the needs of the community and its residents, please provide your opinion on the level of effort that should be directed toward the listed issues.						
		Henniker's effort should be:				
		More	Same	Less	No Opinon	Did not respond
a.	Preservation of farmland	180 37%	205 42%	20 4%	44 9%	34 7%
b.	Protection of woodlands & wildlife habitat	196 41%	210 43%	21 4%	26 5%	30 6%
c.	Promotion of commercial/retail growth	248	126	41	24	44

		51%	26%	8%	5%	9%
d.	Encourage the development of light industry	247 51%	102 21%	60 12%	33 7%	41 8%
e.	Expansion of town forests and conservation lands	163 34%	197 41%	55 11%	28 6%	40 8%
f.	Further development of hiking/walking trails	259 54%	135 28%	24 5%	29 6%	36 7%
g.	Improve access to ponds, rivers and streams	258 53%	139 29%	24 5%	21 4%	41 8%
h.	Expansion of town water system	61 13%	197 41%	73 15%	107 22%	45 9%
i.	Expansion of town sewer system	61 13%	189 39%	73 15%	111 23%	49 10%
j.	Preservation of historic sites & buildings	130 27%	257 53%	36 7%	25 5%	35 7%
k.	Operation of parks & recreational facilities	171 35%	227 47%	23 5%	25 5%	37 8%
l.	Economic development	270 56%	132 27%	16 3%	30 6%	35 7%

Part 7 – Community Services

1. Please rate each service listed in the table below and in general terms, follow with your opinion regarding the amount of funding the Town should spend on each service.

		Please "rate" each service.				
Section 1		Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion	Did not respond
a.	Animal control	169 35%	77 16%	36 7%	160 33%	41 8%
b.	Building code enforcement	119 25%	109 23%	43 9%	158 33%	54 11%
c.	Cemetery care	245 51%	66 14%	7 1%	123 25%	42 9%
d.	Fire protection	364 75%	33 7%	4 1%	47 10%	35 7%
e.	Garbage disposal and recycling	331 69%	52 11%	26 5%	41 8%	33 7%
f.	Health regulations and enforcement	130 27%	83 17%	24 5%	202 42%	44 9%
g.	Library	339 70%	54 11%	8 2%	50 10%	32 7%
h.	Natural resource conservation	233 48%	103 21%	10 2%	92 19%	45 9%
i.	Parks & recreation	221 46%	138 29%	25 5%	58 12%	41 8%
j.	Planning regulation administration and	136	119	29	150	49

	enforcement	28%	25%	6%	31%	10%
k.	Police protection	355 73%	57 12%	4 1%	32 7%	35 7%
l.	Rescue/ambulance service	376 78%	21 4%	6 1%	44 9%	36 7%
m.	Road maintenance	181 37%	181 37%	75 16%	12 2%	34 7%
n.	School system	258 53%	104 22%	21 4%	63 13%	37 8%
o.	Snow removal	325 67%	80 17%	18 4%	25 5%	35 7%
p.	Welfare	101 21%	53 11%	43 9%	240 50%	46 10%
q.	Zoning administration & enforcement	117 24%	94 19%	28 6%	193 40%	51 11%
		How much money should the Town spend on each service?				
Section 2		More	Same	Less	No Opinon	Did not respond
a.	Animal control	14 3%	235 49%	45 9%	102 21%	87 18%
b.	Building code enforcement	40 8%	189 39%	60 12%	95 20%	99 20%
c.	Cemetery care	14 3%	269 56%	19 4%	89 18%	92 19%
d.	Fire protection	44 9%	267 55%	35 7%	51 11%	86 18%
e.	Garbage disposal and recycling	54 11%	274 57%	22 5%	48 10%	85 18%
f.	Health regulations and enforcement	34 7%	188 39%	36 7%	121 25%	104 22%
g.	Library	75 16%	241 50%	43 9%	41 8%	83 17%
h.	Natural resource conservation	86 18%	192 40%	46 10%	66 14%	93 19%
i.	Parks & recreation	126 26%	188 39%	33 7%	41 8%	95 20%
j.	Planning regulation administration and enforcement	28 6%	170 35%	75 16%	99 20%	111 23%
k.	Police protection	57 12%	218 45%	89 18%	35 7%	84 17%
l.	Rescue/ambulance service	58 12%	266 55%	25 5%	45 9%	89 18%
m.	Road maintenance	155 32%	187 39%	24 5%	29 6%	88 18%

n.	School system	70 <i>14%</i>	187 <i>39%</i>	90 <i>19%</i>	52 <i>11%</i>	84 <i>17%</i>
o.	Snow removal	38 <i>8%</i>	288 <i>60%</i>	24 <i>5%</i>	46 <i>10%</i>	87 <i>18%</i>
p.	Welfare	54 <i>11%</i>	114 <i>24%</i>	72 <i>15%</i>	142 <i>29%</i>	101 <i>21%</i>
q.	Zoning administration & enforcement	14 <i>3%</i>	178 <i>37%</i>	72 <i>15%</i>	117 <i>24%</i>	102 <i>21%</i>

Chapter Three

Population and Economics

Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to delineate the elements that make up the economic character of the Town of Henniker. The need to maintain flourishing workplaces is of great importance to many communities throughout New Hampshire. Businesses need to provide reasonable wages and benefits to workers and provide those workers with opportunities to develop their skills through training, education, and other forms of assistance to prepare for the community's future needs. Government, business, and public service organizations are all important in attracting new investment and in developing new businesses that suit the character of the community.

Population Characteristics

Historical Population Trends

Changes in the population of any community are influenced by a variety of factors ranging from changes in the local economic base, national events and transportation improvements. From 1960 to 2010 Henniker had seen a growth in population of 3,200 people. During the seventies and eighties growth was rapid, while the last 20 years population growth has been more moderate.

Henniker Historical Population, 1960-2013

Year	Population	Percent Change
1960	1,636	
1970	2,348	43.52%
1980	3,246	38.25%
1990	4,151	27.90%
2000	4,433	6.54%
2010	4,836	9%
2013	4,828 ¹	-

Source: US Census

Regional Population Trends

Over the last 10 years Henniker had the fourth largest increase in population in the region which shows a wide range of growth rates among neighboring communities.

Henniker and Abutting Communities Population Trends 1980-2010

Town	1980 Population	1990 Population	2000 Population	2010 Population	% Growth 2000-2010
Henniker	3,246	4,151	4,433	4,836	9%
Bradford	1,115	1,405	1,454	1,650	13.4%
Deering	1,041	1,707	1,875	1,912	1.9%
Hillsborough	3,437	4,498	4,928	6,011	21.9%
Hopkinton	3,861	4,806	5,399	5,589	3.5%
Warner	1,963	2,250	2,760	2,833	2.6%
Weare	3,232	6,193	7,776	8,785	12.9%
Merrimack Co.	98,302	120,005	136,225	146,445	7.5%

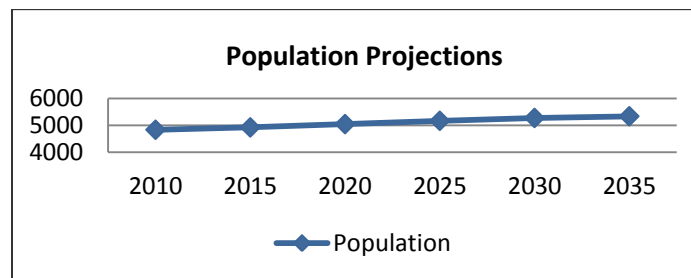
Source: US Census

¹ Office of Energy & Planning estimate

Population Projections

The Office of Energy and Planning periodically produces population projections for both towns and counties in the State. The projections are calculated in five-year intervals, and are consistent with the county population projections in the report titled: State of New Hampshire, Regional Planning Commissions, Office of Energy and Planning - County Population Projections, 2013 By Age and Sex.

Henniker's growth rate is projected to remain modest over the next thirty years, increasing only 10% over this timeline.



Age Characteristics

Understanding population trends by age group can help communities allocate resources for public infrastructure and services to meet the needs of the population. The age group in Henniker with the largest percentage of people is the 45-54 years age bracket. The percentage of “school age” population decreased from the 2000 Census and the percentage of those over the age of 65 increased from 7.9% to 9%. Along with the rest of the New Hampshire and New England, Henniker's population is “graying”.

Henniker Population by Age Group, 2000-2010

Age Group	2000 Population	Group as % of 2000 Population	2010 Population	Group as % of 2010 Population
Under 5	219	4.9%	202	4.1%
5 to 9 Years	304	6.8%	256	5.2%
10 to 14 Years	384	8.6%	257	5.3%
15 to 19 Years	457	10.3%	547	11.3%
5-19 Years	1,364	30.7%	1,262	26%
20 to 24 Years	485	10.9%	692	14.3%
25 to 34 Years	480	10.8%	454	9.3%
35 to 44 Years	800	18.0%	519	10.7%
45 to 54 Years	677	15.2%	801	16.5%
55 to 59 Years	164	3.7%	402	8.3%
60 to 64 Years	111	2.5%	270	5.5%
65 to 74 Years	188	4.2%	257	5.3%
Over 75	164	3.7%	179	3.7%
65 & over	352	7.9%	436	9%
Total	4,433	100%	4,836	
Median Age	33.1		35.2	

Source: US Census

School Age Population

The town's ageing population, along with the "great recession" that began in 2009 that curtailed new home construction has influenced school enrollments over the last five years. Overall student enrollments have decreased by 10.3% since 2009, while the high school bracket declined 23.9%. This downward tendency in school enrollments has been seen throughout New Hampshire and is not a trend limited to the Henniker school system. Given current enrollment trends, capacity concerns at both the Henniker Community School² and John Stark Regional School District will not be an issue for the foreseeable future.

School Enrollments – 2009-2014

	Pre-School	K	1-8	9-12	Total
2009	20	26	371	238	655
2010	20	46	344	214	624
2011	28	39	345	173	585
2012	27	47	333	162	569
2013	31	48	339	166	584
2014	29	44	333	181	587

Income Characteristics of Residents

The income characteristics of households, families, and individuals tell a tale of the economic conditions within a community. Income and poverty levels of a community serve as indicators of the types of social services that a municipality may require.

Median Household and Family Income

Household income is the total income of people living in one household. Family income is the total income of all family members who consider themselves members of one household. Median income is the middle figure in a series from lowest to highest. Henniker has a comparable median household and family income with communities.

Median Household Income 1990-2010

Towns	Median Household Income 1990	Median Household Income 2000	Median Household Income 2010	Median Household Income % Change 1990-2010
Henniker	\$36,951	\$50,288	\$65,429	77%
Bradford	\$36,667	\$49,018	\$63,875	74%
Deering	\$36,302	\$48,750	\$66,875	66%
Hillsborough	\$34,167	\$44,500	\$55,077	61%
Hopkinton	\$46,810	\$59,583	\$84,911	81.3%
Warner	\$37,917	\$44,142	\$65,288	72.1%
Weare	\$41,647	\$59,924	\$84,890	103.8%
Merrimack Co.	\$28,012	\$48,522	\$65,487	133.7%
State of NH	\$36,329	\$49,467	\$64,925	78.7%

Source: US Census

² Community School estimated capacity for grades PS – 8 is 638 and John Stark is 1,248.

Median Family Income 1990-2010

Towns	Median Family Income 1990	Median Family Income 2000	Median Family Income 2010	Median Family Income % Change 1990-2010
Henniker	\$45,153	\$59,527	\$74,167	64.2%
Bradford	\$41,106	\$57,083	\$74,167	80.4%
Deering	\$38,750	\$53,889	\$72,150	86.1%
Hillsborough	\$37,122	\$50,445	\$57,420	54.6%
Hopkinton	\$52,407	\$69,737	\$88,796	69.4%
Warner	\$43,317	\$50,926	\$70,125	61.8%
Weare	\$42,205	\$62,661	\$91,750	117.3%
Merrimack Co.	\$41,018	\$56,842	\$80,161	95.4%
State of NH	\$41,628	\$57,575	\$79,488	90.9%

Source: US Census

Goals/Objectives/Recommendations

Goal: To encourage a diverse economic base that is appropriate in scale, services, and impacts which benefit the Town of Henniker.

Objective: Be proactive in the recruitment and retention of economic development opportunities in Henniker.

Issue: Allowing and encouraging a diversity of businesses to locate and expand in Henniker will help to create a well-balanced and healthy community for all residents.

Goal: Have areas in Henniker be appropriately zoned for commercial development.

Recommendations:

1. Review the table of uses for each Commercial Zone to ensure that the permitted uses are compatible with the goal of the Zone and other uses allowed in the Zone.
2. Investigate the creation of a commercial build-out analysis to see the potential of full development of the commercially zoned land within Town.

Goal: Commercial development should be compatible with the size and scale of the surrounding environment and the character of the community.

Issue: The outside façade of a structure tells the story and history of a community. Henniker has a rich history that is consistent with most small New England Villages. This is something to be proud of and encouraged.

Goal: Protect the aesthetic character of the community and to improve the quality of new development constructed within Town.

Goal: Ensure that new commercial and industrial structures and uses in town are properly screened from abutting developments so as not to diminish property values and the visual character of the neighborhoods.

Issue: Screening is an important aspect of commercial and industrial development designs, can help preserve property values of abutting parcels, and can enhance the overall aesthetic impact of such developments.

Issue: Lighting is a critical component of non-residential site design that is used for advertising, safety, and design purposes.

Goal: To have community support services and infrastructure available to attract and retain desirable businesses.

Issue: To encourage economic development within the community, basic services and infrastructure need to be provided and remain accessible. These services benefit the businesses as well as the residents within the community.

Chapter Four

Housing

Introduction

The purpose of the Housing Chapter is to identify Henniker's current housing inventory and to discuss short-term housing needs. The type and availability of housing within a community are important indicators of the quality of life.

The overall goal is to maintain and enhance the current quality of Henniker's housing while promoting the provision of other types of housing to meet the social and economic needs of current and future residents. The vision of the Town is to maintain its rural character and meet the needs of a growing population in a fair and acceptable manner.

Housing Demographics

1980-2012 Housing Units

By understanding past housing trends, Henniker can better predict future housing growth and needs. Since 1980 construction of new housing in Henniker has been growing, and outside of Weare, was the fastest growing community in the region over the last 12 years expanding by 24.4% during that timeframe. By comparison, Hopkinton and Deering saw little growth during this same time period.

Number of Housing Units, 1980 - 2012

Town	1980 Housing Units	1990 Housing Units	2000 Housing Units	2012 Housing Units	% Change 2000 -2012
Henniker	1,060	1,558	1,679	2,089	24.4%
Bradford	520	757	762	817	7.2%
Deering	400	757	933	945	1.2%
Hillsborough	1,620	2,157	2,323	2,809	20.9%
Hopkinton	1,396	1,924	2,210	2,431	1%
Warner	765	1,039	1,228	1,363	10.9%
Weare	1,243	2,417	2,828	3,577	26.4%

Source: 1980-2012 Census & American Fact Finder

Housing Stock Composite

A well-balanced housing stock is important for all communities. A diversified housing stock provides for housing opportunities for all members of the community at various income levels and personal needs. As of 2012, Henniker's housing stock estimate was comprised of 61.3% single family housing units, 9.9% manufactured housing units, and 28.6% multifamily housing units. Henniker has the highest percentage of multi-family housing in the region and has ample areas within the community zoned appropriately to allow for a variety of housing options.

Housing Composites for Henniker and Abutting Communities, 2012

Town	Total Units of Housing	# Single-Family Units	Single Family Units as % of Total	# Manuf. Housing Units	Manuf. Housing Units as % of Total	# Multi-Family Units ³	Multi-Family Units as % of Total
Henniker	2,089	1,282	61.3%	208	9.9%	599	28.6%
Bradford	817	740	90.5%	24	2.9%	53	6.4%
Deering	945	751	79.5%	141	14.9%	53	5.6%
Hillsborough	2,809	2,134	75.9%	194	6.9%	481	17.1%
Hopkinton	2,431	2,147	88.3%	67	2.7%	217	8.9%
Warner	1,363	1,008	73.9%	80	5.8%	275	20.1%
Weare	3,577	2,990	83.5%	166	4.6%	421	11.7%

Source: US Census & American Fact Finder

Owner-Occupied and Renter-Occupied Information

Knowing the quantity of both owner-occupied and rental housing units in a community helps create a picture of the types of housing options available. In 2012 64.2% of Henniker's occupied housing units owner-occupied and 35.9% renter-occupied. These figures differ from abutting communities in that Henniker has a much larger percentage of renter-occupied housing units is most likely driven by being a college community.

Breakdown of Occupied Housing Units, 1990-2012

Towns	2000			2012		
	Total Occupied Units	Owner-Occupied (%)	Renter-Occupied (%)	Total Occupied Units	Owner-Occupied (%)	Renter-Occupied (%)
Henniker	1,585	1,083 (68.3%)	502 (31.7%)	1,734	1,114 (64.2%)	620 (35.9%)
Bradford	803	444 (55.3%)	115 (14.3%)	609	521 (85%)	88 (14.4%)
Deering	827	647 (78.2%)	66 (8.0%)	714	635 (88.9%)	79 (12.4%)
Hillsborough	2,335	1,793 (76.8%)	542 (23.2%)	2,260	1,753 (77.5%)	507 (22.4%)
Hopkinton	2,084	1,799 (86.3%)	285 (13.7%)	2,169	1,942 (89.5%)	227 (10.4%)
Warner	1,048	797 (76.0%)	251 (24.0%)	1,058	830 (78.4%)	228 (21.5%)
Weare	2,618	2,278 (87.0%)	340 (13.0%)	2,992	2,781 (92.9%)	211 (7%)

Source: 2000 Census and 2012 American Fact Finder

Household Size

The average household size in a community is an indicator of how the population is arranged. Henniker had an owner-occupied and renter-occupied average household size of 2.91 and 1.54 in 1990. Since 2000, the owner occupied household size has increased slightly and renter occupied has decreased. In the region, Weare and Henniker have the highest occupied household size and Deering has the highest renter occupied household size.

Average Household Size, 2000-2012

³ Includes duplex units.

Town	2000		2012	
	Owner-Occupied Avg. Household Size	Renter-Occupied Avg. Household Size	Owner-Occupied Avg. Household Size	Renter-Occupied Avg. Household Size
Henniker	2.80	1.94	2.91	1.54
Bradford	2.65	2.24	2.34	2.78
Deering	2.54	2.33	2.55	3.04
Hillsborough	2.69	2.18	2.65	2.52
Hopkinton	2.70	1.92	2.64	2.14
Warner	2.68	1.98	2.71	2.06
Weare	3.03	2.59	2.95	2.66

Source: 2000 Census and American Fact Finder

Trends in the Cost of Housing

The Great Recession of 2009 that impacted New Hampshire and the entire nation can be seen the trend of local home sales. Between 2008 & 2009 home prices dropped 27.5% over one year period and bottomed out in 2010. Although home prices have recovered somewhat, they still lag well behind the 2008 average selling price. Actual home sales also hit lows in 2010, but have returned to more reasonable levels over the last few years.

2008-2014 Average Home Sale Prices & Homes Sold

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 ⁴
Average Selling Price	\$257,771	\$186,851	\$165,939	\$176,178	\$182,919	\$202,019	\$215,731
Closed Sales	33	37	22	40	50	46	29

Workforce Housing

The State's Workforce Housing Statute RSA 674:58 – 61 became effective January 1, 2010. The law requires that communities provide a “reasonable and realistic opportunity for the development of workforce housing”. This includes allowing “workforce housing to be located in a majority, but not necessarily all of the land area that is zoned to permit residential uses”. Workforce housing is defined as “housing which is intended for sale and which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 100% of the median income for a 4-person household”. Based upon a figures produced by the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA), for 2014 it has been estimated that for the Henniker region the median income is \$83,300, which equate to an “affordable home purchase price not exceeding \$268,000⁵. In addition, the definition also means “rental housing which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 60% of the area's median income for a 3 person household. For Henniker, that equates to a \$44,980 income and a gross monthly rent⁶ not exceeding \$1,120.

Workforce housing applications that are denied or are approved with conditions that have a substantial adverse effect on the viability of a project have the right to petition the court for a hearing within 6 months. If a hearing is not granted within this time frame, a referee may be appointed to decide the case.

⁴ Sales As of Oct. 1.

⁵ New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, based upon a 5% down payment, & a 30 year mortgage at 3.98f%.

⁶ Rent includes utility costs.

The statute does provide a provision that allows communities to take into consideration their existing housing stock if it is “sufficient to accommodate its fair share of the current and reasonable foreseeable regional need”. If such a finding is determined, then “the municipality shall be deemed to be in compliance with....the statute”.

Based upon a review of recent single family home sales, as outlined in Table above, at this time the average home price is well below the Workforce Housing “affordable” criteria of \$268,000. Every year, NHHFA conducts a statewide rental cost survey and for Henniker, the median rent for all units was \$1,012 a month and the two bedroom median rent was \$1,067; both of which are under the Statute guidelines for affordability (\$1,120). Given these findings, the Town of Henniker is in compliance with the Workforce Housing statutory requirements as the existing housing stock can accommodate its fair share of current and reasonable foreseeable regional need.

Empty-Nester and Elderly Housing

Elderly housing ordinances are increasingly becoming a way that communities are addressing the need for specialized housing for the elderly without allowing for general multi-family housing. These usually take the form of Overlay Zones. In a few communities, actual parcels of land have been zoned for elderly housing.

In most cases, Elderly Housing Ordinances provide for a far higher density than allowed in the underlying zone and contain a separate set of regulations and restrictions. Some of the types of regulations include a provision for recreational and community facilities on-site, open space and walking trails, and on-site medical and management staff. Many times, when an elderly housing facility is developed by a non-profit entity, the town will negotiate a payment in lieu of taxes so that any increase in community services due to the development is not solely the responsibility of the town. Empty-nester housing refers to housing for people 55 years old and above.

Henniker currently has one elderly housing development (Rush Square), which is a subsidized development. There are no zoning regulations pertaining to the development of elderly housing currently in Henniker.

By encouraging empty-nester and/or elderly housing development, Henniker can retain residents within the community who, for a variety of reasons, may be looking for a different type of housing arrangement.

Building Code and Inspection

In the spring of 2002, the New Hampshire legislature adopted statewide building codes that are to be enforced in every municipality. The Statewide Building Code includes the model codes of the International Building Code 2009, the International Plumbing Code 2009, the International Mechanical Code 2009, the International Energy Conservation Code 2009, and the National Electric Code 2011. The adoption of a Statewide Building Code will insure that the state has a uniform, modern construction code, which will protect public health, safety, and welfare.

The State Building Code applies to any new construction or renovations after September 2003 in the state of New Hampshire, other than single-family, two-family, and town house style developments. The issuance of permits and the collection of fees related to the state building code are reserved for the municipalities. If Henniker does not adopt an enforcement mechanism for the state building code, the contractor of the building/structure shall notify the state fire marshal and be required to meet the minimum requirements of the building code. The

municipality will not be held liable for any failure on the part of the contractor to comply with the provisions of the state building code in that situation. The Henniker Selectmen have the power to adopt any additional regulations provided that the regulations are not less stringent than the requirements of the State Building Code or the State Fire Code.

Goals/Objectives/Recommendations

Goal: To encourage sound housing development that meets the needs of current and future residents and with student populations through a variety of housing options, while protecting the natural resources and rural character of the Town.

Objective: Ensure that current town regulations support sound housing development.

Issue: Manufactured housing is an affordable, convenient, and popular type of housing in New Hampshire.

Issue: With the aging of the “baby boom” generation, the demand for quality elderly housing will continue to increase in Henniker.

Recommendations:

1. Consider adopting an Elderly Housing Ordinance provision into the Henniker Zoning Ordinance.
2. Review and update the Manufactured Housing Ordinance, multi-family housing regulations, and the Open Space Residential Development Ordinance to ensure that they are meeting the stated goals of the regulations.
3. Prepare to enforce the statewide building code and other codes, as appropriate, at the municipal level through the hiring of a professional building inspector and adoption of a fee schedule.
4. Research the zoning and tax revisions necessary to establish an Elderly Housing Overlay Zoning District and desired developments.

Chapter Five

Historic and Cultural Resources

Goals/Objectives/Recommendations

Goal: To protect and preserve the historical and cultural resources located in Henniker for future generations to enjoy and learn from.

Objective: To ensure cooperation among the various committees and organizations involved with historic preservation and cultural resources in Henniker.

Objective: To ensure that there are adequate resources made available for historic preservation and education.

Goal: Protect and highlight buildings and areas within Town with national historical and cultural significance by having them listed on the State Register.

Issue: Many historic and cultural resources within Town are of national importance and should be protected and preserved.

Goal: Educate the public about the local historic marker sites within the Town.

Issue: Many historic and cultural resources within the Town deserve to be highlighted and identified through local historic markers for the purpose of public education.

Goal: Protect and preserve/recondition gravel and scenic roads, the old stone bridge, and the railroad stations as historic transportation facilities.

Issue: The diversity of historic transportation methods, routes, and structures still evident in Henniker contributes to the Town's unique and historic atmosphere.

Recommendation:

Provide process to protect and preserve the existing gravel roads within Town from being paved or widened. Changes in these roads should not be made without considering the historic evidence that these roads provide.

Goal: To ensure that all historic resources about the Town of Henniker, its residents, or events are preserved and protected.

Issue: Maintaining a historical record of Henniker will help to maintain the sense of community that residents enjoy and cherish.

Chapter Six

Transportation

Goals/Objectives/Recommendations

Goal: To promote the improvement of public roads and economic development in Town; encourage a system of transportation that will meet the mobility needs of all local residents by providing for the efficient movement of people, goods, and services within Henniker and throughout the region; maintain a commitment to the rural and historic character of the community; and provide a well-maintained and safe transportation system that meets the functional and aesthetic needs of the community, in a cost-effective manner.

Objective: Continue to work with State NHDOT officials to explore intersection traffic solutions to increase safety and accommodate additional traffic volumes to the two NH Route 202/Old Concord Road intersections.

Strategies:

1. Work with both the NHDOT and the Town of Hopkinton to improve the safety of the Rt. 202/Old Concord Road/Rt. 127 intersection,
2. Work with the NHDOT to find long term traffic improvement solutions to the intersection of NH 202/Old Concord Road/Old Hopkinton Road.

Objective: Provide a highway and street system that will allow the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout Henniker.

Strategies:

1. Minimize adverse traffic impacts of "through traffic" on residential streets wherever viable alternatives can be provided.
2. Use traffic-calming measures to reduce speed and to direct traffic around neighborhoods.

Objective: Protect the rural character of Henniker's roads that are gravel and have scenic attributes.

Strategies:

1. Develop road and entrance standards for Henniker's more rural and scenic roads. These standards should be consistent with the character of these roadways, balancing scenic characteristics, safety, and sight lines.

Objective: The Town should develop and fund a long-term road repair and replacement program.

Strategies:

1. Explore revenue generating options for transportation projects that can be used for local transportation projects or for local match funding for State and Federal projects.
2. Establish a road resurfacing and improvement schedule that is recommended to and endorsed by the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen.

Objective: The Town should address safety, maintenance, and development concerns on Class V and Class VI roads, on a priority basis.

Strategies:

1. Class VI roads are important recreational assets, provide excellent walking opportunities, and should not be upgraded to Class V roads.

Goal: Identify major commuter roads used to enter and exit the community and work to make them more efficient and safe.

Issue: Understanding the commuting patterns of the labor force in the community can assist in planning roadway improvements that will make important travel routes more efficient, safe, and promote sound economic growth.

Recommendations:

1. Henniker should identify local residential roads that are not suited for heavy commuter traffic, and work to minimize this "through traffic" wherever viable alternatives can be provided.
2. Traffic counts should be reviewed and analyzed to identify roads that have shown an increase in traffic over the years.
3. Henniker should continue to have yearly traffic counts done on roads that they feel are of concern.

Goal: Investigate alternative modes of transportation to move people to and from their place of employment that are not single occupancy vehicles.

Recommendation:

1. Henniker should encourage and promote the State and Regional bicycle and pedestrian networks.

Goal: Create an infrastructure that allows people who work in Town to get to and from their place of employment in an economical, environmentally efficient, and timely manner.

Recommendation:

1. A local bicycle and pedestrian network should be developed that allows residents to access major points of interest in Town safely and efficiently.

Goal: To create a pedestrian infrastructure that would allow and facilitate safe, efficient, reliable, and continuous travel throughout Town.

Issue: Residents of Henniker value the rural and country atmosphere of the Town, yet there is a threat to that atmosphere from the increasing numbers of cars on the road and their associated speed, especially in the residential neighborhoods and in the downtown.

Recommendations:

1. Henniker should work with NHDOT regarding the placement and maintenance of crosswalks on State roads within Town.

2. Use innovative methods to increase safety, which could include such things as raised crosswalks, striped or colored sidewalks, increased signage, or walking paths separated from the road by landscaping.

Goal: To reduce the travel speed, as well as the volume, of motor vehicles on residential neighborhood roads within Town.

Recommendation:

1. Investigate the use of appropriate traffic calming measures to discourage high speeds and to direct traffic around neighborhoods.

Goal: To reduce the number of accidents in Town that may be caused by unsafe road conditions or poor transportation infrastructure.

Issue: Continue to monitor the quantity and location of accidents in the community in order to identify those areas along the community's roadways that are dangerous and need to be addressed.

Recommendations:

1. Henniker should identify and prioritize intersections that need improvement because of safety issues.
2. The Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Town Highway Superintendent should annually review accident locations and determine enhancements that could be made to improve safety. This list of enhancements should be submitted to the Town Highway Safety Committee, Planning Board, and Board of Selectmen for review and endorsement.

Goal: Protect and preserve the existing gravel roads within Town.

Issue: The diversity of roads in Henniker contributes to the Town's unique and historic atmosphere. Maintaining the gravel roads and roads with scenic attributes will further enhance the character of the community.

Recommendations:

1. Henniker should encourage the rural quality of gravel roads by limiting the size and scope of development that can occur on and adjacent to the gravel roads, where deemed appropriate by the Planning Board.
2. Gravel roads should be assessed as to their level of safety and traffic, by the Highway Superintendent, Police Chief, and Highway Safety Committee, before decisions are made whether or not to pave them.

Goal: Preserve roads in Town with scenic attributes.

Recommendations:

1. Henniker should consider identifying roads with scenic vistas and aesthetic qualities, such as stone walls, historic buildings, and farms. Research methods of protecting and preserving such areas.
2. Henniker should annually research potential roads as candidates for Scenic Road designation.

Issue: Class VI roads are important cultural, historical, and recreational resources that need to be protected and preserved.

Goal: To encourage, support, and expand the Towns trail network.

Recommendations:

1. Henniker, with the help of the Conservation Commission, should identify Class VI roads, as well as rail road beds, existing paths, and areas along the various water bodies in Town, that connect open space, forest, conservation, and/or agricultural land, that would help create a greenway trail network.
2. Henniker should create a public education campaign that highlights the benefits of a Town greenway system.
3. Investigate the location of railroad segments, with landowner permission, that could be used in the linking of existing and future greenway trails in the community.
4. Identify for designation, as Class A Trails, some of the Class VI roads within Town by working with abutting landowners.
5. The Town should follow-through with the recommendations outlined in the *Open Space Trail System Plan for the Town of Henniker, New Hampshire, July 1999*.

Goal: Discourage inappropriate and scattered and premature development along Class VI roads.

Recommendation:

1. Henniker should adopt building policies for all Class VI roads. Any Class VI road policy the Planning Board adopts should distinguish between building on existing lots and creating new lots.

Goal: To ensure that transportation options and services are available to all residents of Henniker.

Goal: To have adequate and safe parking areas in key locations in Town to encourage economic activity and ease of use and access to facilities and buildings.

Issue: The lack of adequate and safe parking facilities, as well as the ability of all residents to get around Town, can inhibit economic growth, reduce the sense of community, and weaken the overall comprehensive transportation infrastructure.

Goal: To ensure a safe, reliable, and efficient system of bridges that will meet the transportation needs and goals of the Town.

Issue: The Bridge Network, which encompasses Town-owned and State-owned bridges, is an important and necessary component of the comprehensive transportation infrastructure.

Goal: To have more transportation projects proposed to and included in the TIP.

Issue: The Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) serves as a funding source for major transportation projects across the State and the Town of Henniker has underutilized its ability to fund local transportation projects through the TIP.

Recommendations:

1. Improvements to both intersections of NH Rt. 202 and Old Concord Road should continue to be explored, including remaining a priority in the Transportation Improvement Plan.

2. Henniker should be proactive and creative in seeking TIP funding.
3. Henniker should work with CNHRPC to help create proposals to submit in the next funding cycle for the TIP.
4. Henniker should consider establishing a local committee to help solicit ideas and create proposals for the TIP in conjunction with the Planning Board, Selectmen, and Town Administrator.
5. Henniker should coordinate with major employers, New England College, and NHDOT to submit a proposal in the next TIP for a Park-and-Ride facility to be located in Henniker.

Goal: Henniker should use a variety of financing options to reduce the burden on taxpayers for the financing of local transportation maintenance and improvements.

Issue: The financing of and planning for transportation maintenance and improvements can be difficult to accomplish in small communities with limited resources.

Recommendations:

1. Henniker should research available funding options for maintenance and improvements to the transportation infrastructure.
2. Henniker should work with regional, state, and federal agencies and programs to prepare a comprehensive transportation plan that includes funding availability for the desired projects and programs.

Goal: To have a more defined, active, and public role for the Highway Safety Committee.

Chapter Seven

Community Facilities

Goals/Objectives/Recommendations

Goal: To have all community facilities in Henniker meet the current and future needs of the community in an efficient, safe and effective manner.

Objective: Increase public education, involvement and participation in the various community facilities and Departments in Town.

Strategies:

1. Regularly schedule and publicly notice meetings to encourage public involvement, participation, and input on the various Town Departments.
2. Continue to coordinate with New England College for Town services.

Goal: The Fire Department and Rescue Squad should meet all of the current and anticipated needs of the community in an effective, efficient, and safe manner.

Goal: To have the Wastewater Treatment Plant meet all of the current and anticipated needs of the service area in an effective and efficient manner.

Issue: The services that the Wastewater Treatment Plant provides are a necessary function to ensure environmental and public health standards are maintained.

Recommendations:

1. Work with New England College to ensure that their planned expansion will be adequately serviced by the current waste water treatment facility.
2. Create a public awareness campaign regarding the wastewater treatment plant process, highlighting how each individual impacts the system. This could be done in conjunction with the Merrimack Composting Facility, New England College, and the Conservation Commission.

Chapter Eight

Conservation, Preservation, and Open Space

Goals/Objectives/Recommendations

Goal: The Town of Henniker desires to conserve, protect, and preserve its natural resources, including but not limited to, ground and surface waters, agricultural and forest land, and wildlife habitat, in order to preserve the character of the community.

Objective: When engaging in development, encourage open space land preservation that retains the natural conditions of the site.

Strategy: The Planning Board, as part of the subdivision review process, may encourage developments to dedicate land for open space.

Objective: Minimize impacts of development in environmentally valuable and sensitive areas.

Strategies: The Planning Board shall review recommendations of the Conservation Commission as part of the development review process when site plan and subdivision proposals are made and determine if proposals in environmentally sensitive areas should be reviewed.

Objective: Encourage the preservation of existing and potentially productive agricultural lands, forest lands, open space, and lands for public use.

Strategies:

1. The Town may pursue the preservation and conservation of existing and potentially prime agricultural lands, forest lands, and parcels of open space lands.
2. Make available information on current use assessment to all property owners who could qualify for the program. Continue support of a public education campaign to highlight the benefits and value of the current use program.

Objective: Protect wetlands and surface water resources including the shoreline of lakes, streams, ponds, and rivers.

Strategies: Review, update and enforce ordinances and regulations as necessary to adequately address the issues of stormwater management, erosion, and sediment.

Objective: Protect aquifers and ground water resources.

Strategies:

1. Make available information to encourage residential well water users to periodically test their water to ensure its safety.
2. Continue to support ongoing efforts for the proper disposal of waste oil, household chemicals, and household hazardous waste.

Objective: Ensure that the use of geologic resources is undertaken in an environmentally responsible manner.

Strategy: Continue to monitor active sand and gravel pits operating within the Town to ensure safety and environmental protections are in place.

Objective: Promote cooperation locally and regionally with others engaged in environmental protection.

Strategy: Participate in local and regional efforts as they become available.

Objective: Protect scenic view sheds

Strategy: The Planning Board should continue to consider the impacts that development could have on scenic views.

Objective: Encourage the responsible use of natural resources within the town.

Strategy: Encourage waste reduction and energy efficiency

Objective: Continue to work to protect the clean water, materials and natural resources of the town in order to protect human health and our environment.

Strategies:

1. Promote the education of sustainable agriculture and local food production
2. Support the education of appropriate alternative energy projects

Objective: Promote our current outdoor recreation opportunities that are accessible and made available to the public.

Strategy: Create, expand, promote, and maintain a Henniker multi-use trail system.

Objective: Provide for indigenous plants and animals.

Strategies:

1. Protect, preserve, and/or manage important native species habitats
2. Support efforts to control invasive species

Chapter Nine

Existing & Future Land Use

Many factors have a direct impact on the landscape of every community. The way a community uses its land base has a direct impact on aesthetics, community character, transportation infrastructure, housing affordability, and on the tax base.

Henniker's historic development pattern was determined long before there were any land use regulations in the State or Town, with the Contoocook River playing a major role. Growth pressures seen in the community a decade ago have long disappeared as a result of the “Great Recession”. Since 2010 only 16 single family homes have been constructed and a limited number of new commercial/industrial expansions have been seen. Population growth has been flat since 2010 and school enrollments are in decline, decreasing 10.3% since 2009.

Five years ago two new commercial zones were created, Commercial Medium and Commercial Recreational along Weare and Bradford Roads respectively. In addition, the CH Heavy Commercial zone was strengthened to allow for larger scale commercial buildings and residential uses are now prohibited in order to reduce potential adjoining use conflicts.

Given the existing growth trends and recent changes to community zoning, the Planning Board does not envision the need for major zoning changes in the near future. Objectives and recommendations are geared to maintaining and strengthening existing regulations that are presently in place.

Summary of Acreage use by Land Use Category 2002 & 2015

Category	Acres	Percent of Total Land
Commercial Lands	750.5	2.6%
Industrial Lands	436.96	1.5%
Public / Institutional Lands	218.99	0.8%
Residential Lands	3,297.55	11.5%
Army Corp Land	1,768.45	6.2%
Conservation Lands	685.48	2.4%
Undeveloped Land	21,472.07	75%
Total	28,630	100%

Goals/Objectives/Recommendations

Goal: The Town of Henniker desires to maintain regulations that allow it to ensure quality development, protect sensitive environmental features, provide opportunities for a variety of development types, and preserve its rural and historic nature.

Objective: Enhance the village center as the cultural, social, and commercial center of town.

Objective: Preserve and protect the open space and environmentally and/or culturally sensitive areas in town.

Objective: To foster sound business development in appropriate areas within Town.

Recommendations:

1. Create and adopt an Elderly Housing Overlay District into the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Consider reducing the lot size for one- and two-family homes where both municipal water and sewer service are available.
3. Residential development within the Village Proper District (RV) and Village Commercial (CV) Zones should have a lot size less than 2 acres to encourage development to be in keeping with the traditional look and feel of the village.
4. Consider reducing the lot size and ratio for multi-family development in order to encourage its development.

Residential Neighborhood District (RN)

The Residential Neighborhood District provides a mixture of single-family and two-family homes in neighborhoods removed from the Center Village.

Recommendation:

1. Review the provisions for home business, with special emphasis on parking and the number and types of businesses allowed.

Rural Residential District (RR)

The Rural Residential District provides for a mixture of agriculture and low-density rural living outside of the built-up districts of the community, where public water and sewer services are not generally available. The low-density open areas complement and encourage agriculture characteristic of the town.

Recommendations:

1. Review the provisions for home business, with special emphasis on parking and the number and types of businesses allowed.
2. Review the design requirements in the Open Space Residential Development ordinance to ensure compatibility of the rural areas they adjoin
3. Review existing regulation to consider the environment in which Open Space plans are proposed and can they be developed in harmony with the surrounding rural neighboring area.

Heavy Commercial District (CH)

The Heavy Commercial District provides a business and manufacturing area outside of the village with good highway access for all types of commerce operations. This area is anticipated to be the major commercial/industrial corridor in the community.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to support and assist existing businesses to grow and prosper along this corridor along with encouraging new businesses.
2. Explore providing a public water source for this area.

Wireless Communication Towers

The regulations have been enacted in order to establish general guidelines for the siting of personal wireless service facilities, including towers and antennas, within Henniker. The Ordinance aims to protect the community from adverse impact from towers, while providing reasonable opportunity for their siting throughout Town.

Recommendation:

1. Review the Ordinance periodically to ensure that it is keeping up with current technology and standards.

Natural Preserve Areas

This Zoning Ordinance provides for the purchase of space, designation, and regulation of natural preserve areas. Natural preserve areas are to remain wild, undeveloped areas of Henniker for managed forest resources, recreational values, wildlife habitats, and unspoiled natural beauty. While the above mentioned purpose of the Ordinance is worthwhile, it is unnecessary to have a provision in the Zoning Ordinance allowing for the public or private purchase of land for conservation, preservation, or open space.

Recommendation:

1. Remove Natural Preserve Areas from the Zoning Ordinance.