

CHAPTER 6

TUFTONBORO'S PLAN OF ACTION

This chapter articulates the long range goals and guiding policies for the Town of Tuftonboro and identifies the strategies necessary for acting upon those goals and policies. It is intended to provide direction for making municipal decisions and reaching conclusions regarding the town's future growth and development. While the information and analysis presented elsewhere in the plan provides an important framework for setting a vision for Tuftonboro's future, the goals, policies and implementation strategies are the basis of the plan.

The challenge to Tuftonboro residents and local officials is translating the following goals and policies into specific actions, and developing a program to measure the community's success over time. To this end, implementation measures are provided to address Tuftonboro's community, natural and cultural resources, and infrastructure, as well as future land use. These measures include:

- Goals, which serve as statements of aspiration related to Tuftonboro's long range vision;
- Policies, which will guide local decision making and serve as community position statements on a range of topics;
- Implementation Strategies, which describe specific actions to be undertaken over the next five years; and
- Metrics, which will be established on key strategies in order to provide indicators on progress toward plan goals and to allow for mid-course corrections as necessary. These metrics will be reviewed twice annually by the Planning Board and presented annually to the Selectmen prior to review at the Town Meeting.

Implementation of the Tuftonboro Master Plan will occur gradually and will require a wide range of efforts. Investment, regulation, leadership and support will be necessary to build consensus and devote the resources necessary to carry out the Tuftonboro 2006 Master Plan's vision for the future.

6.1 TUFTONBORO'S PLANNING PROCESS

- Goal 6.1.1** To maintain an active, ongoing local planning process.
- Goal 6.1.2** To seek widespread involvement of residents and property owners in an ongoing planning process, including plan implementation.
- Goal 6.1.3** To cooperate and coordinate with neighboring towns on issues of regional importance.

Policy 1. To provide opportunities for citizen input during every stage of the planning and decision-making process and to ensure that decision making occurs in an open, public environment.

Implementation Strategies

1. Identify potentially affected parties and include them early in the planning and/or decision making process.
2. Ensure compliance with NH Right-to-Know law and statutory hearing requirements as a minimum level of public involvement. Try to exceed that minimum in all instances through the use of website, email distribution and other new technologies.
3. Solicit public participation through the use of surveys, questionnaires and forums.
4. Through hearings, direct mailings, the town's web page, the Tuftonboro Times, local cable television and the newspaper as appropriate, inform the public of town activities on a regular basis.
5. Ensure that the diversity of the town's population is well represented in the implementation process.

Policy 2. To explore and encourage cooperative partnerships with nearby towns in order to better address issues of mutual concern, enhance efficiency through cost sharing and minimize conflict through communication.

Implementation Strategies

1. Support and participate in regional groups and organizations to address growth, housing, conservation, transportation, water quality, economic activity, waste disposal and other issues.

Policy 3. To ensure that state, regional and local decisions affecting Tuftonboro are compatible with the Tuftonboro Master Plan and vice versa.

Implementation Strategies

1. Identify and appropriate the necessary funds to support the town's planning efforts.
2. Review the Master Plan bi-annually.

6.2 HOUSING IN TUFTONBORO

Goal 6.2.1 To promote a sustainable rate of housing development in a manner that does not overburden public services and maintains the town’s rural character.

Policy 1. To encourage a diversity of housing types in appropriate locations and well integrated into the community, including multi-family housing, accessory apartments/dwellings and manufactured housing.

Implementation Strategies

1. Review and update land use regulations. This may include:
 - Reviewing district uses, density and dimensional requirements as they pertain to residential development – (e.g., allow for ¼ acre lots in “villages” that share off-site septic systems, “mother-in-law” apartments in accessory structures).
 - Continuing to allow accessory apartments to single family dwellings;
 - Encouraging multi-family housing in areas with good access to infrastructure;
 - Encouraging developments that promote creative site design allowing for a mix of housing where appropriate while preserving natural resources and open land, and, in appropriate instances, provide a density bonus to projects for including affordable housing, environmental easements, preservation of historic structures or innovative technologies; and
 - Providing options such as the conversion of existing structures – including reuse of historic structures in a manner that preserves their integrity and character - in addition to new construction for residential use.

Policy 2. To design new residential development and associated infrastructure in a manner that minimizes adverse effects on Tuftonboro's natural, cultural and scenic resources.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Provide incentives to use land efficiently. Where feasible, make use of renewable energy sources and other innovative environmentally responsible technologies.
2. Monitor available population and housing data on an annual basis and track annual permit data to identify the rate of housing development.
3. Consider regulatory tools to control the rate of development in the event that housing development exceeds what the town can handle.

6.3 TUFTONBORO'S ECONOMY

Goal 6.3.1 To support existing businesses and business development that is compatible with the town's rural character, is sustainable, and offers jobs, goods and services for residents.

Policy 1. To accommodate and support the expansion of existing businesses and the establishment of new businesses that serve local residents, enhance the town's tax base and local employment opportunities, and reinforce the community's historic settlement pattern and rural character.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Review and update zoning, subdivision and site plan regulations to ensure that:
 - Requirements for small home-based businesses are not overly restrictive and that larger home-based businesses are allowed in suitable locations. Both should be subject to standards that minimize adverse affects on town roads, other facilities and services, natural, scenic and cultural resources, and the surrounding neighborhood.
 - A mix of uses is allowed within the village areas including small commercial businesses, multi-family housing and manufacturing enterprises that are in keeping with the area's scale and character.
 - Provisions allow for re-use of historic structures including barns, to include compatible commercial uses that may not otherwise be allowed in the district in which they are located (e.g., storage facilities, antique car shops, galleries, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, wood shops, light manufacturing).
 - Provisions are made for resource-based industries.
 - Provisions are made for local service businesses (e.g., marinas, landscapers, contractors, carpenters, and mechanics) to "grow" their businesses and to store and maintain their equipment in suitable locations subject to standards that minimize adverse impacts to adjoining properties, facilities and neighborhood appearances.

2. Identify strategies for strengthening resource-based industries including farming, forestry and related activities.

Policy 2. To promote economic activities which provide goods and services that are needed locally; maintain high standards of environmental health and aesthetics; do not degrade the quality of our water, air and soils or the viability of native wildlife populations; are energy efficient, and emphasize the use of local renewable energy sources; are sustainable - maximizing the use of local resources in a manner that does not deplete those resources; provide economically viable employment for residents of our community; contribute to the vitality of our community, including the social fabric and well being of the entire population; support agriculture; and promote good forestry management practices.

Implementation Strategies:

1. To the extent that the town may exercise discretion when working with businesses, industries, and local and regional development agencies, local officials should always seek to promote economic activities that exhibit the characteristics noted in Policy 2.
2. Consider establishing a Tuftonboro Development Committee to include representatives from local businesses to work with adjoining towns to develop an economic development strategy. This committee could be charged with:
 - Preparing and maintaining a local business directory for the promotion of local businesses.
 - Inventorying and conducting a survey of local businesses to find out what types of support services and facilities may be needed.
 - Creating a newsletter or regularly published newspaper article to increase communication among businesses.
 - Establishing a local outdoor market to be held regularly during the summer months, to support local/regional farmers, and artists.
 - Establishing a neighborhood convenience store or coffee house to serve the local community in Melvin Village. Consider operating the store/house as a cooperative.
 - Establishing a gasoline station in town. Consider operating the station as a cooperative.
 - Working with Wentworth Economic Development Corporation.

Policy 3. To enhance tele/data communications, local intellectual resources (library, higher educational opportunities and facilities) and energy infrastructure stabilization to allow residents access to international electronic resources at the highest level possible and businesses to operate in a rapidly changing world.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Identify ways of funding infrastructure improvements and work as a community to enhance opportunities.
2. Review and amend town ordinances and regulations to allow for infrastructure improvements in an environmentally responsible manner.

6.4 TUFTONBORO'S RESOURCES

Goal 6.4.1 Preserve the town's rural character and scenic beauty.

Goal 6.4.2 Maintain and enhance the quality of the environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

Policy 1. To protect the natural, cultural and scenic resources of the town from the adverse effects of development.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Conduct inventories to further document the town's natural, cultural and scenic resources, including:
 - natural features (farmland, steep slopes, ridgelines/hilltops, water);
 - shoreland and public access to water;
 - critical wildlife habitat areas and travel corridors;
 - historic districts, sites, structures and landscapes; and
 - scenic resources, including scenic views and roads.
2. Develop an integrated natural resource protection strategy that identifies and links the most environmentally sensitive areas of town to protect groundwater resources, surface waters, wildlife habitat, ridgelines, hilltops and farmland.
3. Design and implement an ongoing public program to protect natural and scenic resources through land acquisition, conservation easements, education, application of best management practices and/or low-impact development strategies.
4. Increase the public's awareness of their role in protecting natural resources and minimizing impacts on the natural environment. Provide information about appropriate water usage, non-point pollution sources (i.e., lawns, storm drains), maintenance of catch basins, waste disposal, invasive plants vs. native species, land protection options and other conservation issues.
5. Invest in professional planning services (architectural, town planning, etc.) to identify innovative approaches and integrate those into land use regulations.
6. Develop land use regulations that explicitly encourage and reward natural and scenic resources conservation.
7. Consider establishing an Agricultural Commission to represent Tuftonboro's farming community, to encourage the pursuit and promotion of agriculture, to insure the preservation of open spaces, and preserve the town's rural character.

8. Review and update zoning, subdivision and site plan regulations to ensure that:

- forested and poorly accessible upland areas continue to support forestry, wildlife habitat and managed recreation and remain free of development;
- sufficient setbacks and isolation distances are in place to protect surface waters and groundwater from structures, on-site septic systems and other potential sources of pollution;
- adequate vegetated buffers are required to protect water quality and riparian habitat;
- erosion control and storm water management plans incorporate natural drainage patterns and are required for any development that involves more than one acre of site disturbance, is located on steep slopes (15+%), or could otherwise adversely affect water quality;
- no development is permitted on very steep slopes (25+ %); and
- innovative subdivision designs and site plans are allowed/required (for example, allow homes to be built on smaller lots if a portion of the land is left undisturbed as protected open space).

Policy 2. To encourage the protection of historic sites and reuse of historic structures in a manner that maintains the historic integrity.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Continue to support the Tuftonboro Historical Society to conserve town history, to increase public awareness of Tuftonboro’s cultural heritage, and to update the Tuftonboro Historical Society Museum.

6.5 TUFTONBORO'S INFRASTRUCTURE

- Goal 6.5.1** The provision of an environmentally sound and cost efficient system of community facilities, services and infrastructure to meet the present and future demands of Tuftonboro citizens and visitors.
- Goal 6.5.2** The expansion of community facilities, services and infrastructure in a manner consistent with the goals and policies of this Master Plan.
- Goal 6.5.3** Maintain and improve a transportation system that is safe and efficient.

Policy 1. To ensure that adequate facilities and services are in place to accommodate future demands, so that those demands do not create an unreasonable burden on the town's ability to provide them.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Coordinate the provision of new or expanded capital facilities to avoid sharp annual fluctuations in the property tax rate and provide a balanced view of long term investments. To this end, prepare a capital budget and improvement program to identify and schedule needed capital improvements, to be updated annually.
2. Monitor the scale and timing of development to ensure that the resulting demand for services and facilities does not exceed the town's ability to provide them.
3. Update local land use regulations as needed to:
 - Ensure that the potential impacts of development on community facilities and services are adequately addressed in review;
 - Ensure that proposed development will be adequately served by existing or planned infrastructure and utilities; and
 - Reference or incorporate updated road standards and other related town policies and ordinances.
4. Consider adding provisions to the subdivision regulations that require a developer to fund the proportional cost of the facility(s) needed to accommodate the new development unless the municipality determines that the proposed development will provide community benefits which outweigh or offset the cost of facilities.

5. Ensure that all development is accessible to emergency service vehicles and require all new development to provide fire protection facilities as deemed necessary.
6. Continue to investigate, plan and implement strategies to keep solid waste disposal costs as low as possible; also to expand recycling programs and improve existing programs.
7. Explore options for community wastewater systems in the village areas and in-town septage disposal.
8. Support efforts to expand telecommunications options throughout town including high-speed internet access and other technologies that enhance communication without negatively impacting Tuftonboro's rural character.
9. Continue to support regional and not-for-profit organizations that provide important community services that are not provided by the town, county or state governments.

Policy 2. To preserve the small town quality of Tuftonboro and its villages by maintaining and strengthening Center Tuftonboro as the center for town government and services.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Maintain and enhance existing town properties to meet the current and anticipated needs of the community.
2. Develop a site design and building plans for the Public Safety Facility that address the existing and future needs of the police, fire and emergency services. Support efforts to build a Public Safety Facility that meets the existing and future needs of the community.
3. Support efforts to meet the existing and future needs of the library.
4. Explore options for a community wastewater system in Center Tuftonboro.

Policy 3. To sustain the town road network in a manner that maintains safe and efficient traffic conditions for current and future demand.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Retain the current scale, rural quality and capacity of town roads while conducting improvements and maintaining roads. Address the needs of cyclists and pedestrians when making improvements.
2. Develop a road improvement plan and equipment replacement schedule to identify needed improvements or upgrades for inclusion in the town's capital improvement program.
3. New development shall not result in adverse impacts to traffic or pedestrian safety or a significant decline in the level of service of the impacted road network. The cost of mitigation to avoid such impacts will be the responsibility of the developer.
4. Control access and concentrate development within designated villages to ensure safe and efficient traffic movement along principal roads and to avoid strip development.
5. Explore opportunities to slow traffic, to increase opportunities to safely cycle and to provide for pedestrian access. Cost effective solutions (e.g., traffic calming including sidewalks, bike paths and trails) should be developed before new infrastructure (e.g., new roads, bypass).
6. Maintain the public's interest in Class 6 roads and access to legal trails.
7. Coordinate with and support the efforts of local, regional and state entities to plan for Tuftonboro's transportation needs in a comprehensive manner.

Policy 4. To maintain the land resource and water access necessary to support recreation.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Maintain and enhance land resources for recreational opportunities.
2. Where appropriate, acquire interest (e.g., conservation easement) in important recreation resource areas and public access to the town's water bodies.

Policy 5. To conserve renewable and nonrenewable energy.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Establish a strong and visible commitment to energy efficiency by conducting energy audits of municipal facilities and by taking measures to reduce energy use.
2. Prohibit streetlights in areas outside the villages, except for safety reasons, to help maintain Tuftonboro's rural character and access to the night sky.
3. Amend zoning regulations to allow flexible standards for renewable energy generation and transmission facilities.
4. Conserve forest lands as a renewable resource.
5. Encourage sustainable forest management to ensure wood supply for the future.

6.6 TUFTONBORO'S LAND USE

- Goal 6.6.1** The preservation of the town's historic settlement pattern, defined by compact villages surrounded by water and rural countryside.
- Goal 6.6.2** The maintenance and enhancement of the unique village areas.
- Goal 6.6.3** The maintenance of the rural community with a balanced mixture of residential, open space and recreational uses with commercial and light industrial opportunities.
- Goal 6.6.4** The regulation of land development in a manner which protects important natural and community resources – including water quality, farm land, forest resources and important wildlife habitat – while allowing for diverse land uses in appropriate locations.

Policy 1. To reinforce existing village areas as the focus of cultural, economic, institutional and residential activities in the town, in a manner that respects the unique character of those areas.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Explore ways to strengthen the village areas. Conduct detailed inventories of resources and limitations for each village area. Work with property owners and residents to define each village district, its boundaries, appropriate land uses, development standards and dimensional requirements.
2. When making public investments, including the construction and expansion of infrastructure, reinforce the traditional character, patterns and densities of development within the village areas.
3. Locate new residential development in areas served by existing roads and infrastructure. Higher density, consisting of three or more units per structure, should be encouraged within the village areas, or allowed as a special exception in a historic structure in any district, or allowed within an innovative subdivision that is deemed "sustainable."
4. Provide Planning Board with authority to encourage innovative developments to meet the Master Plan goals, including an investment in professional resources as needed.

Policy 2. Maintain an overall high quality of site design and environmental protection throughout town.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Require adherence to rigorous environmental review through subdivision and site plan regulations for all new development and redevelopment in the Lakefront Residential and Islands' Conservation Districts. It may be necessary to address all development in these districts as special exceptions or conditional use in order to better protect the critical water resources and unique character of these properties.
2. Allow clustering of development in all districts. Require clustering for all major subdivisions within the Low Density Residential District, or for any development within the Open Space/Forestry District to avoid environmentally sensitive areas.
3. Require, as appropriate, buffer areas and/or management plans to separate incompatible land uses, and to protect environmentally sensitive areas, including surface waters, wetlands, wellheads, aquifer recharge areas and wildlife habitat, and support the aesthetic goals of the community.
4. Base all development on natural resource science (such as high intensity soil surveys and resource identification) as well as the ability of the town to provide services.
5. Prohibit development of environmentally sensitive areas (fragile natural features). Expand overlay district to include environmentally sensitive areas.
6. Update the town's subdivision and site plan review regulations to incorporate:
 - Basic settlement pattern (e.g., lot configuration) standards for each zoning district to ensure that lot size and configurations reflect traditional settlement patterns and that new roads and other infrastructure will be connected to and integrated with existing facilities.
 - Standards that protect natural resources and fragile features, including wetlands, headwater streams, steep slopes, wetland, scenic views and minimize the fragmentation of important forest, agricultural and wildlife habitat areas as well as other community resources such as historic features (i.e., stone walls, old foundations).

- Require, as appropriate, the designation of building envelopes on proposed subdivision plats, along with maximum area and siting requirements to ensure that structures, recreation and parking areas avoid adverse impacts to significant natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.
 - Standards and conditions to address internal layout of the site, the physical design, and the functional integration of the site with surrounding properties and uses.
 - Increase review and direction-giving by appropriate town boards to meet land use goals.
7. Update the town's zoning regulations, giving considerations to:
- Clearly defining village districts to maintain and enhance the unique flavor of each area, including basic site design requirements (building scale and orientation) and possibly historic preservation standards.
 - Requiring the designation of building envelopes, and related resource protection standards, for all development within Lakefront Residential, Islands' Conservation and Open Space/Forestry districts to ensure that structures, recreation and parking areas avoid adverse impacts to significant natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.
 - Updating and expanding clustering provisions ("conservation", "open space," "planned unit development") to better protect open space and resource lands and to support efficient use of land and allow for increased densities as needed for affordable housing. Consider allowing density bonuses as an incentive for affordable housing and other incentives to encourage use of clustering. Consider requiring all subdivisions in environmentally sensitive areas to be clustered.
 - Incorporate additional use standards as appropriate – for using historic structures, mixed use development, sand and gravel operations, outdoor recreational facilities, and other uses that may be of concern.
8. Update the town's zoning map and district standards to:
- Include new village districts and to re-evaluate district dimensional and use requirements in accordance with plan recommendations; and
 - Incorporate an Environmentally Sensitive Area Overlay to further protect important natural resources.
9. Consider other non-regulatory land conservation and development options as appropriate.

Policy 3. To administer the town's development regulations in a fair and consistent manner.

Implementation Strategies:

1. Review the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to identify and correct technical deficiencies, ensure compatibility with the Master Plan and make substantive revisions identified in this Plan.
2. Review current administration and enforcement practices related to land use regulations and ensure that all standards and associated permit conditions are efficiently administered and strictly enforced.
3. Refer to the planning considerations, goals, policies and strategies set forth in this Master Plan during all site plan, special exceptions and subdivision reviews and all state and federal regulatory reviews.
4. All proposed development, plans, and public policies that could affect Tuftonboro should be reviewed for conformance with the Tuftonboro Master Plan.
5. On a regular basis, review the town's zoning ordinance and other land use regulations against current town policies and make revisions as appropriate.