

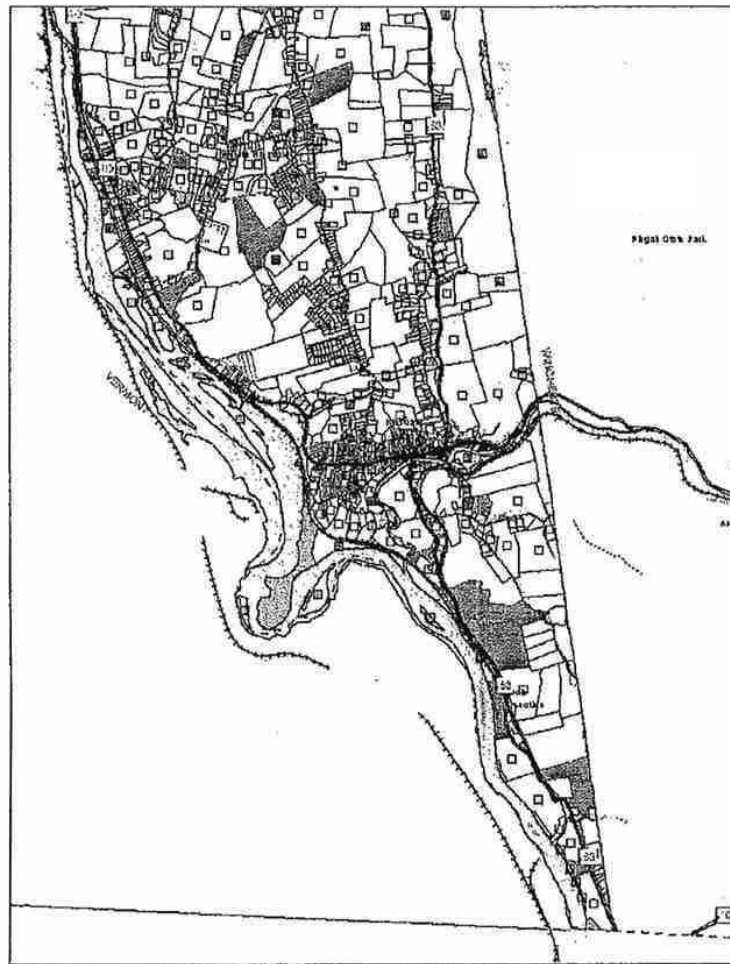
# MASTER PLAN

FOR THE TOWN OF

## HINSDALE,

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

2003



PREPARED BY THE HINSDALE PLANNING BOARD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE  
SOUTHWEST REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

▪ **HISTORICAL SITES AND POINTS OF INTEREST**

Historical sites and points of interest in Hinsdale include the following:

- The Taylor Monument is located at the intersection of Monument Road and Old Brattleboro Road, and marks the site of an Indian skirmish in 1748.
- The Liscom House, located on Route 119, was built in 1759 by Col. Ebenezer Hinsdale. Much history is documented on this house and can be read in the "History of Hinsdale".
- Fort Dummer Cemetery located on Old Brattleboro Road and Hooker Cemetery located on Prospect Street date back to the mid 1700's
- Homes built in the late 1700's included those owned by:  
Mr. & Mrs. Earl Clark, Mrs. Doris Smith, Mr. & Mrs. Wesley Sprague, Mrs. Bertha Herrmann, Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Smith, Mr. Paul Hubner, Sr., and the "Homestead" which is now owned by William Wittmer and Patrick Gillis.

**Post Office:**

The oldest continuously operating United States Post Office is located at 13 Main Street in Hinsdale. The 1,327 square foot building was constructed on September 25, 1816, following the appointment of Hinsdale's first postmaster in 1815. The Post Office currently employs 3 full-time staff, 2 part-time staff with benefits and 2 part-time staff without benefits. The post office has 759 post office boxes and makes 1,251 rural route deliveries. The post office is open Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Churches:**

There are five churches located in Hinsdale:

- The Congregational Church located on Main Street was built in 1835;
- St. Joseph's Church located on Brattleboro Road was built in 1885;
- North Hinsdale Community Church located on Meetinghouse Rd in North Hinsdale was built in 1804 and added on to in 1853, and has an average weekly attendance of 50;
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints located on Plain Road was built in 1995.

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Boy scouts, cub scouts, girl scouts, explorers and 4-H. have sizeable student participation. Peewee and bambino leagues have recently been formed.

Each church has a youth group and members are involved in various social and community projects.

An annual hunting course is offered to anyone over the age of 16 and this course must be taken and passed before hunting licenses can be purchased. This is very important in a town that has so much of its land available for hunting.

The State of New Hampshire has two boat landings along the Connecticut River, at the base of Sand Hill and between the bridges on Route 119. In recent years the recreational use of the Connecticut River has increased greatly, as evidenced by the number of boats in the summer and the number of fishing huts in the winter. Ice skating on the "set back" area of the river has become a common sight. Some of this increased activity is due to the opening of the railroad right of way, which provided off road parking. As this report indicates, the Town of Hinsdale has tried to meet the needs of all age groups in providing recreational entertainment.

### **FUTURE PLANS**

- The town should give serious consideration to the location of a teen center that could offer after school activities to students, especially during the winter months. This center could be open during the week, or just weekends, and should be supervised.
- The location of an open space recreation area in North Hinsdale would be beneficial, since most of the projected growth is taking place there. It will be important to preserve some land for this specific need.
- The construction of a regular size swimming pool has been considered, and the possibility of locating one in Heritage Park should be given serious thought.
- A group of citizens has recently started "Hinsdale's Own Playground". This is a volunteer committee that is setting goals for construction of new playground equipment at the elementary school's play area. Several successful fund raising events have taken place. A model of the proposed playground area has been on display in local store windows. A chain link fence will be erected along the sidewalk as a safety factor, a swing bridge and slide are proposed, and the basketball courts will be moved to the backside of the play area. This committee should be encouraged and supported by all residents of Hinsdale.

### **POLICIES**

- Provide for the preservation of open space and natural preserves to maintain the rural character of the Town.
- Provide the variety of recreational facilities to accommodate all age groups.
- Continue to provide the use of municipal buildings for recreational purposes.
- Continue to fund the programs needed to make the town an enjoyable place to live for our citizens.
- Protect the scenic elements of the town's natural environment such as waterbodies, streams, rivers, and viewsheds.
- Retain the access to open space and environmental areas for public use.

The term "administration" refers here to those activities that direct and manage the town's municipal affairs. Hinsdale is administered by a five-member Board of Selectmen. The Town Meeting is the legislative body of the town, and the Selectmen represent the executive, or administrative, arm of that body. In addition to the Selectmen, other local boards participate in municipal government, i.e., the Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, Conservation Commission, and other appointed entities. This form of government relies heavily on part-time officials serving in a wide range of capacities. Some of these functions relate directly to the goals and objectives of this Master Plan, others less so.

Implementation of the goals and objectives can be accomplished in a number of ways; some items would require no more than official endorsement by the Selectmen. Others, however, would require amendments to the zoning ordinance and/or the Site Plan Review Regulations in order to be realized.

### Goals and Objectives:

#### COMMUNITY FACILITIES

**GOAL:** *To maintain and enhance the quality of the community facilities and municipal services in Hinsdale in a manner compatible with the Town's financial resources.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. The town should develop a Capital Improvements Plan to help identify and schedule major improvements of the town municipal assets.
2. Support the buying or sharing of equipment, materials and/or services with other towns, as feasible.
3. Anticipate the demands that new growth will place on Town services and facilities, and plan accordingly.
4. Maintain and continually upgrade and improve the quality of education in Hinsdale at all levels.

#### TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

**GOAL:** *To maintain a convenient transportation network and to allow for the safe transfer of goods and people throughout Hinsdale while protecting the esthetic and scenic qualities of town roads.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Develop a transportation system/network that supports the ongoing and maintenance of all roads and thoroughfares.
2. Establish standards of construction, maintenance and improvements that balance the need for safety on the highways with residents' concern for maintaining a rural atmosphere.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**GOAL:** *Promote Economic Development in Hinsdale as a way to Protect and Enhance the*

**ACTIONS:**

- Work with Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and HCIDC to determine which type(s) of businesses (e.g. heavy industry, light industry, service/sales) should be most aggressively recruited.
  - Develop a commercial and industrial recruitment program for Hinsdale.
  - Develop a high-quality brochure describing the benefits of locating a business in Hinsdale - for use in business recruitment.
  - Schedule regular meetings between business owners and town officials to discuss relevant issues.
7. Support efforts to strengthen the vibrancy of downtown Hinsdale

**ACTIONS:**

- Encourage service, professional office, and new retail to locate downtown to create a commercial destination.
  - Continue to focus community efforts on improving the Ashuelot riverfront as part of the Community Center.
  - Develop a downtown parking plan to accommodate build-out scenario and examine winter residential parking capacity.
  - Provide public transit service connecting downtown Hinsdale with Winchester, Brattleboro, and other shopping, service, and social destinations.
  - Consider applying for NH Main Street designation
  - Develop and adopt site and architectural standards for commercial and industrial buildings to ensure quality and attractive appearance.
  - Develop and maintain a Town website with links to information on business development in Hinsdale.
8. Increase educational opportunities for Hinsdale residents to promote a more educated work force.

**ACTIONS:**

- Develop partnerships between the Hinsdale High School and local businesses to develop training programs to build appropriate skills for employment in the local economy.
  - Work with regional educational institutions to encourage technical training and re-training opportunities.
9. Ensure the housing stock and residential development opportunities in Hinsdale support Hinsdale's economic development goals.

**ACTIONS:**

- Conduct a housing inventory to develop a better understanding of existing conditions (i.e. number of single and multi-family houses, age and condition of houses, real estate market, number of rental units, and number of homes for sale).
- Conduct a market analysis to determine the type(s) of housing most in demand and potential locations for housing development.

**CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION**

**GOAL #1:** *Balance new development with protection of the Town's sensitive and significant*

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*natural, cultural, and historic resources, while preserving the Town's identity.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Preserve and protect agricultural lands, environmentally sensitive lands, and historic structures to enhance the open space and retain the characteristics of the Town.
2. Establish conservation areas and open spaces throughout the town, where there is a community needs to control further development.
3. Protect water resources throughout the Town. Above ground and underground water resources are now, and in the future will remain a vital asset worthy of protection from all forms of pollution.

**GOAL #2:** *To continue to provide year round recreational opportunities for Hinsdale residents of all ages.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Protect the scenic elements of the Town's natural environment such as waterbodies, streams, rivers, and viewsheds.
2. Retain the access to open space and environmental areas for public use.

**HOUSING**

**GOAL:** *To continue to provide areas in Hinsdale which allow for a diversity of housing opportunities while striving to enhance the visual and esthetic qualities of both existing and proposed housing.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Support the preservation and maintenance of the existing and future housing stock through public and private actions.
2. Encourage the private sector to remove or rehabilitate all substandard housing.
3. Continue to support the development of adequate elderly housing.
4. Ensure the housing stock and residential development opportunities in Hinsdale support Hinsdale economic development goals.

**LAND USE**

**GOAL:** *To promote a balanced pattern of development for housing, agriculture, recreation, business, and industry.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. To find a balance that will provide for fair housing opportunities to all its citizens over a broad range of incomes.