

# LYNDON TOWN PLAN

1999

*PROPOSED DELETIONS IN ITALICS*

PROPOSED ADDITIONS UNDERLINED

## LYNDON TOWN PLAN OVERVIEW

Located in the Northeast Kingdom of Caledonia County, Vermont, the Town of Lyndon has a long and proud history. Founded in 1791, it has been a farming community, a railroading center, the home for Lyndon State College and Lyndon Institute, several medium-sized manufacturing companies, numerous smaller commercial businesses, and a host of retail operations. The Town is easily accessible, being served by two exits from Interstate 91, by Vermont State Highway 5, by Caledonia County State Airport, and by Canadian Pacific Rail Road Company. It is home to over 5,500 people and provides employment for more than 700. It also serves as a bedroom community for St. Johnsbury and other nearby municipalities.

(As of the 1990 census), the average age of Lyndon's residents is 34; the income for each of its over 2,200 households averages \$25,000 per year. Over 72% of its people age 25 and older have completed their high school education, and roughly 45% of the high school graduates also have college degrees. Close to 1,000 are employed in manufacturing, 600 in the retail trades, and over 600 in education. Over 200 work in forestry or farming. Almost 900 are employed as professionals or managers, 500 in clerical or administrative positions.

Approximately 22% of its 23,061 acres is being used for agricultural purposes and 65% is forested. Lyndon's citizens live in house sites which cover 11,117 acres. These lots range in size from less than one acre to over 100 acres. (From 1993 through 1997, 308 new homes were built, an 32% increase in the number of residences. In the same period, the number of commercial lots has more than doubled.) Almost half its population lives in one of its three villages: Lyndon Center, Lyndon Corner, and Lyndonville. Lyndonville is the hub of activities for the area, serves as the home to most of the Town's churches, its municipal offices, most of its retail and commercial operations, and some of its manufacturing businesses as well.

Its attractive surroundings, easy accessibility, and well trained population all suggest that population growth is inevitable. In fact, the Town's population *(is projected to be 6,133 by 1995.)* (estimate for the year 2000 is 6000 people, and some project the Town will be the largest in the Northeast Kingdom by the year 2015.) To preserve its heritage, and maintain its appeal as a place to reside, earn a living, and raise a family, the Town must anticipate its future needs and plan for meeting these needs in an orderly and well thought through manner. To that end, a committee of citizen volunteers *(have)* examined the *(present)* state of affairs in the Town (during the years 1992 and 1993) and developed a series of goals for the Town to use as guides over the next decade. (As those goals appear to still be valid in 1998, this 1998 Plan update simply reflects the changes that have occurred in the Town since the 1993 Plan was written.) As with any plan, these goals and recommendations are to serve as guides as Town and Village officials make decisions over the course of time. They have been made (and updated) after careful investigation, thought, and discussion based on conditions as they are known at this point in time. Over time conditions will change and these goals and recommendations will

need to be considered in light of such changes. The efforts of these volunteers were focused through eight subcommittees which, respectively, examined the Town's:

- community facilities and features
- educational facilities;
- energy, transportation, public facilities & utilities;
- forests and agricultural areas;
- housing;
- retail, commercial, and industrial areas and facilities;
- special resources; and
- waste management.

Each group, appropriate to its own needs, identified the current status of the Town regarding demographics, land use, facilities, utilities, special resources, etc. Each also developed recommendations and/or plans of action to meet the Town's anticipated needs. Such recommendations have been made considering the desires and concerns of the townspeople. These desires and concerns were determined through the results of a mail survey of all Town residences. This resulting Town Plan should provide the Selectmen with guidance as they make their operating decisions. These recommendations should also provide guidance to the Town's Planning Commission. *(It will also enable the Commission)* (The Plan as approved by the townspeople in 1993 enabled the Commission) to establish zoning regulations which *(will)* provide for the Town's orderly future growth and for the compatibility of uses of the land in the Town. (The updated zoning by-laws were approved by the townspeople in November of 1996.)

In developing this plan, the Committee recognized that its recommendations had to be sensitive to the neighboring towns and their future plans. Recognizing this need for sensitivity, copies of this plan *(have been)* (were) sent to municipal officials in the surrounding towns for their review and comments. In addition, as a bedroom community for those residents who work in nearby communities, the Town intends to continue to be an attractive area in which families will want to live and raise families. As a major shopping center, it intends to encourage reasonable growth in its retail and commercial business activities. It will also endeavor to attract more employers so that a greater diversity of employment opportunities will become a reality for both the residents of Lyndon and neighboring towns. Finally, the Town stands ready to cooperate with adjacent municipalities to assure that future actions relate to the development and trends of these entities.

This plan contains many recommended actions to be considered by the Selectmen, Planning Commission, Zoning Board, and/or other entities. Some of these recommendations call for immediate consideration or action; some suggest actions to be taken as future milestones in the Town's development are reached; still others relate to the overall enhancement of the Town with no specific time requirements. In almost every instance the recommendations involve some level of cost and this consideration will, necessarily, be a major determinant as to if and when the recommendations will be implemented.

Once this plan is adopted, *(and as a first step in the implementation process,)* the Selectmen *(should appoint an individual or committee to)* (will) be responsible for seeing that the recommended actions contained in this plan are considered and/or acted upon considering:

- the need for near-term action based upon the immediacy of a particular Finding or Recommendation.
- the need for action based upon developing or changing conditions.
- the financial ability of the Town or other entity to begin implementation of the recommendations.

Here is a random sampling of the findings and recommendations made by these subcommittees (as approved in 1993):

- A safe means of walking and biking into and through the Village should be developed.
- Handicapped access is needed for public buildings, sidewalks, and curbs.
- Monitor, update, and improve traffic flows on Routes 5, 114, and 122.
- A forum for sharing ideas among school administrators, faculty, students and parents should be established.
- Energy efficiency standards for new construction should be encouraged.
- Management plans should be established for each Town or Village owned facility or land parcel.
- Increase the general public's awareness of the values of the Town's agricultural and forestry activities.
- Extend water and sewer lines into potential areas of residential or business development.
- Create incentives such as loans and tax stabilization for businesses to start-up or expand.
- Encourage Lyndonville Development Corp. to take steps to develop land it owns for future businesses.
- Identify and preserve Lyndon's special and historic buildings and other resources.
- Ensure enough reserve water and sewer capacity for anticipated future growth.
- Develop septic system safeguards for drinking water coming from wells and springs.
- Review the trash collection fee structure to produce more equitable cost sharing and to increase recycling efforts.

The Planning Commission wishes to sincerely acknowledge the efforts of all those who volunteered their time to this effort. They willingly gave up personal time to research, discuss and debate, and prepare the material that formed the basis for this plan. Those who served on the Lyndon Town Plan Committee are listed on the following page.

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## I. EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

1. GOAL: To permit access to as much information as any individual may need or seek in order to pursue personal growth and development. The Town should encourage this type of environment through support of our institutions and their personnel and other resources. All facilities and opportunities should be open and available to all Lyndon residents. Recognizing that each person is fundamentally self-educated, having the support of and access to these facilities will foster independence as well as more satisfaction with one's educational experience.

2. BACKGROUND: Our schools have several important functions. They educate our children, not only in the very critical, basic skills that permit them to find employment, but also in advanced and higher level academic and thinking skills, enabling them to take their rightful place as contributing citizens in our community. The role of the school system is not merely to provide a basic education to our children but to guide and inspire them to be the best they can be. Their happiness and success rely to a great extent on how well their schools assist them in gaining self-confidence and in developing self-reliance through genuine success in their studies and other activities.

The major educational facilities within the Town of Lyndon include the following:

- The Town-owned Lyndon (*Graded*)(Town) School, and the Riverside School, a private elementary school for grades 4 through 8;
- The privately operated Lyndon Institute, meeting the secondary educational needs of Lyndon and other nearby communities;
- The State operated Lyndon State College, a four year liberal arts college for day and resident students; it also provides advanced learning programs for qualified secondary level students as well as educational, cultural and entertainment programs which are open to local residents well as its students;
- Library services are available at each of these facilities and through the Cobleigh Library located in the Village of Lyndonville; this library provides some of the finest and most accessible means of self-education available to the people of Lyndon.

It is recognized that one's education is not limited to formal, public schooling and that these facilities are available to all the people of Lyndon regardless of whether they are currently matriculated.

### 3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Finding: The Town survey results indicated that working relationships among local educational institutions required improvement. Following are the survey results:

<u>Choice</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Percent</u>
High Priority	88	41.7
Medium Priority	71	33.6
Low Priority	22	10.4
Not a Priority	16	7.6
No Opinion	14	6.6
Made No Response	20	

As the results indicate, 75.3% of the people answering this question on the survey believed that improving the working relationships among the Lyndon Schools was of medium or high priority.

The Town of Lyndon is in the unique situation of having a public elementary school, an independent high school, and a state college all functioning as vital institutions. Students in the area reap many benefits from this situation, ranging from the availability of elementary and secondary classroom situations for practice teaching by L.S.C. education majors and availability of college courses for advanced L.I. students, to special programs planned for young students by the L.S.C. community. Area educators often look to L.S.C. for continued education in their fields of interest. L.I. students often make use of the L.S.C. Library for the extra resources available there and because of its convenient hours. Lyndon Institute and Lyndon Town School guidance personnel are continuously working to coordinate curriculum and ease student transition from graded to high school.

Recommendation: Personnel from the three area schools should be encouraged to continue fostering good communications and resource sharing in order to enhance educational opportunity at all age levels. The Town of Lyndon educational community would benefit from a once-a-year forum or workshop for administrators, faculty and students for the purpose of sharing new ideas, improving communications, and renewing the Town's dedication to cooperative education. Possibly this would spawn more study-specific groups in the areas of library resources, science, art, etc. It is imperative that Lyndon make the most of its unique educational resources.

B. Finding: The largest single issue regarding schools as identified through the Town survey was that 49% of the respondents focused on quality of educational programs. This issue includes the precept that school curriculum must be designed to provide students with training that will enable them to compete for jobs in the next century.

Recommendation: The schools should develop ways to involve parents and community groups in helping to plan, develop, and implement educational programs.

C. Finding: Studies have suggested that one and one-half percent of any population is illiterate. On that basis it may be presumed that almost 100 people in Lyndon do not have the skills to read on a 3rd to 5th grade level. Of course, the number of people who would be considered "functionally illiterate" would be even greater. Furthermore, at present Vermont has a dropout rate of approximately 17%. The Lyndon area rate is only one-half the State rate. It is important to each individual and to society as a whole that everyone be literate and functional.

Recommendation: We must continue to encourage young people to complete their high school education and earn a high school diploma. We must also continue to advertise the availability of Adult Basic Education programs in the area which can help those who want to learn to read, write, learn basic math, and develop vocational skills. People with this desire can become more capable of coping with problems in today's society and more fully realize their potential. Lyndon Institute offers a selection of programs including: adult vocational programs, Lyndon Institute Skills Training program (a special program for dropout students), and a CO-OP Education program. (*Adult Basic Education program, and the opportunity to study and earn a Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED).*) There are advanced training programs offered through Lyndon Institute and Lyndon State College.

There is also an Adult Basic Education (ABE) program offered in St. Johnsbury (and Lyndon has a satellite ABE program at the Cobleigh Public Library.) This program offers a variety of basic learning and skills development courses. The Community College of Vermont offers over 500 courses and associate degrees for people who wish to improve their skills or receive an advanced degree in a specific area of learning.

*(D. Finding: Cobleigh Library collection and services should be available to residents of all ages. Availability is now limited because of a lack of a handicapped access. Recommendation: The Town Selectmen and Library Trustees should study the problem of handicapped accessibility-; identify relevant costs and legal requirements and present a plan to fix the problem in 1993. Perhaps State and/or Federal funds could be used in a matching scheme with local funds.)*

(D. NOTE: A major finding in the 1993 version of the Town Plan was that the Cobleigh Public Library was not handicapped accessible. As a matter of record, a new addition to the Library was completed in 1995 which not only provided handicapped access, but also about 60% more usable space. Incorporated into this improvement was a literacy center, and the Library now provides essential computer training to adult learners. A major Lyndon success story!)

E. Finding: Proper maintenance of high visibility areas and good library services in the Cobleigh Library are essential for attracting new business and customers to the Town. Additional attention to landscaping, general maintenance, and staffing levels would enhance library operations.

(In 1997 the Cobleigh Library recorded one of the highest library visit rates in the State, 7.35 per capita. As of that time, 5931 family library cards had been issued.)  
*(Library usage is up 100% since 1987. In 1990 the library was visited by 3047 patrons.)*  
 The facility is a high visibility building because of this usage, plus the fact that an average of two community meetings are held there each week, and the fact that the building is located in the center of Town.

Recommendation: That the Library Trustees develop a maintenance program to submit to the Town Selectmen. The program should include necessary interior painting and external plantings in the spring and fall. In addition, the Town should explore the possibility of hiring a full-time aide to increase the responsiveness of library services.

F. Finding: Library personnel must (continue to) cooperate with schools and organizations such as Adult Basic Education to insure excellent library service, avoid duplication of effort, and eliminate unnecessary expenditures. *(In addition, updated technology is necessary to increase access.) (The library is limited in size and capacity.)* Cooperation with other libraries (locally and statewide) increases the capability of acquiring books and information.

Recommendation: Through semi-annual meetings with other school librarians, the library staff should insure training needs and technology deficiencies are identified. A policy of shared resources to avoid duplication should be stressed.

G. Finding: The library should (continue to) provide pre-school children and families with books and reading programs to encourage life long readers and promote literacy.

As mentioned above, illiteracy is a serious problem. The community must insure programs are available to help those who want it.

Recommendation: The library should establish a liaison with other agencies which deal with adults and education on a continuing basis to insure that deficiencies are identified and dealt with. In addition, family programs should be provided to encourage reading using local experts and facilities.

I. Finding: There is a need for additional daycare facilities for the very young and for the elderly so that individuals can pursue educational and other endeavors.

Recommendation: The Town should encourage development of additional daycare capabilities by continuing to encourage the private agencies who provide such services to expand as necessary.

## II. ENERGY

1. GOAL: To assure that adequate energy resources are provided at reasonable costs to residential and commercial customers while ensuring public safety, aesthetic quality, and attention to environmental concerns. To encourage the conservation of energy resources and the use of renewable, alternative sources of energy.

2. BACKGROUND: Lyndon's energy needs are currently supplied by Lyndonville Electric Department (a public utility owned by the Village of Lyndonville) and several private dealers of fuel oil, propane, coal, and wood. To support the residential and commercial/ industrial activities, it is desired that energy be supplied as economically as possible within review of the Public Service Board or free market conditions. Renewable and alternative energy resources should also be considered given their societal and global benefits.

3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

Finding: There are a number of things that we can do to improve our management of energy resources.

Recommendations:

(1). New or remodeled construction (whether residential or commercial) should take advantage of efficiency standards which have been developed for building materials, insulation, lighting, heating/cooling, etc. This information is available from building contractors, LED, building materials dealers, heating/plumbing contractors, appliance dealers, Act 250 guidelines, etc.

(2). As part of a management plan of public buildings, a review should be conducted with reference to energy efficiency. Where feasible, modifications should be made to improve energy efficiency and /or conservation.

(3). Encourage area lending institutions to offer energy efficiency incentives in their construction loans.

(4). Encourage public and private utilization of alternative forms of energy such as, but not limited to, hydro, solar, and co-generation.

(5). A survey should be made of all public lighting to determine if more efficient fixtures or systems would be feasible. In the interest of public safety, greater illumination is perhaps needed in certain areas. This should be accomplished as efficiently as possible.

(6). Continued demand side management (DSM) efforts at LED should yield energy savings to the area.

(7). LED should continue its Integrated Resource Planning (IRP) to ensure rate payers' access to electrical energy.

(8). LED should consider burying transmission and distribution lines where feasible.

(9). LED should continue studying the feasibility of a substation tie-in to the 115 KV line to improve reliability to its customers.

### III. TRANSPORTATION

1. GOAL: To improve Lyndon's total transportation system so as to provide the safest and most efficient means of transportation commensurate with a responsible and attainable level of funding.

2. BACKGROUND: After assessing current transportation links and weaknesses, the findings and recommendations outlined below were developed.

3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Finding: The present programs of Town highway maintenance and improvement, and Village street, highway, and sidewalk programs must be continued to insure safety and enhance appearance.

Recommendations:

(1). The Village should do a safety study to improve the crosswalk system.

(2). The Village should do more sidewalk and street curbing (*and develop a plan for installing street signs,*) as the budget allows.

(3). There should be strict enforcement of speed limits on all Town and Village highways and streets. Special attention should be given to the Broad Street section of Route 5, "The Strip".

B. Finding: Cooperation should be solicited from State officials to insure safety and reasonable access to the Vermont State highways located in Lyndon.

Recommendations:

(1). Maintain "thru" traffic in Lyndon Center by continuing to have a safe highway bridge over Miller's Run.

(2). Lyndon Town and Village officials should continually monitor and update traffic flows and Vermont Routes 5, 114, and 122 to ensure safe pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular travel.

(3). Town and Village officials and adjoining landowners should (continue to) work with Vermont Highway officials to promote safe and efficient access to Route 5, Broad Street (The "Strip"), while ensuring adequate access to Route 5 by businesses. (NVDA has just completed a Route 5 study, and AOT has committed to re-design the "Strip".)

C. Finding: Railroad related commerce should be improved.

Recommendation: All reasonable efforts should be made to encourage railroad related commerce by working with the Canadian Pacific Railroad Company and all present and potential railroad related businesses in a coordinated and efficient manner.

D. Finding: Utilization of Caledonia County Airport should be improved.

Recommendation: The Town of Lyndon should join with area communities and the appropriate State and Federal agencies to improve, promote, and utilize the Caledonia County Airport for the growth and prosperity of the Town of Lyndon.

E. Finding: Taxi, bus, and other forms of public transportation should be expanded.

Recommendation: The Town should encourage taxi, bus, and other forms of public transportation by providing adequate parking and service areas. Cooperation should be anticipated from Town and Village departments in providing these items.

F. Finding: Pedestrian and bicycle traffic should be encouraged.

Recommendation: Include in the Town program a more aggressive attempt to develop bicycle and pedestrian paths where economically feasible. See related comments in the Community Facilities section of this plan.

#### IV. PUBLIC SERVICES



1. **GOAL:** To provide adequate public services to the citizens and visitors of Lyndon.

2. **BACKGROUND:** New growth and development should be encouraged within the capabilities of the Town of Lyndon. Infrastructure changes or expansion should take place with a minimum impact on the aesthetic quality of the community.

3. **FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Finding:** Municipal governing and planning boards should consider a number of factors in planning for changes in municipal facilities and/or programs. Listed below are a few of those factors that should be considered.

**Recommendations:**

(1). A management plan should be developed for each Town or Village owned facility. This management plan should remain under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectmen and/or the Village Trustees, and should address current capabilities, projected increase in use, and methods of accommodating that growth. Some of the Town or Village owned facilities are:

- a. Lyndon Town House
- b. Town of Lyndon Cemetery
- c. Town/Village Office
- d. Lyndonville Electric Dept., to include Vail and Great Falls stations
- e. Fire Department
- f. Village Garage
- g. Town Garage
- h. Waste Water Plant
- i. Village Water Structures
- j. Town Gravel Pit

(2). A central facility for fire and police departments should be considered periodically and acted upon if considered feasible.

(3). Consideration should be given to a Town and Village merger or intermunicipal agreements to promote overall efficiency of public services.

(4). Village Trustees should continuously study adequacy of police protection.

(5). Town Selectmen should consider providing police protection to areas outside the Village if interest warrants.

(6). Our volunteer fire department should continually assess their capabilities. Any training or equipment deficiencies should be brought to the attention of the Selectmen.

(7). Water. See additional comments in the Waste and Water Management section of this plan.

(8). Waste water. See additional comments in the Waste and Water Management section of this plan.

## V. HOUSING

1. GOAL: To provide housing that will adequately meet the needs of our people - housing that is affordable, comfortable, and economically integrated.

2. BACKGROUND: In the past, local clergy have sent homeless people to other areas for shelter. It was then determined that Lyndon didn't have large numbers of homeless people, so it was not fair to send them to other areas. Shelters seem to be too temporary a solution and are not conducive to keeping families intact. Permanent, affordable housing seemed to be a better approach.

The Vermont State Housing Authority shows that low income elderly and families with children have difficulty locating good quality rental housing at rents they can afford, i.e., 30% of income including utilities. Realtors report that middle and upper income households have difficulty finding high quality rental housing as well. Landlords claim that the high cost of improvements and limited rental potential discourage them from making the necessary property maintenance and improvement investments.

As this plan is written, local senior housing complexes (Marigold Apts, Darling Inn, and Lyndon Terrace) have traditionally had waiting lists.) *(have waiting lists as follows: Marigold Apts - 8; Darling Inn - 10-15; Lyndon Terrace - 4.)*

Several projects are currently under consideration to address some of the Town's housing needs. *(They are:)* (Three of the projects in which the Town has been involved through grant funding, and has worked with Gilman Housing Trust to develop, are:

A. Rehabilitation/refurbishment of rental units at 98-102 Main Street.

B. Rehabilitation/refurbishment of 118 Main Street.

C. Rehabilitation/refurbishment of the Mathewson Building at the end of Depot Street after it was destroyed by fire.

The first two projects listed above are complete. The Mathewson project includes renovation of the upper two floors for low/moderate income elderly/mobility impaired, with the first floor remaining for commercial use.)

*(A. LAEC Homes, Inc., a corporation sponsored by the Lyndon Area Ecumenical Council, and Gilman Housing Trust are working on an agreement to secure a 5-unit property. Terms of the agreement call for Gilman Housing Trust to purchase and rehabilitate the units, and for LAEC Homes to provide management ministry and mission.*

*B. A second project under discussion by LAEC Homes calls for a privately owned property to be managed by LAEC Homes for young mothers (18 years of age), with infants, who have been released from foster care. LAEC Homes would provide emotional support as these mothers develop the necessary skills to be on their own.*

*C. Also being discussed by LAEC Homes is a group home for pregnant teens.*

*D. The Town of Lyndon has joined with the Northern Community Housing Corporation and secured a grant and other financing to acquire and refurbish 14 units currently occupied by low income households.)*

3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS: Based on the conditions cited above, the Town, clergy, and interested townspeople should work together to address the issues of homelessness and affordable housing.

*(A. Finding: Residential areas have suffered because of poor zoning and through continued acceptance of incompatible activities in these areas.*

*Recommendation: All existing residential neighborhoods in Lyndon should be identified, and should be protected for strictly residential uses with the possible exception of a small grocery or variety store in each neighborhood. Non-conforming uses in residential neighborhoods should be phased out.)*

*(A.)(B). Finding: There is a need for housing for people with specialized needs, such as the handicapped, elderly, and others.*

*Recommendation: These classes should be identified, and the Town should (continue to) encourage development of housing for them.*

*(B.)(C.) Finding: There is a shortage of affordable, decent housing for low and moderate income residents of Lyndon. There is also a lack of quality rental housing (three or four bedrooms) for middle income families.*

*Recommendation: The Town should reduce legal barriers to, and encourage the development of, rental housing.*

*(C.)(D.) Finding: Properly designed and well located mobile home parks can add to the availability of decent, affordable housing stock in the Town.*

*Recommendation: Development of one or more mobile home parks in areas compatible with surrounding land uses should be promoted, as this represents a form of affordable housing of choice for many people.*

## VI. INTRODUCTION TO

## FORESTRY, AGRICULTURE, AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

The following three sections of the Town Plan are entitled Forestry, Agriculture, and Outdoor Recreation. The background portion of these three sections is consolidated into the statement below.

The Town of Lyndon contains 23,061 acres. Most of this land is privately owned with the exception of about 200 acres under municipal ownership and another 253 acres that is State owned. The total forested area in Town is roughly 65% or 15,000 acres. *(However, only 6993 acres (159 parcels) are categorized as forest land by Town classification.)* Approximately 22 % of Lyndon's total land base is being used for agricultural purposes. Of this, 2901 acres are tillable and another 2070 acres are pasture land.

*(Between 1979 and 1984 about 65 house lots were created in developments of six or more lots. Several single house lots were also created. From 1984 to present, 195 house lots have been created, as well as 62 mobile home units in parks. This is a rate of growth four times greater than the rate between 1979 and 1984. House sites, as classified by the Town, cover 11,117 acres, which is almost one-half of the total size of Lyndon. These lots range in size from less than one acre to over 100 acres.)*

The forests and farmlands of Lyndon represent an important part of the Town's heritage. They are also priceless resources for the future. They provide both social and economic benefits for everyone. They also provide a wide array of outdoor recreational opportunities and occasionally contain sites of cultural and natural significance.

The vision of this plan is that Lyndon should remain predominantly rural in character. The panorama, typical of Vermont's landscape, with rolling forests, patchworked with fields and villages, should be retained. Citizens will recognize the importance of conserving our natural resources for themselves and future generations.

Traditional land uses should not be displaced or disappear. Farms and forest land should remain viable and productive. Growth should occur in an orderly fashion, so as not to fragment prime farmland and forest land. Special or unique sites of natural and cultural significance should be identified, and measures should be taken to protect their natural or historic integrity.

Outdoor recreation is recognized as essential to everyone's quality of life. This should ultimately result in a public sector commitment to ensure outdoor recreation opportunities for its residents. The public sector should be helpful in working for and providing support (legislative, technical, and fiscal) for private landowners and the community to build a recreation land base in Town. These actions should lead to a partnership being formed between the public sector and private landowners.

## VII. FORESTRY

1. GOAL: To maintain an adequate forest land based to develop and foster a stewardship ethic considering multiple uses and values of the forest including recreation, water, and natural beauty; and to increase the productivity of the forest, including maple sugaring.

(Note: for the purpose of this plan, "forest land" or "forest soils" refers to land which is not primary agricultural land, but which has reasonable potential for commercial forestry. Such land must be characterized by location, natural conditions, and ownership patterns capable of supporting or contributing to present or potential commercial forestry.)

2. BACKGROUND: See introduction to this section, page 13.

3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Finding: Economic conditions, development and escalating land values and property taxes are pressuring landowners to sell their forest land.

Recommendation: Although the municipality has limited control or influence over the economic forces causing this problem, existing and new State/Federal programs such as Vermont's Use Value Taxation Program and the (*newly created*) federal Forest Legacy Program can provide for property tax relief and money for the purchase of forest conservation easements. These should be explored. Private land uses and estate planning are other options for protection and conservation of forest land.

Efforts to protect our forest land should be ongoing as program monies become available. Assistance to the Town can be provided by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation, US Forest Service, and private land trust organizations. Consideration should be given to establishing a local Conservation Commission to help coordinate efforts.

B. Finding: Efforts must be made to protect and conserve forest land because forests provide important economic, environmental, and social benefits. The conversion of forest land should be directed away from the most valuable growing sites, the most ecologically sensitive, and historically sensitive or significant areas.

Recommendation: A plan to promote forest land benefits should be developed. The first step could be to present residents with a concept of forest planning and benefits and solicit their input. Prime forest land in Lyndon has not been precisely defined, and the limited information which is available is not readily available. The forest land in Town should be identified and classified according to size, ownership, use, potential, and ecological, aesthetic and/or historical values using the FLESA process. (FLESA = Forest Land Evaluation Site Assessment.) The resultant plan would then be presented to the residents.

This plan of action could be done (*by Spring of 1993*) for an approximate cost of \$10,000, which perhaps could be obtained through a Vermont planning grant.

Organizations that should be involved include the Town Planning Commission and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation. Other sources of information include consulting foresters, forest landowners, the Northeastern Vermont Development Association, Lyndon State College, and Lyndon Institute Natural Resources and Environmental Science students.

C. Finding: The fragmentation of forest land is also resulting in a change of land use regarding development patterns. Facilities and roads should be located away from prime forest land.

Taking these soils out of production gradually decreases the forests' ability to buffer environmental degradation and destroys the unique scenic character of the North Country. Forests are essential to our unique historical heritage and character, wildlife habitat, water quality, soil conservation, clean air, climate and aesthetics. In Town, this contributes to the economic benefits and potential of the area.

Recommendation: A process of site selection should be adopted that will categorize and rate the risks associated with the fragmentation of forest areas. This will result in directing development away from prime forest land and areas deemed critical for wildlife, water, and recreation. Two factors should be considered:

- (1). Develop and propose a set of criteria that will allow planners to calculate the risks of degrading forests on any given parcel of land in the Town of Lyndon.
- (2). Conduct a Forest Lands Evaluation Study (*in the spring of 1993*) with funds provided by a State planning grant.

D. Finding: There is a need to promote urban forestry practices within the Village near residences and along roads and public rights-of-way. We currently have no consistent policy that encourages and promotes urban forestry. Such a policy would provide long term benefits to the Town. Most likely this has not been addressed because people are not aware of the economic and environmental benefits for urban forests and tree care.

In contrast to the values of commercial forests, the principle value of urban forested areas is environmental and aesthetic. These values are often unclear or vague within the policies of local governments and in the minds of its citizens.

Recommendation: Promote awareness of the economic and environmental benefits of urban forestry and encourage practices based on a Town-wide plan. Specifically:

- (1). Obtain information on urban forestry practices.
- (2). Engage local agencies in a review of information and present activities.
- (3). Develop a strategy for promotion. (*in 1993.*)

The cost of such an effort should be about \$1500 and could be funded by local greenhouse nurseries, landscape businesses, and similar organizations. Responsible organizations would include the Village Improvement Society and Town/Village highway and parks departments.

E. Finding: There is no documentation or data base which provides the criteria for objectively evaluating economic, social, and environmental values of forest lands in Lyndon. This would contribute to improving the potential of forest lands and educating the public about this resource.

Recommendation: Develop a set of criteria and a model for evaluation of the forest lands in Lyndon, and develop a data base for vital statistics on the resources of the Town. This could be done through the following process:

- (1). Propose a set of guidelines.
- (2). Engage professionals and interested parties to develop a plan and evaluate results.
- (3). Encourage all educational institutions to participate and promote ideas.
- (4). Incorporate results of the FLESA study.

F. Finding: There is no program to make the general public aware of the benefits of acceptable forest management practices and the multiple uses and values of forest land.

Most forest land within the Town of Lyndon is used for timber production or is developed for non-forest related activities. There are commercial uses that some woodlands could be used for that do not destroy the basic character, and these should be publicized.

Recommendation: Include in public information activities the land use options that increase forest potential without destroying the natural character of the forest. This could be accomplished by a local Conservation Commission with assistance from applicable State agencies and educational services.

G. Finding: There is a need to promote good forest management practices to increase productivity. There are many woodlots that are poorly stocked or overstocked with low quality timber. In addition, there are many instances where potentially high quality timber has been cut before its full economic potential was reached. There are other situations where high value stands have been degraded by over-maturity, disease, or damage by poor harvesting practices.

Recommendation: With minimal funding, and with assistance from the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, a local Conservation Commission should be formed with its major objectives being to:



- (1). Meet with interested forest landowners and professional foresters and land managers.
- (2). Review accepted forestry practices and their benefits.
- (3). Develop a plan for promotion that could include the following elements: Town Policy Landowner Association, Professional Foresters Forums, publications of benefits, promotional activities, tree farm program, etc.

## VIII. OUTDOOR RECREATION

1. GOAL: To ensure that there will be adequate outdoor recreational opportunities to meet present and future demands.

2. BACKGROUND: See the introduction to this section, page 13.

3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Finding: There is currently no developed public access to any waters in Town, waters being deemed as public as defined by the Vermont statutes. Action should be taken to insure that we meet the increased demand that will be placed on public waters (lakes, ponds, rivers) for recreational activities.

Recommendation: A local Conservation Commission should be formed to develop policies that will maintain adequate public access to important and/or major public water bodies. Courses of action include the following:

(1). Identify the major public water bodies and consider their significance and contribution in providing recreational opportunities.

(2). (Explore avenues to provide greater public access to rivers and other major public water bodies) (including purchase of land for public access as monies and willing sellers are identified).

B. Finding: There is inadequate trailhead parking in Town for snowmobilers. Local and other snowmobilers are greatly dependent on other access points outside of Town.

Recommendation: Develop and maintain adequate public access to snow machine trails by identifying a favorable location for a trailhead parking area and entering into an appropriate lease or purchase agreement. The Vermont Association of Snow Travelers could work with the Town on a suitable plan of action.

C. Finding: There is no established landowner/user code of ethics to foster a harmonious relationship between private landowners and recreationists. It has been estimated that 85% percent of all outdoor recreational activity in Vermont occurs on privately owned lands. Private lands offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities and are heavily relied upon for dispersed recreational activities such as hunting or fishing.

Recommendation: Develop and implement an education and recognition program for landowners and recreationists. *(in the next two years.)* One objective is to insure that recreationists will recognize the important role and benefit that private land offers to them and will respect landowners rights and interests. This could be done at minimal cost in cooperation with the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation.

D. Finding: There is no municipal land base to provide long term community recreational needs. Acquisition and development of new public park land and open space is becoming increasingly difficult due to high real estate prices and lack of funding. Therefore, as the population continues to grow, there will be increased use and degradation of existing areas.

Recommendation: Acquire and develop an adequate public recreation land base capable of providing a variety of outdoor leisure activities by identifying specific community needs; locating parcels of land which meet these needs; and exploring possible avenues of funding. A volunteer task force could be formed to work these options in conjunction with the municipality.

## IX. AGRICULTURE

1. GOAL: To maintain an adequate agricultural land base, and to increase public awareness of the values of our agricultural industry.

(Note: for the purpose of this plan, "prime farmland" or "primary agricultural soils" means (a.) land which has a potential for growing food and forage crops, with the average slope of the land not exceeding 15%; (b.) land which is sufficiently drained to allow

sowing and harvesting with mechanized equipment; (c.) land which is well supplied with plant nutrients or highly responsive to the use of fertilizer; and (d.) land which has few limitations for cultivation, or limitations which may be easily overcome.)

2. BACKGROUND: See the introduction to this section, page 13.

3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Finding: Fragmentation of farmland is occurring and is resulting in a change of land use. Our objective should be to sustain the present level of agricultural activity.

Recommendations:

(1). The Town should identify all operating farms and parcels of land in agricultural use, then classify that farmland according to use, productivity potential, social, ecological, aesthetic, and historical values using the LESA process. (Land Evaluation Site Assessment). This could be done at an approximate cost of \$10,000, funded through a Vermont Planning Grant. A special Town planning committee could be formed to oversee the process with assistance from the US Soil Conservation Service, UVM Extension Service, and the Vermont Department of Agriculture.

(2). The Selectmen and Zoning Board should (continue to) encourage the location of new development away from prime farmland in (*a revision of*) municipal zoning by-laws and subdivision regulations. Cluster development away from these lands should be considered.

B. Finding: Because of economic conditions and development pressures, escalating land values and property taxes combined with increasing operational costs are pressuring farmers to sell land.

Recommendation: Voluntary steps to conserve/protect farmland should be explored. These steps include the following:

(1). Direct purchase or conservation easement by a land trust organization.

(2). Tax incentive programs such as the Vermont Use Value Appraisal Program. The feasibility of a municipal program should be explored.

(3). Estate planning, with assistance being provided by the UVM Extension Service and tax experts.

(4). Marketing assistance provided by the Vermont Department of Agriculture.

A local Conservation Commission could study the feasibility and gauge support for additional, municipally funded options.

C. Finding: As there still appear to be conflicting/ negative attitudes towards farming, there is a need to educate the public as to the values and benefits for the public of our agricultural land and industry. The public needs to understand how the agricultural industry contributes to both our economic and social well-being.

Recommendation: A local Conservation Commission should establish a program to build public awareness, appreciation and understanding of how a healthy agricultural climate will positively affect everyone's quality of life. The program could include elements as follows:

(1). Supporting educational programs in local schools which teach resource-based skills and conservation.

(2). Conducting workshops/seminars aimed at educating the public about the economic and social values of the agricultural industry.

(3). Conducting tours of working farms for the public, allowing farmers and other residents to discuss their questions/concerns/attitudes.

Assistance for this type of program could be obtained from the UVM Extension Service, US Soil Conservation Service, US Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, and local vocational programs in high schools.

## X. SPECIAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

1. GOAL: To preserve the area's special and historic resources and promote a public appreciation of Lyndon's historic past.

2. BACKGROUND: The Town of Lyndon has a long and varied history. From its beginnings in 1791 to the present day, the Town's physical features have been affected by the interests of its citizens in agriculture, commerce, religion, education, and industry. Numerous distinctive buildings from the various stages of Lyndon's development remain in each of the main centers of the Town (Lyndon Corner, Lyndon Center, and

Lyndonville), as well as in several less well defined areas. Lyndonville, for example, was designed in 1866 as a railroad community. It has been suggested by the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation that it may have the largest concentration of railroad workers' homes in original condition of any town in Vermont. These buildings, as well as many others planned by the railroad and by individual citizens in other parts of Town are a rich reminder of the Town's heritage. As the Town continues to grow and change, new markers will be created for future generations.

In maintaining a sense of community, it is in the Town's best interest to promote a public appreciation of Lyndon's historic past. By providing public recognition of the many notable examples of the past which have survived to now, and at the same time incorporating these examples into the activities of our lives in the late 20th century, the Town will insure that sense of community and continuity. For some buildings or structures, strict preservation may be the only way to keep them available for future generations, while adaptive reuse may be the preferred route with others.

Having just completed celebration of the Town's Bicentennial, general interest in the Town's history is at a relatively high level. The Town's history has also recently been published, and activities of the Historical Society continue to bring items of historical interest to the public eye.

Many of Lyndon's historic resources are within the public domain. It is recommended that the majority of these remain in public ownership so that they can be preserved for future generations. In most cases, a special interest board or committee oversees these structures/buildings/activities and works with the Town Selectmen regarding their use. Costs of maintenance of special projects are financed by tax dollars, contributions, or trust funds already established.

Buildings of historic interest held by private owners are mostly residences. These are considered special resources either because of their architectural style, the person

who initiated construction, date of construction, or special importance to the community at some time in its history. For all these buildings we should encourage owners to take pride in their buildings' past and retain the historical charm and beauty of their properties. Public appreciation of these properties should be promoted as much as the appreciation of properties in the public domain. Periodic tours of selected properties or prizes for renovation of landmark buildings are two suggestions for accomplishing this goal. Where it is necessary to change the use of an historic building in order to retain its economic viability, we encourage adaptive reuse plans which will maintain these buildings within our community.

Although partial at best, the following buildings, structures, or activities are considered to be "special resources" within the Town of Lyndon:

#### Lyndon Center

- Shores Museum
- Town House
- Baptist Church
- Lyndon Institute Campus
- Miller's Run Bridge
- Luther Harris House (*current owner D. Drew*)
- Wild Boar Fountain
- Stone Water Trough
- Revolutionary War Monument
- Sleeping Child Monument
- Bicentennial Monument (*to be erected in Spring, 1992*)

#### Lyndon Corner

- Old Congregational Church
- Grange Hall
- Old Lyndon Academy (*current owner R. Delabruere*)
- Dana Block (*current owner M. Godfrey*)
- Lyndon Corner School
- Chamberlain Bridge
- Schoolhouse Bridge
- Quimby House (*current owner D. Vinton*)
- Eaton House
- Waterman House

#### Lyndonville

- Bandstand Park
- Houses surrounding park (*various owners*)
- "Railroad houses" on East and Raymond Sts. (*various owners*)
- Veterans Memorial
- Donatello Lions.
- Merry Cyclers Water Tub
- Cobleigh Public Library
- Lyndonville Military Band
- Sanborn Bridge
- Lyndonville Graded School
- Jardine House (*current owner Irons*)
- Darling House (*current owner D. Drew*)
- Darling Inn
- Connecticut & Passumpsic Rivers R.R. repair shops (off Church Street)  
(*current owner Platt Fence Co.*)

#### Other Areas

Randall Bridge  
 Marker of first Town Meeting on Vail Drive  
 Cahoon House (*current owner Hoffman*)  
 Riverside School  
 Squabble Hollow School

### 3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

(A. Finding: *There is no citizen group currently*) (The Lyndon Historical Advisory Committee has been) tasked with the responsibility of tracking these resources and providing local, informational recommendations, the degree of which would vary based on ownership.

Recommendation: In order to facilitate the accomplishment of some of the goals outlined herein, (*an "Historic Preservation Committee" should be appointed by Town Selectmen. As a permanent committee (with revolving membership as seen fit by the Selectmen), such a group would*) (The Lyndon Historical Advisory Committee should) continue the efforts of this study committee in compiling a more comprehensive inventory of the Town's historic resources. The information gathered would serve as an advisory resource to Selectmen and the Town Planning Commission when new developments and/or changes to historic structures or areas are considered. The committee could also spearhead efforts for public recognition of laudable renovation projects and could be a source of information for Townspeople regarding historic preservation grants. Attracting attention to the Town's covered bridges and other historic points of interest could be another of the committee's functions. (*A permanent committee is needed to offer continuity in these efforts.*)

Additional Recommendations: Specific objectives and strategies for some of the properties listed above are mentioned on the following pages. These recommendations were developed from discussions with property owners, persons interested in historical preservation, and review of the results of a recent survey of Town peoples' attitudes regarding these issues. Categories of structures are listed by "AREA OF FOCUS".



## XI. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND RECREATION

1. GOAL: To improve and expand our public facilities to better meet the needs of the community at a minimum cost to taxpayers with emphasis on family recreation, the youth, the handicapped, and safety. This, in turn, will improve the quality of life in Lyndon.

2. BACKGROUND: More and more residents are walking, or want to be walking and/or biking as a means of transportation and/or exercise, but they are concerned about safety. There are no bike or walking paths in Town that residents could use in lieu of Town roads.

*(Handicapped access to municipal facilities, and the ability of the handicapped to use existing sidewalks, is limited. Future development plans must definitely include considerations to overcome this weakness.)*

The desire for recreation has increased as individuals' financial resources have decreased. Less income, added stress with unemployment, two parents working, or single parenting responsibilities have all caused recreation to be viewed not merely as a pleasurable past time, but as an important part of family life for the physical and emotional well being of its members.

There is considerable concern for the youth in the community, particularly those who "hang out" while parents are working. With parents working more, our kids' need for a support group and a place to belong has increased. The increasing number of participants in the Powers Park Summer Program is evidence that kids prefer not to be alone, to have a place to be. They need their own special gathering place to share experiences, learn from one another, experience teamwork, and increase their self-esteem. They need to belong and to be safe.

As a outgrowth of this committee's research on facilities and recreation, lighting in the Town and Village became an item of interest. It appears that lighting could be greatly improved simply by changing existing fixtures to more energy efficient ones that give off more light and use less electricity.

3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS: Specific needs, and their related goals and action steps are covered in the following tables.

## XII. RETAIL, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREA & FACILITIES

1. GOAL: To establish the right conditions and environment to allow and encourage business growth in designated areas in the Town. This, in turn, should provide area economic growth to insure continued job, business, and tax base expansion opportunities.

2. BACKGROUND: Over the years the Town has benefited from the presence of several manufacturing facilities within our borders. Our tax base has been broadened, many of our residents have become skilled workers, and payroll dollars have been paid and spent in our community. The continued presence of these or similar operations and the development of, or transferring in of, additional industrial operations will continue to provide benefits to the community.

Much the same may be said for our retail and commercial businesses. However, the retailing and commercial business activities of the Village and Town face several problems which may hamper the orderly growth of the area as a viable retail center. These include:

A. Inconvenient and potentially insufficient parking for customers and employees of retailers, banks, and other commercial businesses and services.

B. Traffic congestion and poor traffic flow at key points. By hampering the smooth flow of traffic, accident potential increases.

C. Deterioration of roadways, partly caused by heavy truck traffic through the Village.

D. Unsightly strip development, particularly on Broad Street, which has caused some businesses to place unsightly barriers to prevent drivers from passing vehicles making left turns.

E. The need to extend services such as water, sewer, and power to accommodate future development.

### 3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Finding: There is often insufficient parking in the Village to accommodate both employees and customers, and the problem may grow with population increases. This could have a negative impact on businesses located in this area.

Recommendation: A series of steps should be taken to remedy this situation:

(1). There should be a parking study conducted to determine the number of parking spaces needed for employees.

(2). Where posted, the 2 hour parking rule should be enforced. A 15 minute rule might be considered for spaces in front of the Post Office and banks; or some spaces might be designated for a 15 minute maximum if parking becomes a continuing and significant problem in those areas.

(3). A meeting should be held between Town officials, retailers, bankers, and other businesses to explore alternate sites for parking. Perhaps specific areas, including the parking area behind the municipal building, could be designated for employee parking. The meeting should also address establishing as many as three off street parking areas in the vicinity of South Main Street, Elm Street, and the north end of Broad Street. These are the areas where future expansion is most likely, and the parking could be assigned to either employees or customers as the needs of the time dictated. Options to buy houses/properties to accommodate this plan should be considered. (Any plan for developing additional parking should include signage to advise motorists of the location of that parking.)

Funding for additional parking could come in the form of Federal or State grants; business assessments based on parking lot needs for each business; metering the parking lot and enforcement of the two hour parking limit on Depot Street; or some combination of these. Any costs to the Town or Village should be considered as investments intended to enhance the attractiveness of the area as a retail or commercial business location, thus maintaining, or hopefully increasing, the tax base.

B. Finding: Traffic congestion through the Village on Route 5 is serious and getting worse.

Recommendation: The Town, Village, and State should *(do an immediate traffic study of Route 5. Remedies that should be considered for implementation include creating)* (continue to pursue remedies as recommended in the NVDA Route 5 study and the AOT proposed re-design of Broad Street, which includes) turning lanes, installing curbing, creating specific "enter" and "exit" areas, and (possibly) installing at least one traffic light to interrupt traffic flow. In addition, consideration should be given to improving an alternate route around the Village such as through Lyndon Center or over Lily Pond Road.

Trucking (tractor-trailer) traffic through the Village should be discouraged. It creates congestion, slows traffic, and makes conditions more dangerous for pedestrians. Discouraging truck traffic could be accomplished by improving existing truck routes, developing new or alternate routes, and/or restricting weight limits.

*(C. Finding: Conditions could be improved to accommodate and encourage future development.*

Recommendations: *A number of actions should be taken, including the following:*

(1). *Water and sewer lines should be extended into areas of potential development. These include Red Village Road, Route 114, and Route 122. Expense could be borne by taxpayers in anticipation of future revenues.*

(2). *Re-zoning is a major project that should be done in 1992. The business district needs room to grow, and consideration should be given to:*

*-Allowing commercial development, with strict design control, on both sides of Main Street;*

*-Encouraging future growth and development on Elm Street through additional parking, additional retail outlets, and/or zoning considerations.*

*-Encouraging industrial development in both the Industrial Park and along Route 122 to take advantage of available space and traffic access.*

*-Allowing small businesses in most areas of Town with restrictions in some strictly residential areas. Limit (by square footage, employment, traffic flow, etc.) of industrial facilities outside of designated industrial areas.*

*These factors should acknowledge the increased development anticipated in the Burke Mountain and East Burke area, as well as traffic patterns generated by the new Town School. Signs on the Interstate and around Town should clearly designate business areas.*

(3). *Build incentives for businesses to expand and improve to keep the economy strong. Perhaps establish a five year, limited tax stabilization. Some type of tax stabilization is particularly important for new businesses.*

(4). *Establish through grant monies and Town resources a revolving loan fund to help small and new businesses to get started.*

(5). *Develop an advertising campaign to attract new, commercial businesses.*

(6). *Establish a liaison between existing businesses and community leaders to identify trouble spots and solve associated problems.*

(7). *Encourage Lyndonville Development Corporation to promote the availability of the land it owns for future businesses. Possibly the Corporation could build speculation buildings.*

(8). *Propose simplified Act 250 procedures, perhaps using a master plan based on service requirements, traffic, visual impact, etc., to simplify the process for new businesses.)*

### XIII. WASTE AND WATER MANAGEMENT

1. GOAL: To provide for Lyndon's needs in waste and water management such that we have sufficient, uncommitted reserve capacity to allow for future growth. The Lyndon plan must be responsive to environmental concerns and State laws regarding disposal of waste and management of water and wastewater systems. Management of these areas must be in compliance with State laws to protect our environment and avoid penalties for non-compliance.

2. BACKGROUND: Execution of the plans to separate storm water from the sanitary sewer system (*should increase*) (has increased) the uncommitted reserve capacity of the waste water plant by (*200,000 to*) (over) 250,000 gallons per day. The Town survey indicated that very few residents were interested in hooking onto the water and sewer systems. (For instance, only 7 of the respondents from Finney Hill indicated a desire to have sewer lines extended to their area.) Therefore, it appears that we will have sufficient reserve capacity to accommodate normal population growth for at least ten years - maybe more. However, this topic should be reconsidered as interest warrants.

Threats to drinking water supplies was ranked second in a list of 17 items from which respondents were asked to identify the two most important to them. Our municipal water supply is tested frequently for both bacteria and organic chemicals. The supply of water is tremendous, and since the water treatment system has been added, the municipal water system should be adequate for years to come.

However, the same level of confidence does not always exist in regard to drinking water from wells and springs in the surrounding areas because of some concern about inadequate septic systems. Septic systems are discussed further below in the findings and recommendations section.

Respondents to the survey strongly favored remaining in the Waste Management District; continuing/expanding/mandating the recycling program; initiating a composting system; and educating the public about waste management. (*Nevertheless, at the current time the District has limited financial resources because the voters have not passed a budget, and the Town must be prepared to offer comprehensive waste programs on its own.*)

#### 3. FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. Finding: Contracting the operation of the waste water plant has improved management and compliance with State regulations, and this action appears to have reduced the possibility of the Town being fined or otherwise penalized for non-compliance. However, the cost of the contract will inevitably increase every year, and even though the contract includes provisions for contractor liability in terms of a violation, the Town remains ultimately responsible.

Recommendation: The Town should annually reevaluate the cost-effectiveness of this contract, with a perspective of attempting to balance increasing costs against the

possibility of liability in the event of a violation. There may very well be a point where it would be more cost effective for the Town to cancel the contract, put appropriate resources behind hiring the right people, and again run the plant and assume all liability without use of an outside contractor.

B. Finding: Sewer plant sludge is currently disposed of by spreading on approved but leased sites.

Recommendation: The Town should consider buying or leasing additional land for this purpose.

C. Finding: With completion of the storm water/sewer separation system, our waste water plant reserve capacity should be sufficient to accommodate expected residential and small business growth. Nevertheless, plant capacity may have to be increased if the Town expects industry.

Recommendation: The Town should conduct an annual review of reserve capacity, expected growth, and trend information to enhance planning for plant renovations and/or expansion within a programmed, manageable time table.

D. Finding: There is some concern that there are not adequate controls on the installation of septic systems and that neighboring water supplies might be jeopardized by this lack of control.

Recommendation: Current, commonly used sources of information on septic system design and installation should be reviewed to determine their adequacy for our Town's use. Perhaps the Zoning Board should consider requiring certification that a system was installed following the guidelines given with the State perc test or other appropriate guidelines.

E. Finding: *(Many of our water lines are in need of repair, and water loss appears to be about 37% in 1991. Contributing to the problem of fixing leaks is the inadequacy of our maps, most of which date back to the early 1900's. Although we generally know where the lines are horizontally, we have little information on the depth of those lines.)* (There has been significant improvement in water management since 1991. The combination of new water meters, leak detection, and aggressive repair/replacement of lines has reduced water loss to about 25% as of the last quarter in 1997. The sewer/stormwater separation program provided good opportunity to improve our mapping of water lines as well. However, ongoing management attention is required to continue this positive trend.)

Recommendation: The Village should continue their work with the Rural Water Association to develop an effective leak detection program. The program should include periodic leak detection scans with management oversight of repairs in priority order. As lines are repaired, or when any other opportunity allows, depth information should be correlated and added to our maps.

F. Finding: Waste management alternatives are constantly changing. As a result, the entire area of waste management needs continued, priority scrutiny by the Town Selectmen. The Town of Lyndon should be prepared to take a leadership role in developing alternatives for not only Lyndon residents, but also our neighboring towns. Because of its size, location, and available waste management expertise, Lyndon could become the "center" for developing area waste alternatives at reasonable cost. The following recommendations are suggestions that the Town should incorporate in their development of options:

Recommendations:

(1). Since it appears that we will have to send our mixed waste to a lined landfill (*in Coventry or Bethlehem*), waste disposal costs will increase dramatically. As a result, the Town should explore alternative waste measures to locate cheaper, as effective methods of disposal. For example, the Town could expand its recycling program if the market allows and/or develop a local composting program. Expansion of recycling should be considered from two perspectives: recycling additional types of materials and increasing resident participation. Increasing participation can be done through education; making recycling easy (curbside); charging less for recycled material than regular waste; or by mandating.

(2). As the cost of disposal is increasing significantly, Town Selectmen should consider changing the fee schedule from one that is standard for all families to one based on usage. For example, perhaps a flat fee could be imposed that would allow a certain volume of waste to be disposed, with additional fees for additional volume. Other options include allowing residents to contract directly with waste haulers of their choice, perhaps negotiating a price for a fixed volume; and providing residents the option of hauling their own waste to a particular location to avoid charges generated by the cost of transportation in a curbside pick-up program.

(3). The Town should continue periodic opportunities for residents to dispose of hazardous waste. This program should be offered at least semi-annually.

Fundamentally important to the implementation of a Town Plan is its enforcement through municipal land use regulations, or zoning bylaws. Land use regulations should provide, at a minimum, for the following:

1. The zoning bylaws should be clear and understandable.
2. Maximum authority, consistent with the Town Plan, should be granted to the Zoning Administrator to issue permits. Property owners should not be obligated to appear before the Zoning Board or Planning Commission in any matter where they are entitled to a permit as a matter of right under the ordinance.
3. Requests for variances, conditional use permits and other Zoning Board or Planning Commission action should not be required for a proposal that does not involve a change in land use unless there has been a material change in circumstances from the last time a permit affecting the property in question was granted. For example, if a retail store on Depot Street closes, and another retail business seeks to occupy the space, the Zoning Administrator should be authorized to grant a permit. This is for the convenience of land owners, not the Zoning Board or Planning Commission. These appeals require additional expense, and additional time, in many matters where the zoning permit must be granted as a matter of law.
4. In any proceeding before the Zoning Board or Planning Commission, adjoining landowners should be notified so that they may appear and participate before a permit is granted.
5. The zoning ordinance should be strictly enforced by the Zoning Administrator with the financial and political support of the Selectmen. Failure to enforce bylaw violations is unfair to those who abide by the regulations, breeds disrespect for the zoning bylaws, and imperils the enforceability of the zoning bylaws in appropriate cases when the bylaws are ignored or violated with impunity.
6. Under Vermont law, it is very difficult to grant variances from the strict requirements of a zoning ordinance. The zoning bylaws should make possible the granting of conditional use permits in those cases where relief from the strict requirements of a zoning bylaw is justified.
7. Lyndon is a growing town and, in the future, may attract substantial commercial, industrial and residential development. Within the vision presented by the Town Plan and its recommendations, the zoning bylaws should define with care those areas in Town where commercial and industrial activities are permitted so that they will not interfere with the reasonable expectations of people who buy homes in residential areas.

#### APPENDIX B: LAND USE MAP

Lyndon's land use map is shown on the following page. Prospective land uses are expected to be essentially similar to current uses to maintain the generally residential,



retail, and commercial character of the Lyndonville area; the generally residential nature of the Lyndon Center and Lyndon Corner areas and, except for specifically designated areas, the generally agricultural and forest nature of the outlying areas of the Town.

All land shown on the map without a specific designation is zoned "RR", meaning Rural Residential.

Following is the legend of explanations of the various symbols used on the map:

RR - Rural Residential

RNH - Residential Neighborhood

*(VR - Village Residential)*

VC - Village Commercial

*(CR - Commercial Residential)*

PK - Park

*(VC - Village Commercial)*

IND - Industrial

*(FP - Flood Plain)*

C - Commercial

LCI - Lyndon Corner Industrial

MAIN - Main Street

IC - Institutional Control Area

I/C - Industrial/Commercial

TOWN OF LYNDON  
APPENDIX B: LAND USE MAP  
(See previous page for legend)

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TOWN OF LYNDON

APPENDIX C: TRANSPORTATION MAP

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TOWN OF LYNDON

UTILITIES AND FACILITIES MAP

LEGEND

1. Lyndon Town School
2. Lyndon Institute
3. Lyndon State College
  
4. Cobleigh Public Library
5. Caledonia County Fairgrounds
6. Lyndon Outing Club
7. Fenton Chester Ice Arena
8. Powers Park
9. Lyndon Municipal Bldg.
10. Town Highway Facility
11. Village Well Field
12. Waste water Treatment Plant
13. Lyndonville Fire Department
14. Fisher Field Little League Pk.
15. Storm water Separation

APPENDIX E: POWER GENERATING PLANTS  
AND TRANSMISSION LINES

TOWN OF LYNDON

APPENDIX F: PLAN ELEMENTS CHECKLIST

1. A statement of objectives, policies and programs of the municipality to guide the future growth and development of land, public services and facilities, and to protect the environment. ADDRESSED in Overview.

2. A land use plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective land uses. ADDRESSED in Sections VI, VII, VIII, IX and Appendix B.

3. A transportation plan (map and statement) showing existing and proposed highways and other transportation. ADDRESSED in Section III and Appendix C.

4. A facility and utility plan, consisting of a map and statement of present and prospective community facilities. ADDRESSED in Sections IV, XI,, and Appendices D and E.

5. A statement on the preservation of rare and irreplaceable natural areas, scenic and historic features and resources. ADDRESSED in Sections VI and X.

6. An educational facilities plan (map and statement). ADDRESSED in Section I and Appendix D.

7. A recommended program for the implementation of the objectives of the development plan. ADDRESSED in Overview.

8. A statement indicating how the plan relates to the development trends and plans of neighboring communities in the region. ADDRESSED in Overview and Section VII.

9. An energy plan, including an analysis of energy resources, needs, scarcities, costs and problems, and a statement on the conservation of energy. ADDRESSED in II.

10. A housing element including a recommended program for addressing low and moderate income persons' housing needs. ADDRESSED in Section V.

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