

Town of Alstead
Draft Vision Statement
May 4, 2007

Alstead is a community that prides itself on several hundred years of rich history. From mills to mining, agriculture and industry, Alstead has generally been left intact as a pristine rural community. The Town's history has shaped not only the land, but its creative, skilled and dedicated citizens. These residents, many whose families have lived in Alstead for generations, have a strong sense of stewardship of the land, pride in town services and community spirit and a strong passion for the rural atmosphere.

Most small towns are held together by the social capital of the community. Alstead is no exception. Social capital is the value of social networks within a community and the spirit, willingness and attitude of people to engage in community activities and volunteerism. In Alstead, activities that build social capital include the Town Festival, Earth Day Cleanup and the Pancake Breakfast, among others. Maintaining and supporting social organizations that build on the social capital of Alstead is of utmost importance.

Country roads, scenic views, significant forested areas, historic landmarks and village, stone walls, pristine water resources and small town character are highly valued by the citizens of Alstead. Our vision is one where all of these valuable assets are protected. Change here is inevitable as growth pressure impacts Alstead; our vision must guide us toward planned and thoughtful growth that will maintain the rural atmosphere so cherished by our community.

In order to craft this Vision, a required element of the Master Plan under RSA 674:2, we have engaged in a number of community activities. This Vision is a collection of the thoughts and ideas that were expressed during these activities, which included a community survey in 2005, a brainstorming session in 2007, public meetings, and informal discussions with townspeople. The following statements reflect the thoughts and ideas as determined during these community activities:

To maintain and nurture our **Community Character**, Alstead will...

- Work toward fostering a sense of community and maintaining the social fabric that has made Alstead a great place to live.
- Recognize that the visual character of the community comes from the many scenic views along its low-volume country roads. We will work at preserving and enhancing the rural character of the Town as seen from its roads.
- Encourage pride in the local skill base among citizens and support development of trades and crafts based organizations.
- Seek to fully integrate our elder citizens in the community and provide appropriate services for their support

- Increase and sustain active participation in Town politics and activities among our younger families and elder citizens.
- Investigate new means of communicating with younger families and elder citizens and seek to bring their knowledge base to the civic community.
- Reevaluate current zoning and make changes to prevent sprawl throughout the town, and evaluate areas within Town where denser development may be appropriate.

To ensure opportunity for **Economic Vitality**, in character with our rural community, Alstead will...

- Promote revitalization of Alstead Village.
- Support efforts that bring viable access to DSL, Broadband and/or wireless internet accessibility to home-based and commercial businesses.
- Actively support and promote organizations, businesses and individuals who contribute to the uniqueness and vibrancy of the Town's creative economy.
- Foster well-managed growth.

To protect and conserve our **Natural Resources**, Alstead will...

- Seek to permanently protect large areas of unfragmented forests and agricultural land through purchase in fee or development rights.
- Enhance protection measures for water resources, farmland, river corridors, groundwater, forested areas, wildlife habitat, wetlands and open space.
- Seek ways to protect the Cold River corridor, designated as a special resources of statewide significance by the NH Rivers Program.
- Collaborate with the several entities already working to protect the water resources found in Alstead and update the Water Resources Management Plan
- Review the Town's Zoning Ordinance periodically to ensure that local zoning adequately balances potential development while protecting natural resources.
- Create an Open Space Plan and a Land Conservation Plan to protect and preserve sensitive environmental areas and help guide public policy regarding development.
- Maintain recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, snow mobiling, cross country skiing, horse back riding and hiking, in concert with an Open Space and Land Conservation Plan.
- Foster a good relationship between outdoor enthusiasts and land owners.
- Support sustainable development through use of environmentally friendly regulations, building practices, energy sources, and reduced carbon emissions where appropriate.
- Support efforts to implement the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan and Cold River Restoration Plan.

To maintain the integrity of Alstead's **Historic Past**, Alstead will...

- Develop and maintain a priority list to rank sites that are worthy of nomination for both the National and State Register of Historic Places, state historical markers, and local markers.
- Support the Historical Society in meeting standards and requirements that qualify the organization for state and federal funding.
- Preserve locally designated buildings and sites of historic or natural significance by supporting the activities of organizations such as the Alstead Area Community Trust. .
- Continue to provide the public with information about local historic places within the Town.
- Continue to support and preserve the historic Shedd-Porter Library.

To continue to provide exceptional **Community Services** to its residents, Alstead will...

- Manage and maintain or expand current facilities consistent with the changing population needs.
- Address underutilized and unmaintained town facilities, such as Vilas Pool and complete a state-approved maintenance plan for Vilas Pool/Dam.
- Explore opportunities for improving access to public waters (e.g. Lake Warren) and the development of public walking trails (e.g. between Vilas Pool and the village, and along river corridors).
- Continue to promote youth and elder services.
- Maintain the Capital Improvements Plan to mitigate fiscal impacts related to growth and to guide public spending.
- Prepare for the future needs of the school.
- Update technological capabilities in the town office to facilitate community planning.
- Track the needs of town departments as population changes over time.

To develop a greater **Regional Connection** to support its residents more efficiently, Alstead will...

- Foster and explore opportunities for inter-municipal cooperation in areas such as solid waste, recycling, and community services (including emergency services).
- Provide a resource directory of local and neighboring communities' available products and services.
- Improve the functionality and updating of the town website, including the development of a policy which encourages the entry of information and links of local or regional importance.