

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

There are five key recommendations which should be given priority by the towns as they begin the process of implementing the Master Plan. They are:

- Establish an Open Space protection program given the limited amount of land permanently protected in each town and the critical need for protecting natural resources and the rural historic character of Buckland and Shelburne;
- Apply for a planning grant to comprehensively update and revise each town's zoning bylaws and maps outlining districts according to the recommendations of the Master Plan;
- Utilize the Pavement Management program to expend funds on road repairs in the most cost efficient manner;
- Ensure that there is land available for future commercial and light industrial growth to diversify and stabilize the tax base; and
- Expand the National Historic District in Shelburne Falls.

The Master Planning process has concluded with two Public Forums and presentations to Annual Town Meetings in Buckland and Shelburne. In addition, the final Public Forum was videotaped and aired on Local Cable TV. Copies of the Master Plan have been placed in each Town Hall and the Public Libraries. Large scale maps and copies of the Master Plan have been provided to each town and its municipal boards. The final task of this project has been the creation of model bylaws for use by the Planning Boards in each Town.

The catalyst for both communities to undertake this major project is reflected in the responses to the community surveys. Threats to prime farmland, rural character, environmental resources, and historic features, which make both communities such wonderful places to live, are increasing. This document has been made possible through the volunteer efforts of the members of the Master Planning Committee and grant funding provided by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs Planning for Growth Program. It is filled with information and maps about the towns of Buckland and Shelburne and guidance about how to grow wisely in the future. The next challenge for Buckland and Shelburne will be to implement the recommendations this Master Plan contains.