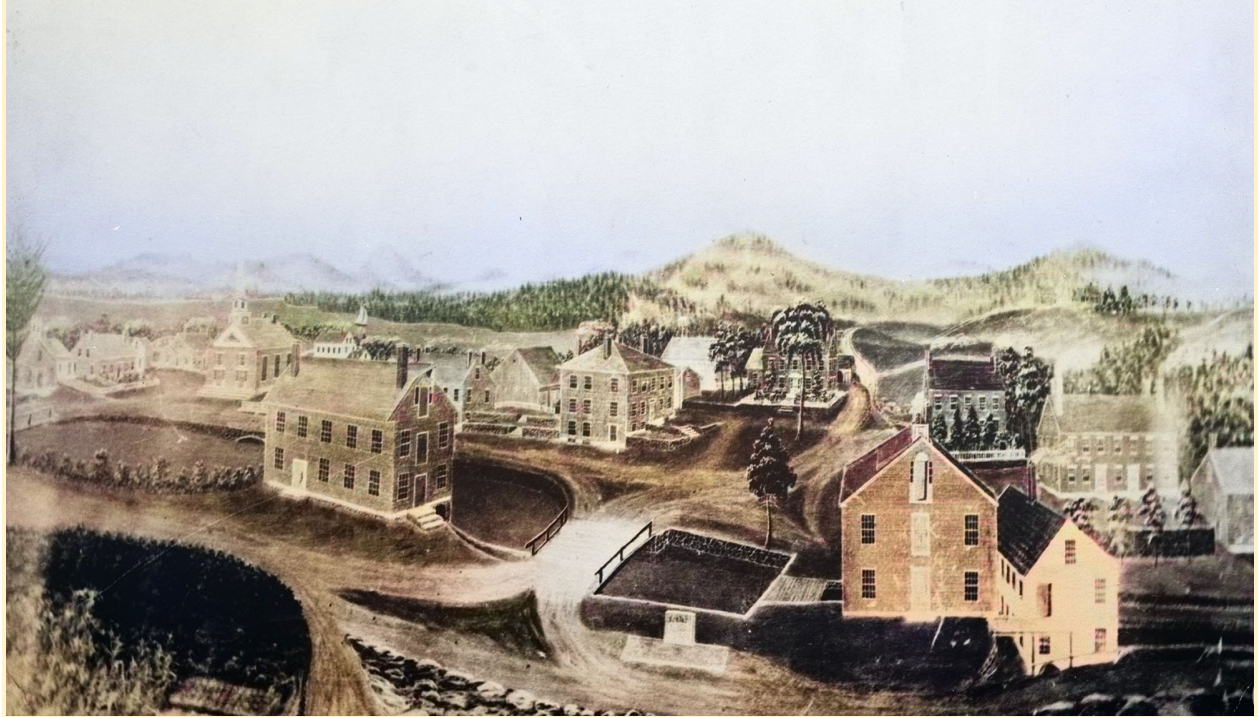


# *At A Glance*



## *What is a Master Plan?*

A Master Plan is a guide to the future based on a vision for the Town developed by the residents.



Resource: [Harrisville Master Plan 2014](#)  
Harrisville Town Offices (603)827-3431  
Pamphlet Version: March 15, 2024

# At A Glance

## *Vision: Harrisville, New Hampshire*

The vision's purpose is to identify measures that will ensure Harrisville continues as a vital, sustainable community with a high quality of life in the future. This requires conservation, civic engagement, business opportunities, innovation, and capital investments. Many components are long-term, up to 20 years or more, but the town should begin to work on these goals now.

The vision for Harrisville can be categorized and considered in four critical tenets, which will develop guiding principles with concrete objectives and implementation recommendations. These components are suggested to guide the preservation of elements in Harrisville's character that we, as residents, enjoy and value. They also shape Harrisville's ability to absorb and succeed with inevitable shifts in technology, climate and demographics. The future leaders of Harrisville will need to consider these four tenets as they make plans and decisions for our community.



## Guiding Principles

### 1. Conservation/ Preservation



- Preserve natural resources: water, land, forests
- Preserve historic locations and buildings
- Preserve scenic natural beauty and open spaces
- Protect wildlife habitat
- Control air, noise and light pollution
- Plan sensible land use and development to prevent sprawl and encourage more housing density in central areas

## 2. *Viability*



- Improve opportunities so that people can afford to live and work here
- Enable economic development that is consistent with the town's historic and natural resources
- Plan for solid, reliable infrastructure: reliable power and energy supply, cell phone reception, high speed internet connection
- Diversify transportation options: public transportation, non-motorized local travel

## 3. *Vitality & Health, Quality of Life*



- Enhance social capital, citizenship, community involvement, governance
- Encourage a heterogeneous demographic mix
- Create opportunities for interaction and communication, physical spaces for community events
- Strengthen existing village of Harrisville, store, post office, pedestrian safety, parking, and create or enhance other sections of town
- Expand recreational opportunities
- Create more locations for physical activity: walkable community, sports & exercise facilities
- Support strong, cost-effective public education
- Continue arts & cultural events that attract people and make the town a dynamic place

## 4. *Sustainability*



- Support local food production, local farms and forestry
- Develop local energy production
- Preserve natural resources (see conservation/ preservation)
- Conserve energy with incentives for renewable energy and energy-efficient building, energy efficient building codes, recycling
- Seek mitigation for impacts of climate change on natural resources of water and land

# 13 Master Plan Topics



## Historic Preservation



Harrisville contains seven historic districts, all of which are entered in the National Register of Historic Places. The Historic District Commission (HDC) is charged with preserving the vitality and integrity of Harrisville's historic legacy.

## Governance

Harrisville is governed by a 3-member Select Board, tasked with following the directives of the voters at Town Meeting. A broad volunteer base serves other governmental functions. "Good governance" involves clear and straightforward ordinances and conflict of interest rules for all town officials.

## Energy



Harrisville has an active committee that focuses on education of energy saving measures and advocating for energy efficient standards for new construction. The community is very supportive of energy conservation and efforts to support local supply options and generation, including alternative energy sources.



## Infrastructure

Town-owned infrastructure consists largely of roads, dams, public buildings, and various properties. Other not Town-owned infrastructure include the electric grid, telephone and internet service. Emergency services are provided by Harrisville Police and Fire Departments, an Emergency Management Director, Cheshire County Sheriff, and Southwestern NH Mutual Aid.

## Housing



There is a need for housing options that meet the needs of a diverse population. Housing in Harrisville is predominantly single-family on larger lots. There is an abundant supply of rental units, especially in the Village, that supplements the housing supply. Future housing strategies should focus on upgrading existing housing stock, increasing density in central areas, permitting Accessory Dwelling Units, and utilizing conservation subdivisions.

## Land Use

A land use plan is the basis for land use regulations, implemented through zoning ordinances, subdivision, and site plan review regulations. The land use plan should reinforce and reflect the larger goals and priorities required to accomplish the town's longer-term development needs. Land use regulations, carefully administered and enforced, are a basic tool to meet the town's goals over the next decade, and should be revisited every 3-5 years. Harrisville's developed land is primarily residential, dispersed all around town. Other, non-residential uses include retail and services, home-based businesses, and agriculture.

## Agriculture



The main goals of the Agricultural Commission are to support commercial farmers, thereby increasing the local food supply, and to increase sustainability and the general quality of life in Harrisville. Local farmers produce a range of goods, including eggs, honey, vegetables, milk, poultry, pork, beef, lamb, kennels, wool, and firewood.

## Transportation



Harrisville's existing roads are designed exclusively for motor vehicle use, with virtually no provision for other uses. There is recognized need for the creation of a more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly road system that will increase non-motorized transportation options for residents and increase the overall quality of life in town.

## Economic Development

Harrisville is home to numerous small businesses and a strong and vibrant community of craftspeople, artists, non-profit and cultural organizations. To supplement its existing business community, Harrisville could become a "destination town" for businesspersons; that is, a place where you would choose to work if you could work anywhere.

## Education

Wells Memorial School has developed a well-deserved regional reputation as an exceptional K-6 public elementary school. Following 6th grade, students attend Keene Middle and Keene High Schools. Population changes and economic demands create challenges, nevertheless Harrisville has continually reinforced its support for keeping K-6 education in town.

## Water Resources

Harrisville residents cherish and recognize the value of all of the Town's water resources. Water is so critical to Harrisville's identity and way of life that the townspeople consistently emphasize the need for protection of aquifers, wetlands and associated wildlife habitat.

## Recreation



Harrisville's four committees focus on natural resources, community venues, and town-wide events to cultivate accessible recreational opportunities: Recreation Committee, Beach Committees – Harrisville & Chesham, and Trails Committee.

Demographic trends and government service efficiencies suggest that certain essential municipal services and functions might be better provided on a regional basis. Harrisville has explored such options in the past, and could do so again, identifying which services/functions are best suited to be shared with neighboring towns.

