

# Town of Lee

## Master Plan

2016-2026



## Preface

The publishing of the Town of Lee 2016 Master Plan, finds our town at an important milestone in its history. We are currently celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the chartering of the Town of Lee. We can only imagine what the town forefathers thought when they signed the agreements with the State of New Hampshire and the Town of Durham, dividing the former geophysical space into what are today two separate towns, but you can be sure that they had thoughts of what the Town of Lee should be and look like in the future.

Today we continue that legacy of defining a vision with documenting what we hope Lee will look like in the next ten years. This document we refer to as the “The Master Plan”. It is the document that defines the next 10 years and the hopes and direction that we desire to follow. It is the document that gives us the direction to establish and update the town regulations and ordinances that meet the desired vision of Lee’s future.

The development of this version of the Master Plan has required the dedication of a subcommittee of the Planning Board for some 18 months to complete. This was not just an isolated effort on their part, but with combined support, patience and effort of all the Departments, Committees and Commissions and of many others that volunteered their time.

As chairman of the Planning Board, I want to express my appreciation for all the effort and cooperation of all the different entities of the town, both paid and volunteer. I would especially like to thank Lou Ann Griswold for chairing the subcommittee and for Ed Bannister, Ryan Crosbie and Gail Smith as subcommittee members. The subcommittee spent many long and hard hours over the last year and a half to produce this document that will serve to guide planning, moving us forward through the next ten years. In addition, I cannot forget the Planning & Zoning Administrator, Caren Rossi, for all of her support to the subcommittee. Finally, I want to thank all those in the town who took the time to thoughtfully fill in the survey and return it to the subcommittee. We had an amazing 26% return.

Robert P. Smith, Chairman  
Town of Lee Planning Board

Pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 674:2-4 & 675:6, the revisions set forth herein to the Town of Lee's Master Plan were formally endorsed and adopted on August 31, 2016

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Robert P. Smith, Chairman

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Mark Beliveau

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Ryan Crosbie

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Lou Ann Griswold

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Ed Bannister

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Dave Cedarholm

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Howard Hoff, Alternate Member

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Wayne Lehman, Alternate Member

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John LaCourse, Selectmen's Rep

## Master Plan - Purpose and Description

From RSA 674:2:

“I. The purpose of the master plan is to set down as clearly and practically as possible the best and most appropriate future development of the area under the jurisdiction of the planning board, to aid the board in designing ordinances that result in preserving and enhancing the unique quality of life and culture of New Hampshire, and to guide the board in the performance of its other duties in a manner that achieves the principles of smart growth, sound planning, and wise resource protection.”



## Vision

Recognizing that many residents in Lee work in other towns or cities, we appreciate returning home to experience Lee's **quality of life** and the opportunity to live and play in a **safe** and **vibrant community**. The residents of Lee **value the preservation of our rural character, agricultural heritage, and natural resources**. While planning for the future and the changing population within the town, our shared vision is to maintain the **balance between development and the core values** of Lee. Moving forward, Lee embraces the concept of **sustainable living** through how we use **energy, manage natural resources, and support locally grown products**.

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APPENDIX C – Survey Results

APPENDIX D – Inventory of Archeological Resources

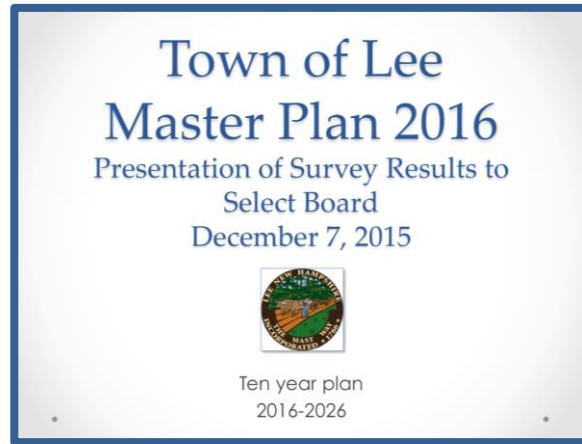
APPENDIX E – Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites

APPENDIX F – Maps

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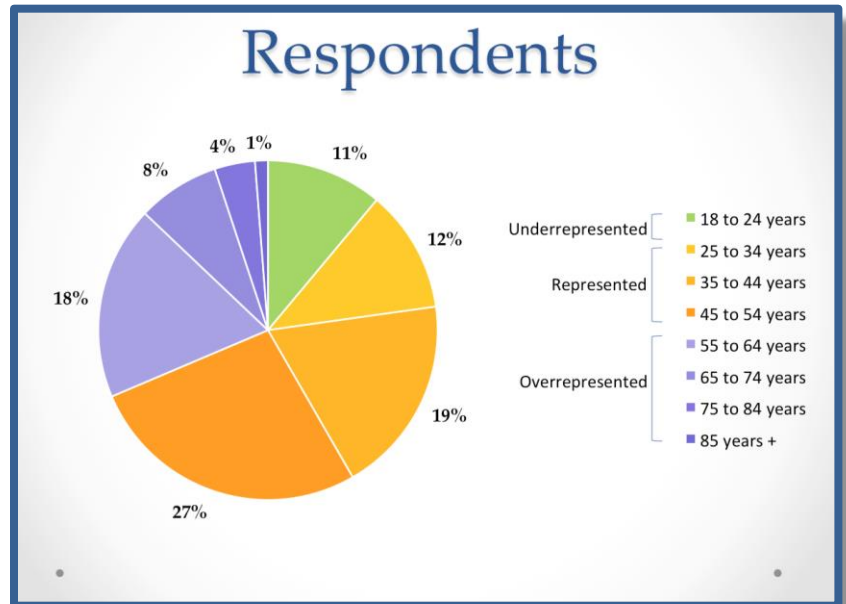


A presentation of the Lee Select Board was [Click here or refer to Data Presentation to](#)



survey results to the Town of given on December 7 2015. [Appendix B for the Master Plan the Board of Selectmen.](#)

Three hundred ninety (390) people completed the survey. Sixty-four percent (64%) of the respondents were between the ages of 35 to 64 years. Comparison of the age of respondents to the most recent census indicated that persons who were young to middle-aged adults (25 – 54 years) were represented by the survey. Younger adults (18-25 years) were underrepresented; and middle-age to older adults (55 years and over) were overrepresented.



Response to the survey indicated that residents choose to live in Lee because of the safe environment, the rural/agricultural character, and the reputation of the school district. Other key factors included the location of Lee, providing access to the seacoast and a reasonable commute to work. The reasons why people initially chose to live in Lee are the characteristics that they want to see preserved moving into the next ten years. How to maintain the Town's character while reducing the tax burden, particularly that of the school board, will remain a challenge, one requires careful attention by the Select Board as well as the Planning Board and other organized bodies in Lee.

General issues identified were to:

- Protect open space and natural resources
- Preserve agricultural lands
- Preserve educational quality

Additionally, respondents to the survey indicated a desire to:

- Attract new businesses
- Monitor the amount and location of new development
- Protect historic resources
- Improve energy use

[Click here or refer to Appendix C for the results of the survey](#)

## Creating a Document

All town departments, commissions, and committees were given the survey results to use to develop their own goals and action items for the next ten years. The shared overlap of many initial goals of the commissions and committees in Town reflect the shared vision and collective desires for the future of Lee.

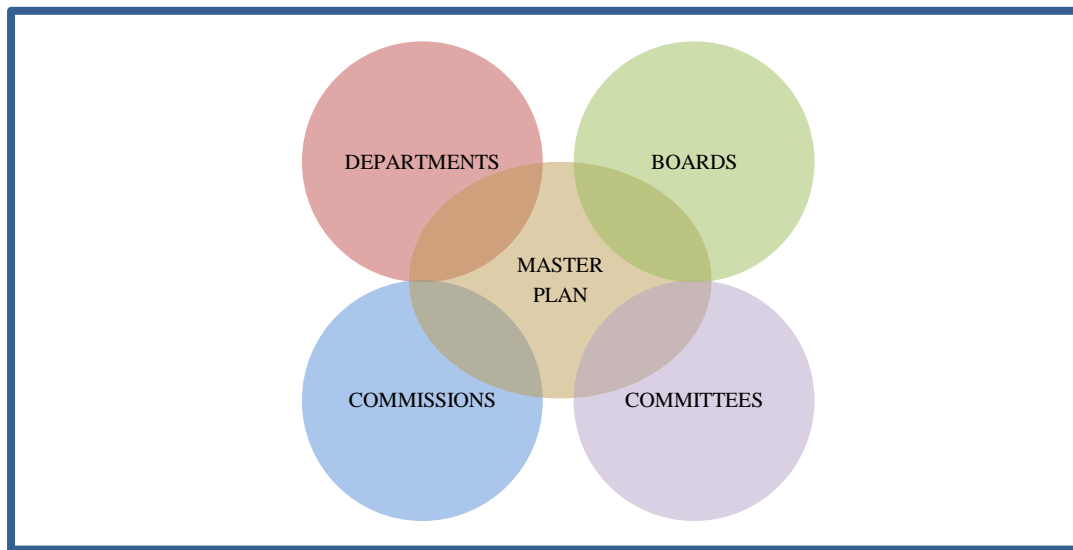
The sense of commitment to developing the Master Plan was evident throughout the document writing process. Each body corresponded or met with the Master Plan Committee multiple times during the winter and spring of 2016 to refine their goals and action items and achieve a consistent language.

Strafford County Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) provided consultation to the Master Plan Committee throughout the planning and writing process. They were generous in sharing maps, charts, and figures.

The final document provides a shared vision for the town. While its primary purpose is to serve as a reference for the Lee Planning Board as they make decisions regarding zoning ordinances, growth and development, and capital improvement, the document also serves as a guide for each of the contributing departments, commissions, and committees as they organize their activities for the next ten years.

## Organization of the Master Plan

Each chapter reflects the contribution of each board, department, commission, or committee, beginning with a brief history and their primary contribution to support the town and its vision. Each entity proposed several key goals and specific bulleted action items for each goal.



### Departments

- Code Enforcement
- Elections
- Emergency Management
- Fire
- Health Administration
- Highway and Public Works
- Information Technology
- Library
- Police
- Schools
- Town Administrator
- Town Assessor
- Town Clerk / Tax Collector
- Transfer Station
- Welfare

### Boards & Committees

- 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Committee
- Advisory Budget Committee
- Agricultural Commission
- Select Board
- Cemetery Trustees
- Conservation Commission
- Energy Committee
- Fair Committee
- Heritage Commission
- Historical Society
- Joint Loss Management Committee
- Lamprey Regional Solid Waste Coop

### Boards & Committees cont.

- Lamprey River Advisory Committee
- Library Building Committee
- Library Trustees
- Municipal Records Committee
- Planning Board
- Race Track Committee
- Recreation Commission
- Senior Advisory Committee
- Sustainability Committee
- Trustees of the Trust Funds
- Town Center Committee
- Zoning Board of Adjustment

## Chapter 2. History of the Town of Lee

Like other New England Communities, Lee has countless ties to the Native American past. Not only did the ancient Pentucket Trail cross our territory from north to south but a prehistoric fishing village more than 8,500 years old has been discovered at Wadley Falls. Ten to eleven thousand years ago when glaciers were retreating, Lee's highest point, Wednesday Hill, then bald, served as a lookout for the Native hunters who could follow the large herds passing through the grasslands below.

The colonists began settlement along the Piscataqua about 1623 and continued expanding settlements through 1641. Dover joined Massachusetts in 1641 and by 1643 the town boundaries of ancient Dover extended to include what is now known as Lee. During this time there was peaceful coexistence with the native populations and our vast forests were harvested for export of masts, sawn boards and staves. Lee's woodlands provided the tall straight white pine trees that were required for ship masts for the King's navy. These giant trees were identified and saved, some reaching 120 feet in height and a girth of 40 inches in diameter. Once felled the masts started their long difficult journey to the sea following straight mast paths or roads to reach the river headwaters located at Dover or Durham. This process often required the use of 30 to 40 pairs of oxen to pull these massive trees from where they fell to a water resource to complete their journey directly to the Port of Portsmouth.

In 1652 Valentine Hill was granted the marshland north of Wheelwright Pond and had a house built nearby. The first land grants were made at Wadley Falls in 1657 and in Newtown in 1663. In the years following, mills were constructed at these sites. The abundant natural water resources of the area prompted the eventual construction of 9 mills, the first being Hook or Hook Island Mill which no longer existed by 1750. The earliest were used as saw mills and as the number of farms and agriculture products increased, mills were built for grist, carding and fulling. The last working mill in Lee was North River Mill or Harvey's Mill and according to records continued operating until 1938.



Map of Lee and surrounding towns from 1784. Edited from:  
[http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~jalandne/Durham\\_Newmarket\\_NH\\_1784.gif](http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~jalandne/Durham_Newmarket_NH_1784.gif)

During the years 1675 to 1720 wars with the indigenous population and legal disputes over land titles resulted in the slowing of new land grants being laid out in Lee. Our forests continued to be harvested for wood and the marshes hayed. The homes of the few remaining settlers who didn't abandon the area were garrisons fortified against attacks. One of the most notable garrisons was the Doe Garrison, generally called the Fox Garrison. This was located on what is now called Cartland Road and was constructed prior to the revolution around 1737.



In Newtown the Jones Garrison was established on land owned by Nehemiah Snell, today in the vicinity of Snell Road. Another garrison known as Randall's Garrison stood on the south side of today's Mast Road between Lee Hill and Durham (this garrison was finally razed in the middle 1800's).

Even though disputes continued between citizens and the Native Indians, settlement again began to increase between the years of 1720 and 1732, with dozens of new farms being laid out and settled. Dover previously had two church parishes supported by taxes, one on the Neck and one at Oyster River. In 1732 almost all of the area served by the Oyster River church parish was incorporated as the Town of Durham. During 1733/1734 the common land of Durham located around the Little and North Rivers was sold by lottery to Durham residents and 169 persons purchased land in what was soon to become Lee. Additional grants were made in 1737 and by this time almost all of the common land was laid out into private ownership. On January 16, 1766 the western section of Durham was separated by petition and the parish of Lee was incorporated.

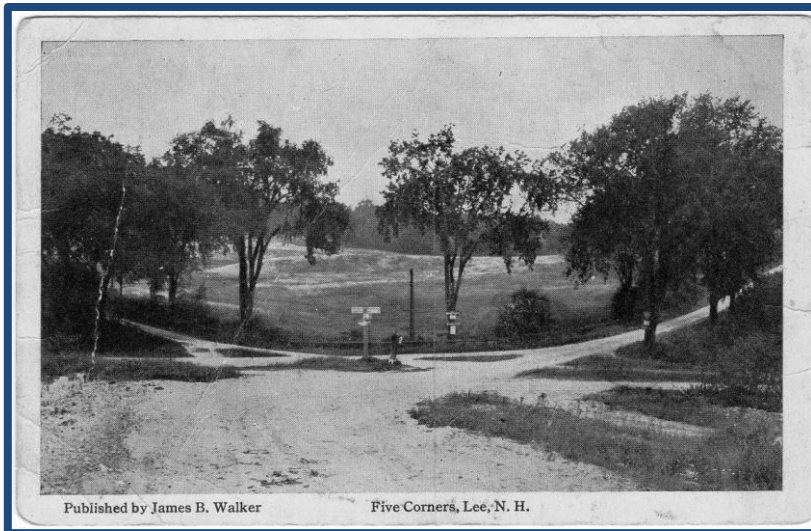


In its' infancy as an independent Parish, the settlers here used the previously existing paths and roads to move people and goods about Lee. Considering that Lee has four rivers traversing our landscape (Little, North, Lamprey and Oyster Rivers) and as the Lee Hill community became a busy crossroads, the construction of some 16 bridges was undertaken to provide for efficient transportation of people, agricultural products and goods needed for daily life and commerce. As people pushed farther westward and the need for transport to and from coastal market towns and port cities

intensified, Lee's intersecting road systems fostered a booming overnight tavern/inn business environment.

Two days was the time required to travel from Portsmouth, around Great Bay, to Concord and Lee Hill was in the perfect position for overnight stops. The taverns and inns of Lee Hill (visible today around the perimeter of the triangle at the intersection of Rt. 155, Bennett and Lee Hook Roads) provided rest, food and drink for weary travelers. In addition, the other various shops and businesses located at Lee Hill provided for any commodities needed to continue their journey. This vibrant business atmosphere slowed with the approach of the temperance movement and by 1850 no licenses for alcohol had been issued in the Town of Lee.

With heavier traffic traveling through Lee, the necessity for additional roads increased and the years between 1790 and 1840 became an era of intensified road building. Lee became a hub of interconnecting toll roads and turnpikes utilized for transportation of citizens and the goods produced by our farms and mills.



In 1803 Lee Hill was by-passed by the opening of the Portsmouth and Concord Turnpike which traveled through Lee Five Corners and in 1832 the current Route 155 was laid out from Dover to Epping by court order with opposition from the Lee townspeople.

In 1805 the legislature empowered the towns in New Hampshire to divide into school districts, but by this time Lee had already established 7 school districts and private schools were located at Lee Hill and on Cartland Road. Keeping with the New England

tradition of thrift and repurposing of materials, today many of the schools are serving our community in new ways such as the North Lee School located today on Route 4 that still serves as a residence.

Lee Town Hall located at Lee Hill was finished in 1846 and for many years served multiple purposes for Lee's citizens. In addition to being the center of government it was often used to bring the community together for dances, plays and in 1893 the second floor of Town Hall became the town library. Town Hall also held classes from 1943 to 1955 for students after their South Lee School was destroyed by fire.

The coming of the railroad in 1874 changed the complexion of Lee and provided transportation for mountain and lake bound tourists, business travelers and products for 60 years. The line generally followed a north/south route (today known as Route 125) and South Lee, having one of 7 crossings, rose in importance and activity within the Town of Lee. The passenger depot and freight house located in South Lee and the coming and going of passengers and goods also spawned a general store and other businesses necessary to further transport people and goods on inland roads. With the railroads providing convenient transportation to Boston, dairy farming became a popular agricultural option for our local farmers. The last train rolled through Lee in 1943 and the freight house was later moved to Lee Hill to become the museum for the Lee Historical Society.



From the Grange (a former church) to the current Highway Department (former Lee fire station) the town has kept the historic buildings in between; Town Hall, Library, Historical Society, the Annex (first fire station), Parish house and the Church. There are new additions in the Lee Hill area as well; Mast Way School, Transfer Station and the Public Safety Building. The town Memorial Field located next to Mast

Way School serves as a way to honor our veterans. It provides an area to bring the community together on Memorial Day for services, parades and in the fall for the Lee Fair.

The general stores and liveries have morphed into super markets and gas stations located at the Lee Circle. Today our town has grown and modernized, however Lee continues to be steeped in its agricultural roots and quiet rural atmosphere with its citizens ready to embrace progress while continuing to value Lee's 250 years of historical significance.

### **Lee Heritage Commission**

The establishment of a Lee Heritage Commission was approved at the 2005 town meeting. Eight three year term members, including a Lee Selectmen's representative, a Lee Historical Society's representative, and three alternates were solicited in the spring and the Commission began meeting in June 2005.



The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources states that Heritage Commissions are “intended to have a town-wide scope and a range of activities that is determined by each individual municipality. Heritage commissions do for cultural resources what conservation commissions do for natural resources” (NH DHR/SHPO Oct 1996, revised June 2001).

The Lee Heritage Commission works collaboratively with the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Recreation Commission, Historical Society, and New Hampshire Preservation Alliance. The Heritage Commission should continually seek to expand its network of partners in order to accomplish its goals.

### **GOAL**

Preserve and protect Lee's historic resources and agricultural heritage

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Secure easements on core town center buildings
- Creation of a designated historic district(s)
- Create and maintain an inventory of archeological resources in areas of archeological sensitivity [Click here or refer to Appendix D for the inventory of archeological resources](#)
- Create and maintain an inventory of cemeteries and burial site. [Click here or refer to Appendix E for the inventory of cemeteries and burial sites](#)
- Protect our currently designated scenic roads that are Cartland Road, Steppingstones Road, High Road, Birch Hill Road, Demeritt Avenue, and Sheep Road
- Identification and preservation of historic buildings and sites in town and finding ways to maintain and preserve them
- Location, recording and publication of written and oral cultural past
- Acceptance and management of gifts, monies, and grants

### **GOAL**

Enhance and encourage knowledge and respect for Lee's heritage through education and community involvement

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Promote oral history projects pairing elementary through high school students with town elders to capture the "living history" of Lee
- Locate, record, and publish written and oral materials of Lee's cultural past
- Sponsor educational lectures, publications, and events
- Reinstate historic trolley tours
- Sponsor Treasure hunts
- Enhance and encourage knowledge and respect for Lee's heritage through education of both young and old, and community involvement

#### **GOAL**

Protect our heritage through the preservation of all historic documents and artifacts

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Work with the town to secure a safe place and climate-controlled environment for our town records
- Hire an experienced archivist to advise on the safekeeping of our collection
- Secure support for the Lee Historical Society Museum for maintenance, improvements and enhancements. Specifically, support is requested for increased space for artifact/document display, climate control, access, and extended hours of operation



# Chapter 3. Natural Resources

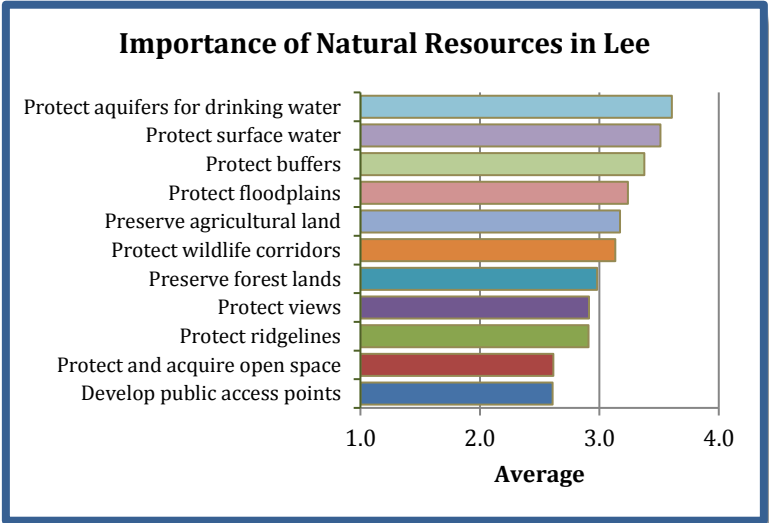
## Introduction

Natural resources represent the foundation for the quality of life in the Town of Lee as they play important roles in the development and life of the community. Surface water (lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, and wetlands) and groundwater provide drinking and agricultural water, recreational opportunities, and important ecological components for plants and wildlife. The soils are vital to the agricultural and forestry industries. Biological resources such as wildlife (both resident and migratory) and native plant communities provide food, enjoyment, and ecological diversity for the Town and its neighbors. Open space lands contribute greatly to the scenic vistas and the Town’s rural character.

The value Lee’s natural resources hold for residents is demonstrated by the Master Plan Survey results. In particular, protecting drinking water aquifers, surface water, and buffers and floodplains topped the list of importance. Behind reducing the overall tax burden, the most important general issues the public is interested in include preserving agricultural lands and protecting open space and natural resources.

These interests are represented by the Conservation Commission, the Agricultural Commission, Energy Committee, and the Planning Board, and in some respects, the transfer station. Other town-related entities have a vested interest in these issues and efforts, including the Board of Selectmen, Lamprey River Advisory Committee, Lamprey River Watershed Association, Oyster River Watershed Association, and the recently formed Sustainability Committee. Additional support for conservation, preservation, and enjoyment of natural resources comes from the Strafford County Conservation District, Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC), the State of New Hampshire, and conservation organizations.

The Town continues to monitor and plan for threats to these resources, actual or potential, including: climate change, invasive species, and unregulated development, among others. Understanding and planning for these issues attempts to maintain our natural resources for future generations and creates a more resilient community.



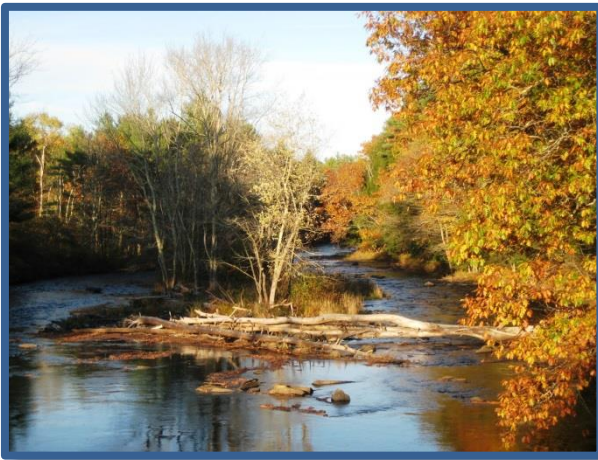
## Lee's Natural Resources

### Physical Characteristics

Lee encompasses approximately 20 square miles of land and 0.2 square miles of inland water (NHELMIB Profile, 2016) in the southern portion of Strafford County. It is a rural town with a strong agricultural heritage where farmland and forest are only broken by the various wetlands, rivers, ponds, and lakes. The general topography of Lee is flat with a mix of rolling hills and few sharper bedrock ridges. [Click here or refer to Appendix F for a map indicating various natural resources in Lee.](#)

### Water resources

The Town of Lee's water resources can be considered within two broad categories: surface waters and groundwater. Surface waters include rivers, streams, ponds, wetlands, and vernal pools. Groundwater can be found in water-bearing strata of permeable rock, sand, or gravel known as aquifers.



The Lamprey, Oyster, Little, and North Rivers comprise the main streams in the Town of Lee. The Oyster and Lamprey Rivers, and Chesley and Dube Brooks are important sources of municipal water for Durham and UNH. Wheelwright Pond is the only official pond or lake in Lee and covers 99 acres. There are also several “farm” ponds, multi-purpose ponds and fire ponds.

Within Lee there are 2,966 acres of wetlands (swamps, marshes and bogs) that have been inventoried, measured and scored by value of relative importance.

This represents almost one fourth of the area of the town. “Wetlands of Lee” is a detailed resource manual available through the Town that identifies each of these bodies and was developed by David Allan in 1981. Other resources of interest are vernal pools, unique wetlands that are seasonal in nature and often temporary. Surface water is sustained only for short periods of time in vernal pools, but such areas are vital to certain species of amphibians, turtles, and invertebrates.

Surface water and groundwater sources are under increasing threat from point and nonpoint sources of pollution such as stormwater runoff, excessive use of fertilizers, and poorly functioning septic systems. These sources of pollution can contribute to water quality impairments in water bodies in Lee, and contribute to impairments in the Great Bay estuary with cumulative contributions from other communities. With two of the Great Bay's major tributaries flowing through Lee, it is important that Lee play a leadership role in the region's effort to find practical and innovative ways of preserving and improving water quality. The residents of Lee are actively working toward this effort as described in the following paragraphs.

In order to protect its surface water resources, the Shoreland Conservation District and the Wet Soils Conservation Zone (formerly Wetlands Conservation Zone) are integral parts of the Zoning Ordinance. The Shoreland Conservation District has been identified as 100 feet from the shores of all rivers, Dube Brook, Chesley Brook and Wheelwright Pond. Clearing and development in the 100 ft. area is prohibited. The intent is to protect the water quality, visual character and the wildlife habitat of the shoreline areas.

The Wet Soils Conservation Zone consists of soils that are classified as poorly drained or very poorly drained. The ordinance is intended to protect surface or groundwater, maintain natural flood protection, and protect wildlife habitat and natural areas.

Lee's Shoreland Conservation District regulations help to protect these shores and the adjacent waters. In 1995, the Town of Lee voted to support designation of the Lamprey River as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers program, and in 2011, portions of the Oyster River were added to New Hampshire's River Management and Protection Program.

The protection of groundwater resources, both in quality and in quantity, is an important objective for the Town. The intent is to ensure that the resource is not degraded or depleted so that there will continue to be water available to meet the needs of the Town and its residents. The Aquifer Ordinance was introduced into Lee Zoning in 1985. Its intent is to protect the public health and general welfare by controlling and guiding the use of land areas for the protection and preservation of existing and potential groundwater resources in the Town of Lee.

The Conservation Commission has the following goals and action items related to the Water Resources of Lee:

### **GOAL**

Conserve and protect the integrity of the Town's surface water resources in their quality, quantity, and their intrinsic scenic and wildlife habitat values and to conserve and protect the integrity of the Town's groundwater resources in their quality and quantity for their availability for use by the Town and its residents

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Acquire conservation easements or fee simple ownership of lands having important water resource values, including the meeting of future needs
- Continue to strengthen Town Ordinances and Regulations relative to the protection of water resources
- Educate residents and businesses on the value of water resources, the threats from point and non-point pollution sources, and improving management of the resources
- Educate landowners periodically about the requirements for the Shoreline Conservation District, the Wet Soils Conservation Zone, and the Aquifer Conservation District, and the rationale for their adoption by the Town

## **Agricultural & Forest Lands**

The rural-agricultural character of the town is an important feature of Lee. Though Lee is now largely forested, it has a long history of agriculture including crop fields, hayfields and pastures. Existing farms and agricultural soils continue to provide opportunities for farming and non-forested lands such as hayfields and pastures also provide important wildlife habitat.

Rapid development in Lee can have adverse effects on agricultural and forest lands. Highly productive soils, as mapped by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, may be paved over, built upon, or fragmented in such a way as to make farming or forest management more difficult. The Town seeks to protect its most productive lands and soils for current and future agricultural and forestry activities.

In Lee's early history, the harvested forests provided land for agriculture. The pastoral nature of Lee is evident today as one drives through the heart of Lee.



In the early part of the millennium, members of the agricultural community gathered to promote the agrarian nature of Lee. What was an informal 'agriculture committee' in 2004 transitioned to a 'town-recognized' committee in 2006 and into the fully recognized Agricultural Commission in 2008. Over the last ten years, the Agricultural Commission has become a vital part of the Town of Lee: promoting Lee agriculture, educating the public, creating numerous outreach programs, and lobbying for 'farm-friendly'

legislation, in Lee and within the region.

Agriculture in Lee has expanded beyond dairy cattle to now include beef cattle, sheep and goats for meat, milk, cheese, and fiber; chickens for eggs and meat; elk for meat and antler, vegetables, fruit, and wine and spirits. Artisans work with wood and fiber to create products for utility and décor. Agri-tourism helps provide entertainment as well as education.



Though many of Lee's boards, committees and commissions share the general goal of conservation and protection of our agricultural and forest lands, the Conservation Commission has prepared several specific goals and action items that provide guidance for the Master Plan.

## **GOAL**

Identify and protect the most productive agricultural and forest lands to avoid or minimize further fragmentation of large tracts of farm and forest lands

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Acquire conservation easements on lands having highly productive soils for agriculture and/or forestry





## Natural Areas, Wildlife Habitat, and Open Space

The Conservation Commission in recent years, with the cooperation of the Planning Board and the support of voters, has actively pursued the acquisition of conservation easements in an effort to protect open space in Lee. Cluster residential development also has offered the town an opportunity to obtain some additional land through the open space and common area created.

Unusual natural areas in Lee include geologic formations of historic value (Peters Oven located near George Bennett Road); and habitat for rare plant and animal species (including the Lee Bog located behind the Town Hall and Library Buildings). Designated Scenic Roads are Cartland Road, High Road, Birch Hill Road, Demeritt Avenue, Steppingstones Road, and Sheep Road.



## Invasive Species

Invasive species are non-native plants or animals that are particularly aggressive in out-competing native species. Often their success is the result of having no natural predators or diseases here. Also, their reproduction rates are often extraordinarily high. Because of their aggressive nature, invasive species crowd out native species which our native wildlife and migratory birds depend on for food and habitat.

At present in Lee, invasive species are almost exclusively plants, though invasive insects are increasingly being found elsewhere in the state. Control of invasive species is most feasible with early detection, before they become widespread and entrenched. In the recent past, the Conservation Commission has been active in attempting to control oriental bittersweet (Town Forest), Japanese knotweed (Lee Five Corners Reserve, Joe Ford Wildlife Preserve, and Rothwell), and autumn olive (Lee Five Corners Reserve).

The Conservation Commission has the following goals and action items related to natural areas, wildlife and open space of Lee:

### GOAL

Identify and protect habitat used by rare, threatened, or endangered wildlife and plant species and protect the diversity of habitat types within the Town. Avoid or minimize fragmentation of habitat while maintaining travel corridors for wildlife and identifying and protecting scenic vistas seen from the Town's roads and highways

### ACTION ITEMS

- Protect important habitat through conservation easements or acquisition
- Prepare and present educational programs for landowners relating to habitats and their protection
- Periodically update and refine the Town's natural resource maps

The Conservation Commission has the following goals and action items related to addressing invasive species within Lee:

## GOAL

Detect and control, to the extent feasible, invasive species on Protected Lands

## ACTION ITEMS

- Conduct follow-up control actions at the Town Forest, Lee Five Corners, Rothwell, and Joe Ford Wildlife Preserve
- Maintain vigilance for early detection on all Protected Lands and initiate control where feasible

## GOAL

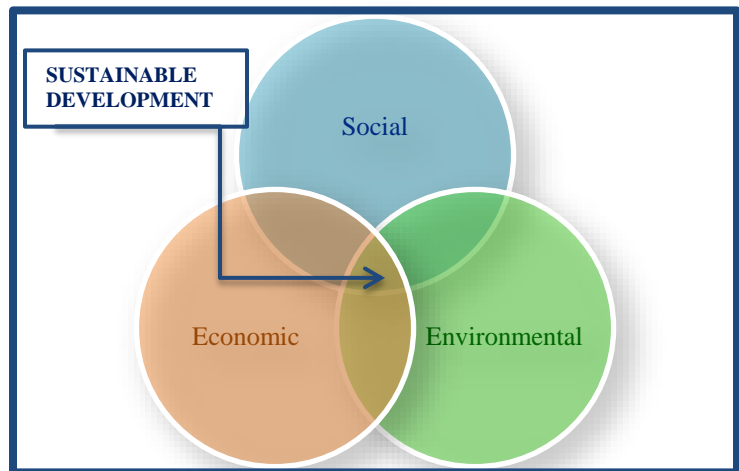
Inform residents about invasive species and methods of control

## ACTION ITEMS

- Develop and implement educational information for residents on identification and control methods

## Sustainability and Energy Use

It is challenging to define the term “sustainability” in a way that adequately considers the variety of interests and issues, such as culture, biodiversity, natural resources, development, and history, among others, that are important to a community. The topic is gaining in importance as science and society improve their understanding of the potential effects of climate change, effects of different types of development and land use, and evolving energy sources and markets (coal, natural gas, renewables, etc.). Just about every entity in the Town of Lee considers sustainability and sustainable practices in some way with their own approach. However, the judicious use and protection of our natural resources and balancing the social, environmental, and economic needs of the community and future generations are of particular interest to the Planning Board, the Lee Energy Committee [LEC], and the recently formed Sustainability Committee. The figure presented at right shows that sustainable development is best achieved when reasonable consideration and balance are applied to the land use and development policies and decisions adopted by the Town.



## Lee Sustainability Committee

According to the United Nations' Commission on Sustainable Development (1987), sustainability refers to “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” A sustainable town then, aspires to design its processes to promote vibrant ecological, social and economic health over the long term. Citizen education, open space preservation, smart growth initiatives (as defined in RSA 9-B), recycling and waste reduction programs, local food promotion, community building, energy efficiency and green energy promotion, green building programs, affordable housing, and climate change initiatives are just a few of the ways a town can address its sustainable future.”  
– Lee Sustainability Committee.

The Sustainability Committee formed after new submissions for this Master Plan could be accepted, but they have the following preliminary action items:

- Educate community members on sustainability issues and advocating for sustainable living
- Provide residents with the information and resources necessary to make more sustainable choices in everyday living
- Advise the town of sustainability concerns within our boundaries, and by providing creative and workable solutions that promote sustainability
- Become a coordinating point/ forum for the community for questions, concerns and discussion related to sustainability
- Involve residents of all ages in the pursuit of greater sustainability for the town of Lee

### **Lee Energy Committee**

The Lee Energy Committee's (LEC) mission is to promote and facilitate energy conservation and resilience, energy efficient practices, and the use of renewable, sustainable energy by the town and people of Lee for the purpose of reducing Lee's energy costs and emissions consistent with comparative standards. The LEC has worked industriously recently to lay the groundwork and define specific actions necessary for advancing Lee's energy efficiency profile and competitive performance. Through the committee's past efforts, in 2008 Lee citizens substantially benefitted from a \$40,000 Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant that financed research and planning for a more energy-efficient present and future for the Town.

Results of the committee's work over the years from 2007 to 2016 have included municipal building audits, a policy audit, a biomass feasibility study, an Energy Capital Improvements Program, and a strong public outreach effort, including energy surveys of Lee constituencies and an Energy Fair. The LEC has actively investigated new municipal policies that would encourage energy efficient innovations for municipal, commercial, and residential structures and now will move forward.

The Energy Committee has the following goals and action items related to energy use in Lee:

#### **GOAL**

Reduce energy used, total emissions, and tax dollars spent in Lee on energy annually

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Implement energy conservation measures identified in the LEC Building Audits as included in the Lee Energy Capital Improvements Program
- Convert existing exterior Town-owned lighting to LED fixtures

#### **GOAL**

Increase public awareness of energy conservation options, for municipal, residential and business energy needs

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Develop outreach displays on energy use
- Design and run a dynamic display on energy for the Lee Fair
- Develop a series of workshops on energy efficiency to help people learn about options and to include hands-on projects
- Collaborate with interested teachers at Mast Way School to form an Energy Club

#### **GOAL**

Analyze energy efficient measures for municipal buildings

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Install energy efficient window coverings for municipal buildings, e.g. window quilts, insulated blinds, etc.
- Investigate solar photovoltaic and geothermal options for municipal buildings
- Investigate feasibility of a Community Woody Biomass District Heating System by the town in cooperation with the school district



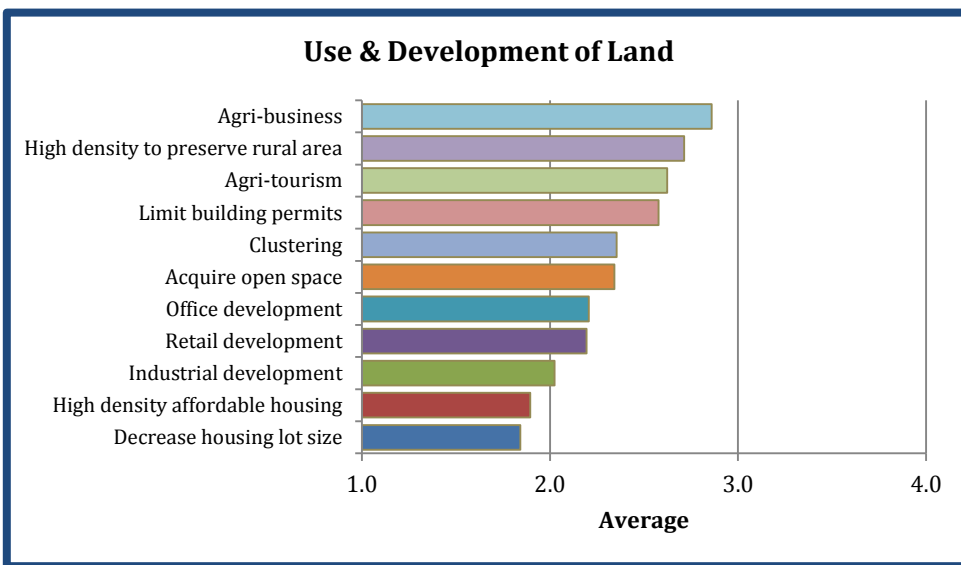
## Chapter 4. Land Use

### Introduction

The best available data on land use in Lee is from the 2010 Census. The data show that of the land surface not covered by water, the most significant land uses include forest (54.8%), residential (15.4%), agriculture (10.8%), and wetlands (9.5%). Other uses make up the other 9.5% of land surfaces. Based on conversations with the Town and SRPC, these percentages have not changed significantly in the last six years. Lee is a rural landscape with very little commercial/industrial development. However, Lee's physical size, location of transportation corridors, and distribution of natural resources make Lee a unique challenge when considering development strategies.

Land Use (2010)	Land Area (acres)	% of Land Area	Total Area (acres)	% of Total Area
Forest	6948	54.8		53.7
Residential	1952	15.4		15.1
Agriculture	1366	10.8		10.6
Wetland	1206	9.5		9.3
Non-Vegetated	312	2.5		2.4
Transportation, Communications, Utilities	277	2.2		2.1
Transitional	174	1.4		1.3
Commercial, Services, Institutional	142	1.1		1.1
Outdoor and other Built-Up	130	1.0		1.0
Other - Maintained open areas	97	0.8		0.7
Industrial	63	0.50		0
Vacant	3	0.02		0
Mixed Use	3	0.02		0
Industrial/Commercial Complexes	0	0.00		0
Total	12670	100		
Water			257	2
Total			12927	100

2010 Census data provided by SRPC.



When asked about the importance of certain types of land development techniques, the residents of Lee selected agri-business, higher density developments to protect rural areas, and agri-tourism as the most important. As indicated above, Lee has a strong agricultural heritage and the Town wants to protect and promote that type of land use.

Land use issues are particularly important to the Planning Board, Agricultural Commission, and the Conservation Commission. Because agriculture is so important to Lee's sense of character, its economy, and community, many land use decisions need to consider the continued preservation of the natural resources, adequate controls on development with respect to agricultural areas, and improved resistance to threats to these.

## Agricultural Land Use

The Agricultural Commission has provided the following goals and action items with respect to land use related to agriculture:

### GOAL

Expand locally sourced food and fiber production

### ACTION ITEMS

- Formally integrate value-added food products, ‘cottage industries’ and artisans into Lee’s local economy
- Market fresh and frozen food, value-added food products and craft/artisan products in Lee year round through CSAs, markets, coops, restaurants, institutions, etc.
- Develop a food hub and/or shared/leased local storage



### GOAL

Provide Education and Outreach for agriculturally related activities

### ACTION ITEMS

- Promote active backyard gardening, food production and animal husbandry
- Educate the public about food security in Lee and the benefits of sourcing locally and regionally, (i.e., reducing the carbon footprint and reducing Lee’s waste stream)
- Initiate a community garden project (public)
- Educate citizens about eating seasonably

### GOAL

Develop a vibrant agri-tourism presence in Lee

### ACTION ITEMS

- Advertise farm activities and farm products
- Educate residents about the benefit of agricultural activities to support families and the community
- Work with the Planning Board to ensure regulations to support agriculture



Photo courtesy of Coppal House Farm

### GOAL

Support legislation to enhance the viability of farming

### ACTION ITEMS

- Partner with UNH/Extension and with the private sector to promote local food production

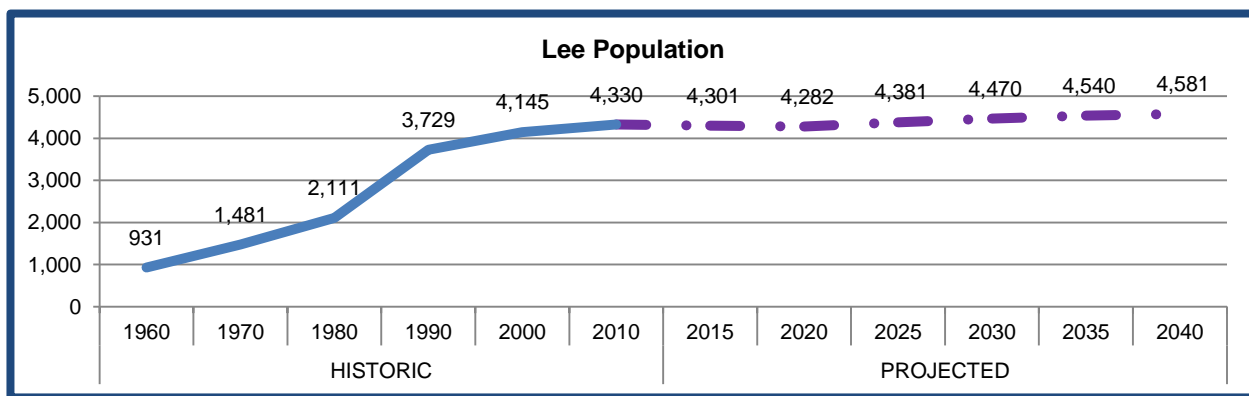
- Collaborate with local government and state officials to advocate for food security and farm-friendly legislation
- Research and promote incentives for attracting young farmers
- Promote farm worker housing
- Collaborate with the Planning Board and others to develop zoning regulations to allow for gardening/farming green space in future subdivisions and commercial projects



## Planning Board

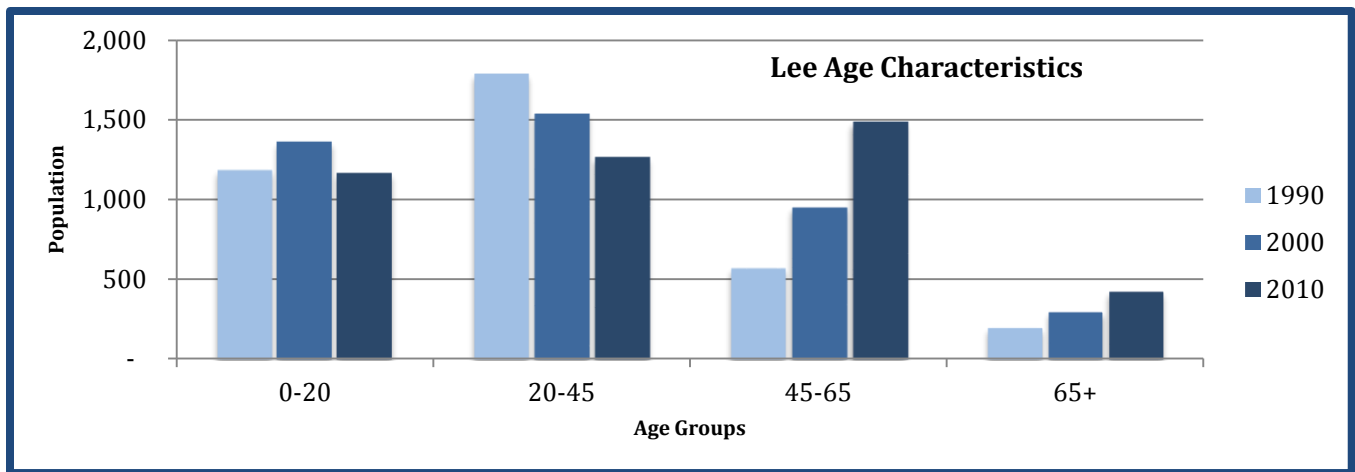
The Lee Planning Board was formed by warrant article on March 10, 1952 with the intent to make a study of the Town's development and report to the Town meeting appropriate recommendations for the promotion and maintenance of the Town's best development. The Planning Board's mission has not strayed far from that original intent and continues work reviewing applications for compliance with site plan and subdivision regulations and authoring the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The Planning Board plays an integral part in the development of zoning and land use regulations and attempts to adhere to the guidelines established in the Master Plan. From time to time, the Planning Board is tasked with updating the Master Plan.

According to information provided by the SRPC (see graph below), Lee's population experienced rapid growth (365%) from 1960 through 2010. In the period from 2010 to 2040, Lee is expected to add approximately 250 new residents, which represents a 5.8% increase. This rate is less than the expected population growth rates for the state (~8-9%) and the Strafford region (~13%).



2010 Census data provided by SRPC.

Two important factors to consider are the age and age trends of its population. The graph below shows the ages of Lee's population groups based on 1990, 2000, and 2010 US Census data. The data indicate that the population of Lee's children and young adults has decreased, while the population of older adults has increased. The change in demographics of Lee residents has implications for decisions considering development, recreation, services, and community character.



2010 Census data provided by SRPC.

The Planning Board has provided the following goals and action items:

#### **GOAL**

Plan for land use, town wide, to harmoniously combine development with the protection of green spaces, natural resources, and rural character

#### **ACTION ITEM**

- Review and amend zoning regulations as needed
- Update fees for application for proposal review

#### **GOAL**

Plan for aesthetic and quality commercial and residential development generally, remaining mindful of Lee's changing demographics

#### **ACTION ITEM**

- Review and amend site review and subdivision regulations as needed
- Update fees for application for proposal review

#### **GOAL**

Evaluate how to better plan for and manage the commercial development in an orderly manner and minimize the pressure to develop residential zoned land for commercial uses

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Re-evaluate the feasibility of commercial development along the primary corridors (Route 125 and Route 4) and elsewhere to encourage appropriate economic development
- Gather information on the land type and restrictions along the primary corridors
- Address contaminated water around the Lee traffic circle, working with appropriate NH agencies

## Protected Lands

Over the years, the Town has acquired land for conservation purposes, and has also acquired conservation easements on private lands. These have been obtained through donations, grants, Town appropriations, or some combination of these techniques. [Click here or refer to Appendix F for a map of protected lands in Lee.](#)

As of 2015, the Town owns or is acquiring several important tracts for conservation and passive recreation. Notable among them, are the 196-acre Town Forest Complex, the Maud Jones Memorial Forest, the Oyster River Reserve, Lee Five Corners Reserve, Old Mill Reserve, and the Joe Ford Wildlife Preserve.

There is an extensive network of marked and mapped walking paths that cover much of the Lee Forest Complex. The Conservation Commission prepared a comprehensive biological inventory of the Lee Forest Complex, and a forest management plan. The Lee Forest Complex also has become an important resource for teachers and students at Mast Way School. The Maude Jones Memorial Forest continues certified as a Tree Farm, a management plan has been prepared, and a demonstration timber harvest has been conducted. A comprehensive plant and animal list for this property is also available.

Acquisition of conservation easements has been a high priority for the Town for many years. As of 2015, there are more than 2,000 acres of privately owned land in Lee protected in perpetuity by conservation easements. Privately owned lands under conservation easements remain on the tax rolls. Including Town-owned conservation lands and deed restricted common lands, the total protected land is 2,879 acres or roughly 22% of the Town. In the Master Planning Survey conducted in 2005, respondents answered strongly in the affirmative that the Town should identify and protect more of the remaining uplands from development. The importance of this objective was reinforced by voters' responses in the 2015 Master Planning Survey.

For many years, the Town has been mindful of threats, actual and potential, to many of these resources. It has adopted ordinances, appropriated funds to protect lands for conservation, and has been the beneficiary of gifts of land or conservation easements from generous landowners.

### GOAL

To identify and protect the most important of the Town's natural resources (surface waters, groundwater, agricultural soils, forests, wetlands, wildlife habitat, scenic vistas)

### ACTION ITEMS

- Continue to seek Town support for funding the protection of lands that contain, or are essential to the protection of, important natural resources
- Encourage landowners to consider gifting lands or conservation easements by outright donation or by bargain sales (less than full market value)
- Explore creative ways of achieving resource protection through regulatory requirements and/or through incentives to encourage development that also produces important resource protection

### GOAL

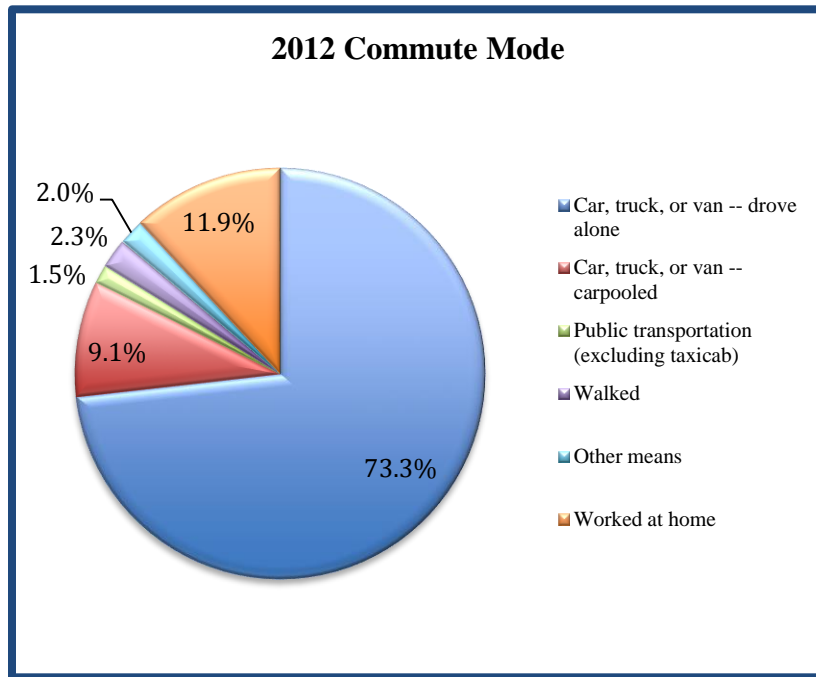
Manage Town-owned conservation land and conservation easements consistent with conservation objectives and Best Management Practices

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Prepare and implement management plans for Town-owned conservation lands, and for annual monitoring of conservation easements held by the Town
- Monitor and enforce conservation easements held by the Town



## Chapter 5. Transportation



Automobiles comprise most of the transportation in Lee. Many commuters use Lee as a short-cut, resulting in increased weekday traffic. Many bicyclists include the scenic roads of Lee on their longer rides, particularly on the weekends. Lee roads are winding and without sidewalks, making walking along roads challenging. However, walking paths exist in town and are utilized for recreation by Lee citizens. The Lee trails system is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

### Roads

In the early years, all roads in the Town were maintained by the Town. There were as many as 16 road

districts and road surveyors at a time and these surveyors would pay their taxes by taking care of the Town roads. Eventually as the state began to take over some of the higher traffic roads and as mechanical equipment replaced laborers, the Town replaced the surveyors with three *road agents*. Finally in the late 1940s the town elected one part time road agent who oversaw the maintenance of the roads. In 1985 the road agent became full time with the responsibilities of overseeing roads, transfer station and cemeteries. As more roads have been added and as demand for better roads has increased, the Highway Department has grown to three full time employees. The Town Highway Department currently maintains 37.4 miles of road, maintains the equipment for road upkeep, maintains the cemeteries and parks, and assists other departments as needed. [Click here or refer to Appendix F for a map of Lee's road system.](#)

The Town's Highway Department has identified the following goals and action items:

#### GOAL

Analyze the current road infrastructure and develop a plan for safety improvements and a plan for road reconstruction

#### ACTION ITEMS

- Work with other town departments to consider needed safety improvements for town roads, possible sidewalks and/or bike paths

**GOAL**

Systemically upgrade the fleet to newer equipment

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Analyze the fleet and determine how many trucks are needed and the best method to upgrade to newer trucks
- Continue to fund the Highway Equipment Trust Fund

**GOAL**

Implement the programs in place to replace the four bridges and three big culverts that have not been replaced

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Put funds away in the highway bridge and road trust fund
- Seek outside funding where possible (FEMA, State Bridge Funding)

**GOAL**

Ensure that current highway buildings are maintained to address current and future needs

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Determine the life expectancy of the current buildings
- Consider changes and additional buildings to address the future needs





## Chapter 6. Community Resources

### Lee Public Library

The Lee Public Library was organized in 1892 on the second floor of the Town Hall building. The town report for 1893 listed expenses of \$23.32 for books, \$6.25 for supplies, and \$3.00 paid to the first librarian, Lizzie Stearns.

In 1959, as Lee began to sell its unused schools, a warrant article at town meeting proposed that the Center School on Lee Hook Road be purchased and moved to Lee Hill. It took three years to raise the money and in

1962, the school became the original library building. Additions to the building were completed in 1972, 1984, and 1996.



Today the library houses over 25,000 books and periodicals, 1100 audio books and CDs, 900 DVDs, six public computers as well as high-speed Wireless access. Atrium, the library's automation system was implemented in 2012. The library is governed by a five-member Board of Library Trustees with two alternates and is staffed by one full-time library director and four part-time employees. The library is open 43 hours per week.

In keeping with its Mission "to serve the informational, educational and recreational needs of the Lee community" the library offers a variety of programs for all ages, toddlers through adults, with additional programs during school vacation time.

### GOAL

To reconfigure/enlarge the current building, bringing the entire building into ADA Compliance with improved/increased parking or to construct a new Library Community Center to meet public needs

### ACTION ITEMS

- Develop a long-term Facility Action Plan
- Develop a plan to fund a new Library Community Center or an expansion/upgrade to the existing building



## GOAL

To increase public participation of library programs

## ACTION ITEMS

- Increase awareness of the unique programs and benefits the Lee Public Library offers by expanding the library's social media presence through daily/weekly posts on the library website, Facebook™ and other outlets
- Develop cross-generational programming and promote lifelong learning
- Increase programs to promote computer literacy
- Expand the types of non-traditional items that can be loaned to the community
- Increase professional staff to expand programming and services for middle school, high school and senior populations

## GOAL

Preserve and consolidate the archival and historical documents of the town

## ACTION ITEM

- Identify funding sources for preservation needs of historic materials

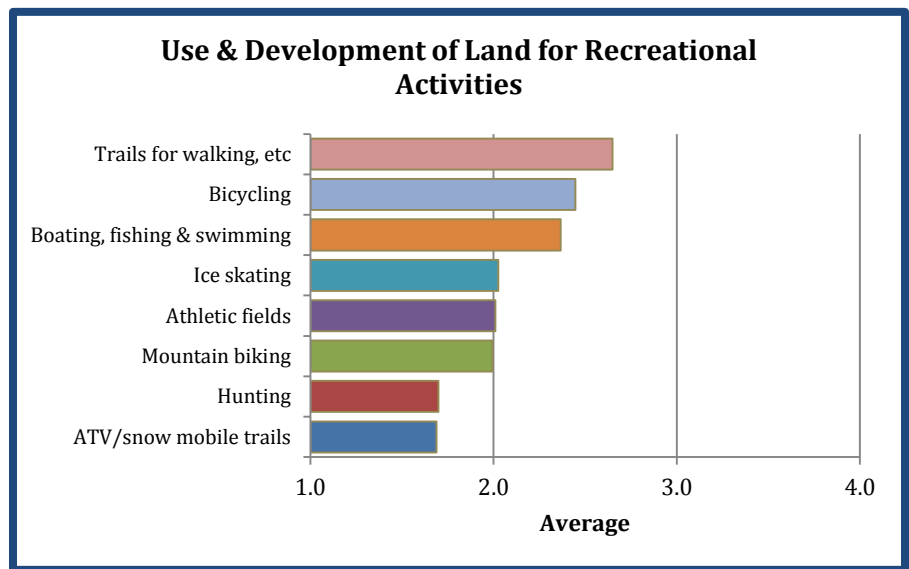
## Recreation Commission

When asked about how best to utilize and develop land for recreational activities, the resident survey results show that trails for walking, bicycling, and boating, fishing, and swimming were most important.

The mission of the Lee Recreation Commission is to provide indoor and outdoor programs and activities to improve the physical and mental health of Lee residents.

The Recreation Commission recognized that recreation is an essential element of a healthy community and lifestyle. Research has shown that:

- Physical activity makes people healthier
- Physical activity increases with access to parks
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and physiological health
- Parks create stable neighborhoods and strong communities



With the above beliefs in mind, the Lee Recreation Commission seeks to provide programs and parks for the Town of Lee that:

- Are available and accessible to a wide spectrum of Lee residents, young to old, athletic or not, as much as is possible and feasible
- Are multifunctional and diverse in each season
- Are protective of natural resources in an environmentally sustainable way
- Appeal to park visitors with diverse active and passive recreational needs
- Utilize local resources, time, and talent
- Enhance community building opportunities



## **GOAL**

Expand programming and activities

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Design and implement activities for residents of all ages and to meet a variety of interests. Possible ideas include music in the park, outdoor movie night and exercise equipment in a town park.
- Expand the playground equipment at Little River Park

## **GOAL**

Staff, as needed, to develop and oversee programming and maintain the fields and parks in Lee including a part-time program director and groundskeeper

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Determine the need for staff
- Work with Select Board to plan and budget for increased staff
- Present the positions on a town ballot for vote

## **GOAL**

Maintain and improve town fields and park conditions

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Expand the tennis courts
- Install an irrigation system in Stevens Field
- Improve the grass on the baseball diamond in the Town Field
- Install an irrigation system in Little River Park
- Enhance landscaping at Little River Park
- Improve path lighting at Little River Park, working with the Energy Committee

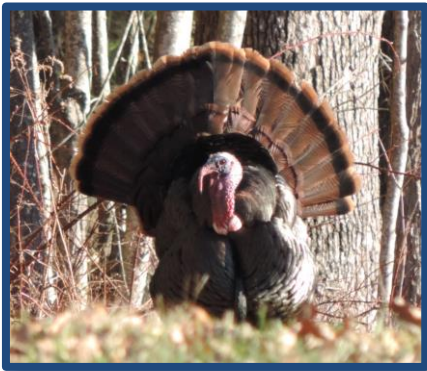


## Lee Trails System

Current New Hampshire state and regional agency strategic plans designate more livable and walkable communities as a critical factor in preserving and improving health, social and economic well-being in the state.

Lee is well-positioned to develop healthy, energy-efficient and safe walking and bicycling connections between neighborhoods and facilities. Given the already existing paths in Lee, a safe walking path system is the logical first area of focus.

Walking paths also allow residents to enjoy the pastoral settings of field and forest, wildlife sightings, and other natural experiences that so many Lee residents value dearly. Heritage sites such as the former mill locations on the Lamprey, Oyster, and Little Rivers are only accessible by foot. If properly laid out and maintained, walking paths can reduce dependence on the automobile for local social and economic trips, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the associated negative impacts on the quality of life. Several different groups maintain Lee's formal and informal trails. For example, the Lee Sno-Travelers maintains about 20 miles of trails that stretch from Epping to Madbury.



Neighborhoods enjoy shared trails in several parts of Lee. The Lee Conservation Commission monitors Lee Town Forest trails. There is a need to link these trail systems to create a more comprehensive network.

The Lee Forest Complex, which covers almost 200 acres from the bog behind the Library to the shore of Wheelwright Pond, provides a working model of the potential of a “livable, walkable community.” Now with over three miles of trails on town-owned land, this system of paths has been developed over the years through a combination of Boy and Girl Scout projects and cooperation by volunteers.

In addition to the Town Forest Complex, other town-owned lands also have walking trails on them. They include:

- James Farm, accessible from the pond along the James Farm loop road
- Little River Park, accessible from Route 155
- Little River Reserve, accessible from Cartland Road and Thompson Mill Road (informal paths only)
- Maud Jones Memorial Forest and Tree Farm, accessible from Garrity Road

- Oyster River Reserve, accessible from Route 155A Sherburne Road (formerly Old Concord Turnpike)
- Old Mill Reserve, accessible from Old Mill Road (informal paths only)
- Five Corners Reserve, accessible from Angel Drive (formerly Old Concord Turnpike) (informal paths only)

### **GOAL**

Establish a formal trails committee in Lee, with connections to the Lee Recreation and Parks Commission, the Lee Conservation Commission, and the Lee Planning Board

### **ACTION ITEM**

- Petition the Select Board to establish a Lee Trails Committee

### **GOAL**

Create and improve trail systems in Lee

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Provide safe and convenient connections for walking and biking between the Town Forest trails and the trails/ facilities in Little River Park
- Design and develop the connection of trails and green buffered areas, working with cooperating landowners and departments and commissions of Lee (Planning Board, Highway Department, Recreation Commission, and Conservation Commission)
- Collaborate with the Lee Conservation Commission and Lee Recreation Commission to improve, mark and sign trails on town conservation land
- Work with appropriate committees, community groups, and cooperative landowners to plan and complete safe linkages with the trails in adjacent towns

### **GOAL**

Establish guidelines for development and construction projects to include safe arrangements for pedestrian and bicycle intra- and inter-community travel, applying the principles of livable, walkable communities as defined in New Hampshire state and regional organizations

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Collaborate with the Lee Planning Board to devise appropriate changes to zoning and subdivision regulations, to be submitted to voters for approval
- Educate Lee citizens on the benefits of an expanded community trail system and on the importance of responsible and respectful behavior toward landowners, nature, the land and pathways when using the trails
- Publish, including on a Web site, updated guides and maps to the Lee trail systems
- Monitor Lee's progress compared to similar towns; and keep Lee's town representatives and citizens updated on Lee's status as a leader in environmental stewardship and healthy living

## Police Department

Lee has been recognized as one of the 10 safest places to live in New Hampshire! Lee Police Department is proactive in enforcement of state laws and the protection of our wonderful community.



The Town of Lee and the Police Department have grown substantially since the 1950's when there were only 583 residents and a part-time Police Department. Times have changed and so have the frequency and types of crimes that occur in Lee. To address the growing population and additional needs of the Town, the Police Department has increased to eight full-time officers and a part-time officer.

### GOAL

Provide the professional, visibly dedicated and effective police service that the residents of Lee have been accustomed to and desire

### ACTION ITEMS

- Involvement in the community events and service projects such as the Lee Fair, assisting the Lee Community Church with delivery of food baskets, providing for families in need during the holidays, End 68 Hours of Hunger Project at the Oyster River School District, Adopt a Highway program, assisting residents during emergency weather events.
- Visibility to youth as a positive support for them and the community by hosting tours of the Police Station for students from schools and child care centers in Town.
- Conduct Directed Patrols in areas of concerns for speeding
- Proactive patrolling to deter property crimes



### GOAL

Improve the Police Department's equipment and training

### ACTON ITEMS

- Monitor equipment and training needs and seek grant funding for implementation
- Apply for grant funds from the National Highway Safety Administration to conduct extra speed and DWI patrols
- Develop an Active Threat Response Plan for the Town

- Train officers and Town employees in implementing the Response Plan
- Offer Threat Response training to residents
- Offer self-defense classes for residents

## **GOAL**

Retain and attract experienced officers

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Offer additional training opportunities for current police officers
- Obtain grants for added patrols to give officers an extra earning opportunity
- Maintain up-to-date technology and equipment to give officers the tools needed to perform at their best

## **Fire & Rescue Department**

For more than 50 years, the Lee Fire Department has stood ready to assist the citizens of Lee. Ours is a tradition that began in the late 1940s with a group of men dedicated to helping their neighbors in times of need.

Struggling to find resources, they asked the town for assistance and in 1950 residents voted to accept the Department's equipment and to fund its operation, however, the town did not provide funding for a station. Undaunted by this turn of events, members of the Department set about to build their own station with lumber cut from town property. It was this "can do" spirit that laid the foundation for future members.



Since its inception, the primary mission of the Department has been fighting fires. Hundreds of acres of undeveloped land made the town susceptible to forest and wild-land fires, and this - combined with residential and commercial building fires - was of principal concern to the early volunteers. Over time an increase in motor vehicle traffic meant the Department was responding to rising numbers of motor vehicle accidents. Currently the Department's mission has expanded further to include hazardous materials mitigation, water rescue, ice rescue, and medical emergencies.

The Department consists of full time and part time staff as well as paid On-Call members. In 2004, the residents approved the first full time staff for the Department. Today the full time and part time staff assists the Department in staffing the daytime hours where many On-Call members are not available. In 2014 the Selectmen hired the first full time Chief who is responsible for the planning, administering and supervising fire prevention, fire suppression, disaster preparedness and emergency medical services for the Town. Currently there are two full time and two part time members who cover the hours of 6am to 6pm Monday through Friday and twenty-five On-Call members.



As the challenges facing the fire service continue to increase in number and complexity, and as our town continues to grow, members of the Lee Fire & Rescue Department will build upon the foundation of service set down so many years ago by a group of men and women dedicated to helping their community. Going into the second half of a century of service, it is our mission to maintain the commitment of those who served before us by continuing to help our neighbors in times of hardship.



### **GOAL**

Provide fire and rescue coverage to residents

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Develop an outline to ensure adequate coverage is available during periods where full-time/part-time personnel are not on duty (nights and weekends)
- Determine if town needs require a full-time Fire and Rescue Department and consider the cost and benefits of a full-time department

### **GOAL**

Enhance emergency radio communications though all parts of town

### **ACTION ITEM**

- Develop a financial plan to purchase a repeater to assist with poor radio transmission

### **GOAL**

Support current membership of the department

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Provide training, within the department and partnering with other towns
- Enhance a feeling of teamwork and mutual respect
- Provide more leadership opportunities

### **GOAL**

Recruit new members into the department

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Expand public relations and need for a strong volunteer department with open houses
- Attend public events to show equipment and discuss the department's role and activities
- Develop videos of training, equipment, and apparatus for the members and public
- Recruit using a variety of media including Channel 13 and social media (E-Crier, Facebook, Town website and others)



## Transfer Station

Managing waste is a personal and public matter. Prior to the 1950s, residents disposed of their trash on their own. In 1952, the Town of Lee cleared a lot for collective trash disposal and the first “town dump” was opened. As awareness of the ability and need to recycle materials rather than bury them increased, town leaders explored opportunities. Lee was in the fore-front of waste disposal and, in 1977, established the first “transfer station” for residents to “transfer” their waste for recycling. The efforts were overseen by one person who also served as the Road Agent. Oversight by a committee followed. By 2001, the need for oversight of waste management was turned over to one person. A new building for the Transfer Station opened in 2003. The new structure promoted increased awareness and responsibility on residents to recycle their waste. The sale of recycled material brings revenue to the town and saves the town money as the amount of land-fill material decreases. The Transfer Station is open three days a week and staffed by a manager, two full-time and two part-time people and many volunteers.



### GOAL

To keep our operating expense as low as possible to maximize our fiscal efficiency.

### ACTION ITEM

- Seek new opportunities for recycling and selling products under the guidance of the Northeast Resource Recovery Association, or similar group

### GOAL

Increase recycling in the Town

### ACTION ITEMS

- Educate the residents about the cost-benefits of recycling
- Educate the residents about sorting for the highest “grade” of recycled products
- Provide clear signage at the Transfer Station for recycling and disposal
- Use communication available to inform residents regarding recycling and disposal of unneeded items

### GOAL

Build a new ADA approved Swap Shop against the Old Baler Building

### ACTION ITEMS

- Design a plan
- Work with Select Board to obtain approval

The Planning Board and the Master Plan Subcommittee would like to thank the Town of Lee residents and members of the Town Boards, Departments, Commissions, and Committees for their active participation, for providing comments and questions, constructive feedback, extensive knowledge, and colorful photographs.

Your efforts made this Master Plan very valuable to the Town and the Planning Board.

**Thank you**

APPENDIX A – Master Plan 2016 Lee Resident Survey

APPENDIX B – Master Plan Data Presentation to BOS

APPENDIX C – Survey Results

APPENDIX D – Inventory of Archeological Resources

APPENDIX E – Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites

APPENDIX F – Maps