

II. VISION FOR RAYMOND

As provided by RSA 674:2 II (a), a vision statement serves to direct the other sections of the master plan, articulates the desires of the citizens affected by the master plan, and contains a set of guiding principles and priorities to implement that vision. A vision statement also offers clear future goals toward which short term and long term policies and practices can be shaped.

Raymond's Vision Statement is specifically crafted from the results of the Town's 2007-2008 Community Participatory Planning Process and reflects the desires of today's citizens for tomorrow's town, hence the title "The Town We Want".

"THE TOWN WE WANT"

Raymond's Vision Statement

"Preserving Our Past Preparing Our Future"

(quote accredited to community residents)



The Town of Raymond's vision for the future reflects New Hampshire's unique quality of life and culture -- from preserving open spaces and natural resources, to maintaining a vibrant village life, thriving small businesses, and an independent volunteer spirit.

To enhance these elements, we know that we must answer the challenge of growth with planning that will broaden our tax base by adding commerce while safeguarding, especially, our water and floodplains from the stresses that development will bring.

To Raymond citizens, smart growth means a variety of housing choices; with enough vibrant businesses and recreational opportunities that we can work, shop and play at home; quality education for our children; and core light industry that will bring knowledge-based jobs to our community.

Sound planning means that Raymond's planning board members will dedicate themselves to making careful, studied, holistic decisions that respect our master plan. With these decisions we must inform, educate, and "provide assistance to all citizens."¹ Planning decisions must also stand the test of time. Above all they must respect the law and strive to reflect the stated will of the people.

Finally, wise resource protection means proactive conservation as well as insuring that every planning decision considers the effect of our choices. Resource protection strives not just to protect, but also to enhance our natural resources so that we leave our children a better environment than we inherited.

A. Community Character

Town of Raymond citizens want a future that offers both economic vitality and cultural diversity combined with the qualities of a rural town. In the future, Raymond will capitalize upon its strategic location along NH Route 101 and NH Routes 102/107 and Route 27, attracting appropriate businesses and industry to development locations at Exits 4 and 5, through the provision of infrastructure, including wastewater treatment. Compact, well-designed, low impact business and commercial development appropriate to the town's character, will also expand along the NH Route 102/107 and NH Route 27 corridors.

Downtown Raymond will be revitalized through a combination of zoning, economic, and cultural initiatives. New stores and restaurants will offer a diversity of choices for shopping and eating out. Internet connection and cable access will be widely available. The Downtown will feature a movie theater and will be home to one or more institutions such as a small educational institution and/or a medical clinic. A new centrally-located community and recreational center offers year-round cultural and recreational activities for all Raymond residents. Theater, concerts, day care, community suppers and teen events will take place at central gathering places throughout the community.

¹ see *Carbonneau v. Town of Rye*, 120 NH.96 (1980)

B. Natural Resources

The citizens of the Town of Raymond will be successful in preserving its rural character and open lands through wise land use policies adopted in the first decade of the new century. Raymond will be a model in its preservation of open space and creation of natural recreation opportunities such as swimming, fishing, kayaking and canoeing on the scenic Lamprey, Exeter and Pawtuckaway Rivers.



Jessica Scott, Lamprey River Elementary School Grade 4
SNHPC Poster Contest Award 2008

Open space will be preserved strategically throughout Raymond to create wildlife corridors and nature paths for walkers and bikers by linking open space, woods, and park areas. Preservation and wise land use policies will also protect the Town of Raymond's water bodies and waterways, its public wells and aquifers. Several new parks will be created throughout the Town of Raymond within an easy walk, bike, or short car ride away.

C. Existing Land Use

New residential development will be designed in a manner that preserves open space and fosters pedestrian and bike use. New residential development will be in balance with Raymond's economic growth. The Town of Raymond will strategically guide its growth away from the floodplain areas and will preserve these floodplains as pristine open space which in turn reduces the risk of flooding. There will continue to be a variety of housing choices available in Raymond that are affordable to a diversity of residents – senior citizens and young people seeking their first home, professionals, and working families.

D. Schools

In the future, the schools of Raymond, long a centerpiece of the community, have made the school district one of the top in the state. An up-to-date elementary school and new sidewalks/bike lanes throughout the downtown will allow children to walk safely to and from school. All Raymond's school buildings and other public buildings will be

physically sound, well-maintained, and energy-efficient. The elementary school will be one of several new “green” buildings in Raymond using renewable energy for its heat and power. This building will be built with natural and safe building materials that create a healthy interior environment and good indoor air quality. This and other “green” buildings within the community will save Raymond taxpayers thousands of dollars annually in heating and other costs.

E. Economic Development

The Town of Raymond’s balanced economic growth policies will bring about fiscal stability and relief to residential taxpayers by expanding Raymond’s taxable base and hence increasing its revenue. This increased revenue, augmented through a wise revenue investment plan, will help to fund several of the community facilities, recreation and open space projects that have enriched community life for Raymond citizens and young people.

F. Fiscal Responsibility

Fiscal responsibility will be achieved through a variety of innovative methods. A new strategic open space plan will set forth a number of techniques to protect open space, including such methods as promotion of private conservation easements and deed restrictions in addition to land acquisition. Further, both the Town of Raymond and the school district will realize substantial cost savings by changing to more sustainable practices that reduce dependence upon fossil fuels for heat and power and using renewable energy sources. Shared use of resources and facilities as well as the purchasing power of both units of government will help to increase energy efficiency in school and public buildings. Reduced solid waste disposal costs will be realized through continued and expanded community recycling. Expanded public and business education about toxic substances and using alternatives that are safer will bring about cost savings in hazardous waste management. The costs savings resulting from these measures will provide the Town of Raymond with greater fiscal security and increased freedom from costs over which it has had little or no control. This in turn will reduce the burden on residential taxpayers.

CONCLUSION

Twenty years from now the Town of Raymond will look much different than it is today; but the citizens of Raymond want the town to be recognizable as Raymond – its historic village character intact, open space, woodlands, wild river frontage, and rural character preserved - a place for people of all ages.

Guiding Principles

Given the above vision, this Master Plan sets forth the following guiding principles for managing the future growth and development of Town of Raymond.

- 1. Preserve Open Space.** Practice proactive conservation by using strategic land acquisition and zoning to protect the Lamprey River and Exeter River, floodplains, other water bodies and waterways, public wells, aquifers and wildlife corridors. Revise and implement Raymond's 2003 Open Space Plan. Create and publicize access to public conservation land.
- 2. Enhance Village Life.** Fund and develop a Downtown Plan. Update the Town's parking regulations. Maintain a variety of housing choices and small businesses within a revitalized village center. Clean up the Lamprey River and reopen the Town Beach. Create pocket parks. Plan for the eventual construction/renovation of a new elementary school, community center, town hall and police department.
- 3. Attract, and Support with Infrastructure, Appropriate Businesses and Light Industry to Raymond.** Direct this growth to compact, well-designed gateway locations at NH Route 101 Exits 4 and 5, as well as other identified areas, like Flint Hill. Encourage green development. Enhance commercial development along NH Routes 107/27.
- 4. Reduce and Stabilize Property Tax Burdens.** Utilize effective and aggressive commercial marketing of Raymond's business opportunities and promote efficiency initiatives such as town and school benchmarking and shared services (intra and extra town).
- 5. Educate.** Provide citizens with educational resources through an enhanced town website and local volunteer-staffed welcome center. Provide students with opportunities for off-campus education, internships and job shadowing, and volunteer mentors for college application.
- 6. Plan Wisely.** Update and improve the Town's *Emergency Management Plan*. Create an inventory of town businesses and vacant business buildings. Designate scenic roads. Add wider buffers.