

XI. Relationship to Adjacent Towns and the Region

The Bennington Regional Plan recognizes that Sandgate is a mountainous rural community. Residential development and agricultural uses are planned for the valleys, while the rugged upland forest areas -- roughly corresponding to forest zones -- will allow development on large parcels along with forestry and recreational uses. The Regional Plan acknowledges the importance of Sandgate's upland environment: its preservation serves to protect ground water, forest resources, wildlife habitat, and other natural values. The Sandgate Plan and the Regional Plan are thus in accord. Both state that Sandgate will remain a rural community, accommodating new residential and limited commercial growth where zoning and health regulations permit, thereby allowing for growth while preventing environmental degradation.

Similarly, the plans of adjacent towns (principally Rupert, Manchester, and Arlington) do not conflict with Sandgate's Plan as those towns all have extensive forest and low density residential land uses and zoning districts along their boundaries with Sandgate. The Sandgate Plan also identifies a number of issues -- schools, emergency services, recreation, solid waste, etc. -- where intermunicipal cooperation and communication is necessary. Particular attention should be directed toward issues involving roads and trails that run between Sandgate and adjacent towns.

It does not appear that the level of development planned for Sandgate will result in any significant impact in any other town; moreover, Sandgate has planned for the growth pressures it will face as a result of development in the rest of the Northshire. It would be wise, nonetheless, for the town to participate in joint meetings with neighboring towns when issues of common concern arise, and to continue to participate actively in the Bennington County Regional Commission.