

## The Town of Amherst

Located in the fertile and scenic Connecticut River Valley, Amherst enjoys views of hills and mountains in all directions. Although originally a farming community, Amherst's main industry is now education, since it is the home of the main campus of the University of Massachusetts as well as two private colleges, Amherst College and Hampshire College.

Consequently, the town's population varies from about 35,000 during the academic year to the mid-20's during the summer. While the town's commercial, social and cultural life benefit from the liveliness and diversity stimulated by the colleges and the University, the town suffers financially from the fact that over half its land is tax-exempt.

Amherst has long supported excellent public schools, libraries and town services; it has also worked hard both to preserve farming and open space and to provide affordable housing. Amherst is one of the few towns in the State to have met the State's goal of having 10% of its housing stock affordable.

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