

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Wayland: Looking to the Future

The Town of Wayland has long been regarded as one of metropolitan Boston’s premier communities. A first glimpse of the Town reveals a landscape of forests, scenic roads, open fields, marshes, historic buildings, and attractive neighborhoods including the tight-knit Cochituate Village. Looking deeper, one finds Wayland to be a friendly community with considerable local pride, a place where residents volunteer their time for local activities ranging from schools to arts to the environment. Despite the close proximity of malls and big box stores, many residents choose to shop in the Town’s two business centers, which offer diverse and distinctive local stores. Although Wayland lies squarely within the ring of suburbs that surround Boston, it has been able to preserve its unique history, landscape, and sense of identity.

The Town’s ability to retain so much of what makes it unique in the face of region-wide change is more than just luck. It is the result of deliberate local policies ranging from zoning bylaws to spending decisions that have been implemented over the past years and decades. Thanks to these past choices, Wayland’s residents are generally happy with the Town as it exists now, and want the community to “remain basically the same, only better as time goes on,” as outlined within the Vision Statement. Yet, as regional housing, economic, traffic, and land development pressures continue to grow, the Town will need to continually develop effective responses to new challenges.

Overall, Wayland’s residents agree that the Town should continue to preserve its community, its landscape, and its way of life, while seeking to make improvements in areas such as transportation, affordable housing, and the layout of Wayland Center and Cochituate Village. The challenge is to decide how best to accomplish this, what combination of policies will be most effective, what tradeoffs are necessary, and how the Town can most effectively prioritize its efforts. Through the Master Plan, Wayland and its residents are answering these important questions.

1.2 How this Master Plan was Created

In Massachusetts, a Master Plan is defined as a comprehensive Town-wide plan that contains the following elements: Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, Natural and Cultural Resources, Open Space and Recreation, Public Services and Facilities, Transportation, and Implementation. The Wayland Master Plan includes all these elements. In addition, the Plan examines Wayland’s two centers—Cochituate and Wayland Center—in greater detail.

The Wayland Master Plan has been developed based on input from Wayland’s residents and an eleven-member Master Plan Advisory Task Force (“Task Force”) representing various Town boards and other interested parties in the community. A team of consultants led by Daylor Consulting Group has assisted the Task Force by leading public meetings, helping to develop alternatives and strategies for Wayland’s future, and preparing reports, maps and graphics. The project is funded partially by the Town of Wayland and partially by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the Executive Order 418 Community Development Planning Program.

The Master Plan represents an inclusive public process. Three public forums held during the summer and fall of 2002 provided an opportunity for residents to offer their input on topics ranging from housing to open space to economic development. Follow-up meetings in the winter and spring of 2003 allowed residents to respond to draft Master Plan recommendations before they were finalized. The Task Force's role in the project has been to guide the technical aspects of the Master Plan process as well as the public outreach, and to review draft reports and documents. Throughout the process, Town residents and other interested parties have been able to learn more about the project, review progress drafts of Master Plan materials, and provide written feedback through the project website. The final Master Plan reflects the public input provided throughout the project.

Master planning is a four-step process that starts with a review of existing conditions and the setting of general goals and proceeds toward more focused objectives and policies. The final step is developing implementation strategies to achieve these objectives. The four steps in the Master Plan process are reflected in the four Master Plan sections listed below:

- **Inventory and Analysis** – A review of existing data, trends, and issues in Wayland.
- **Planning Framework** – Wayland's Vision for the Future and the Master Plan Goals Statement, both based on public input.
- **Wayland's Plan for the Future** – Recommended strategies and policies to help Wayland achieve its vision and goals.
- **Implementation Plan** – A specific plan detailing the "what, when, and who" of putting Wayland's Master Plan into action.

1.3 Existing Conditions in Wayland

Each section in the Inventory and Analysis section begins with an "Assets and Liabilities Statement," a summary of Wayland's existing conditions as seen through the eyes of its residents. The Assets and Liabilities identify not only key facts and trends relevant to the community, but also whether the Town as a whole views each of these circumstances as a positive or negative factor. In many cases, a particular attribute can be both an asset and a liability at the same time. For example, Wayland's scenic beauty and natural resources are assets that define the Town's character, but also create a desirable setting that encourages new development.

1.4 Planning Framework

Based on public input from the first two Master Plan public meetings as well as past planning and visioning projects, the Task Force prepared a vision statement and goals to guide the development of the Master Plan. The Vision Statement is a broad set of themes identifying what type of community Wayland would like to be in the future. This statement is intended to be general, and to capture the overall consensus of the majority of Wayland's residents. The goals are more specific, addressing issues related to each of the Master Plan elements. As the Master Plan is implemented over the next several years, Wayland can use the vision statement and goals as a "yardstick" to assess whether various proposals are consistent with the needs and desires of the Town's residents.

Wayland's Vision for the Future

People want Wayland to remain basically the same only better as time goes on. In the future:

- Wayland continues to be a “semi-rural” community, which means a residential community with historic character and ample open space.
- The Town provides a top quality public education system and effective and responsive government.
- Wayland maintains a healthy environment and protects and conserves its natural resources.
- Wayland promotes a diversity of residents in terms of cultural and ethnic background, economic status, time of life, and household characteristics.
- Building on its vibrant local business community, its diverse cultural and recreational offerings, and its strong volunteer tradition, Wayland develops an even greater cohesiveness and sense of identity.

1.5 Wayland's Plan for the Future

The recommendation section of the Master Plan expands goals into specific strategies and proposals relating to each of the eight master plan elements. The Land Use and Growth Management Plan is the centerpiece of Wayland's Plan for the Future. The Town's future use of land will affect almost every topic that is addressed in the Master Plan; housing supply, economic development opportunities, transportation demand, the need for public facilities and infrastructure, etc.

Overall, the zoning and regulatory recommendations direct new development toward areas of Town best suited to accommodate such growth based on physical, environmental, and aesthetic criteria and socioeconomic characteristics. Important open space and natural resource areas as well as areas less suited for development are designated for conservation or low-intensity development.

In addition, the recommendations include other strategies and policy changes for protecting natural and historic resources, protecting open space, providing recreation opportunities, encouraging appropriate economic development, diversifying housing opportunities, providing adequate public facilities and services, and improving the transportation network. These recommendations include regulatory changes, capital investments by the Town, improvements to the organization and function of local governments, and various other strategies.

1.6 Implementation

The Implementation Plan is a step-by-step guide for Wayland to follow over the next several years to ensure that the Master Plan recommendations are put into action. Implementing the Master Plan will require a concerted and ongoing effort on the part of the Town's elected and appointed officials. However, the Master Plan, and the public consensus that it represents, is too important for the Town not to carry through with its recommendations. The actions that the Town takes now will have a lasting legacy that affects future generations.

The Implementation Plan is divided into two components. The first part is the Implementation Action Plan, which identifies the group or groups responsible for implementing each Master Plan recommendation as well as the approximate timeline for action. The second component is an evaluation program designed to help the

Town measure the success of the Master Plan recommendations (once they have been implemented) compared to the public mandate and the goals that were established early in the Master Plan process.