

# Planning Framework



## **9. PUBLIC INPUT, VISION AND GOALS**

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The Master Plan is a policy guide to help Wayland and its residents achieve the future that they desire. Therefore, an inclusive Master Plan process was conducted to gain input from all sectors of the Wayland community. This section summarizes the outcome of the three public forums and presents the Vision and Goals statements that encapsulate the main points of this public input.

### **9.1 Master Plan Process**

The public process included several components intended to inform and seek feedback from the widest possible cross-section the Wayland community. Elements of the process included:

- One “visioning” forum in late spring 2002 to solicit general input from Wayland residents in an open-ended format.
- Two public forums held during the summer and fall of 2002 to address in greater detail two issues of importance to Wayland’s future: the two Town centers (Wayland Center and Cochrane) and housing.
- Two informational sessions were held in the winter of 2003 to review the progress of the Master Plan and to collect feedback on the results of the public forums held in the summer and fall of 2002.
- One public meeting in the spring of 2003 to present the draft strategies and implementation plan to the community and receive input from the public.
- Extensive publicity through newspapers, flyers, a project website, and other media. Town residents and other interested parties were able to provide written feedback to the consultants and the Master Plan Advisory Task Force via mail, email, and an Internet feedback form.
- A final public meeting in the spring of 2004 where the final Master Plan was presented to the people of Wayland.

The following is a brief summary of the three public forums.

#### **9.1.1 Public Forum I**

On June 5, 2002, the Task Force held the first Master Plan public forum. After listening to a brief presentation on recent trends and issues in Wayland, the 50 or so participants were divided into five discussion groups to answer questions on three topics:

1. What makes Wayland special to you?
2. What role should retail and commercial development play in Wayland’s future?
3. What do you like about your neighborhood now? What thoughts do you have about future residential growth and change?

The first question elicited a range of responses. Participants noted Wayland’s local pride, friendliness, good schools, semi-rural character, and natural beauty, among other positive traits. In response to the second question, participants generally favored smaller businesses serving primarily the local community. Of critical

importance to many residents is the design and look of business development, which they feel should be attractive and pedestrian friendly. Residents also noted that local businesses must be supported by the community and by Town government. In response to the final question on residential growth and change, several participants emphasized the need to protect the character of existing neighborhoods. Some residents noted the negative impact of tearing down existing homes and constructing very large homes on small lots or in existing neighborhoods. Other responses were directed at protecting the neighborhood character by trying to control cut-through traffic, tall fences, and the alteration of scenic roads and landscapes.

During the second part of the meeting, participants were asked to comment on the following Vision Statement adopted in 1998 as part of Wayland's Growth Management Plan.

### **1998 Community Vision**

*People want Wayland to remain basically the same only better as time goes on. They like the "semi-rural character" which means a primarily residential character with ample open spaces, top quality education, a sense of identity, a strong volunteer tradition, effective and responsive government, economic diversity of residents, and a vibrant business community serving local needs.*

There was general agreement among the participants that the vision statement captures their desires for the Town's future. However, one participant suggested that Wayland's "semi-rural character" is really its own stand-alone trait, separate from the Town's quality education, strong volunteer tradition, effective and responsive government, economic diversity of residents, and vibrant business community. Other respondents suggested that Wayland strive for a clean (litter-free) community, ample clean water, and racial and religious diversity.

#### **9.1.2 Public Forum II**

The June 26, 2002 public forum was devoted to discussing the future of Wayland Center and Cochrane. A brief presentation highlighted existing issues in Wayland Center and Cochrane as well as possible opportunities for improvement. Participants were then divided into small groups to discuss the following questions for each of the two centers:

1. What, if anything, is missing from this center?
  - Would you like to see any new businesses in this center? If so, what kind?
  - Would you like to see any new housing in this center? If so, what type?
  - Is there anything else missing in the center?
2. Design/Character
  - What do you like about the character of this center now?
  - What would you like to improve, and how would you prioritize these possible improvements?
3. Town Green
  - Would you like to have a Town Green in this center? If so, what function(s) should it serve?

Approximately 40 residents attended the meeting and participated in the discussion groups. The discussions generated a wide range of points, but several common themes emerged. In both centers, residents want to see

better pedestrian accessibility and more aesthetically pleasing amenities such as landscaping and attractive lighting. Many participants noted specific types of businesses they would like to see, such as an ice cream shop, and some suggested that the centers would benefit from more of a night-time presence.

### **9.1.3 Housing Strategies Forum**

The October 16 Public Forum began with a brief discussion of the draft versions of Wayland's Vision for the Future and the Master Plan Goals. The meeting then focused on housing issues in Wayland. The consultants gave a presentation highlighting the cost and availability of housing in Wayland, and then presented eight possible strategies that Wayland could implement to help meet its housing needs:

1. Community Preservation Act for Affordable Housing
2. Local Initiative Program
3. Attached and Detached Accessory Housing Units
4. Multi-Family Housing Options
5. Second Floor Housing in the Town Center and Cochrane
6. Senior Housing
7. Planned Development District and Senior and Family Housing Overlay District
8. Conservation Cluster Development Bylaw

Participants were asked to discuss these strategies and share their views on where and how Wayland could meet its future housing needs. At the end of the discussion, participants were asked to use a check box feedback form to indicate their level of support or opposition to the eight possible strategies. Overall, participants favored the conversion of existing buildings and dwellings for affordable or senior housing over the creation of new development. Focusing housing alternatives in or near the Town centers received considerable support, as did the development of senior (age restricted) housing in locations outside of the centers. Some residents expressed opposition to multi-family housing and attached and detached accessory housing units, while others supported these types of housing.

## **9.2 Vision and Goals Statements**

Based on guidance from the public meetings and the Town's 1998 Growth Management Plan, the following vision and goals statements were developed. The Vision and Goals form the framework upon which the rest of the Master Plan is developed. 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 developed from input from Wayland's residents as determined by public forums.

## 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 spaces.
- 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.

The Master Plan Goals Statement builds on the Vision Statement, providing more specificity about how Wayland might approach issues such as housing, economic development, and transportation. In preparing the Goals Statement, the Task Force began with the goals established as part of the 1998 Growth Management Plan, then refined these goals and added new goals to reflect the current desires of Town residents. The Goals Statement provides the basis for the Master Plan recommendations.

### **General Goal: Preserve Wayland's Semi-Rural Character**

Evaluate and manage future change to achieve an overall physical layout and quality of life in Wayland consistent with the goals set forth below.

#### **Land Use and Growth Management Goals**

- Remain a mainly residential community, with some moderately scaled businesses serving primarily the local market.
- Encourage new development to be environmentally and aesthetically compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and the natural environment.
- Encourage new residential development to be consistent with the scale of existing homes in the neighborhood.
- Foster a village-like center in Cochituate in which future development conforms to the existing character of the neighborhood.
- Create a sense of place in Wayland Center by designing and developing a mixed-use area that complements the Town's historic character and appeals primarily to people who live and work in Town.

## **Housing Goals**

- Promote a variety of housing options to encourage economic and social diversity.
- Provide housing opportunities for senior citizens, young persons, and non-family households to meet the housing needs of Wayland's demographic mix.
- Direct housing development to environmentally appropriate locations.
- When redevelopment and infill of existing neighborhoods occur, ensure that such development is consistent with the scale and character of existing development.
- Provide affordable housing opportunities, including the retention and re-use of existing lower-priced buildings and dwellings.
- Take advantage of the unique housing opportunities in and adjacent to Wayland Center and Cochituate.

## **Economic Development Goals**

- Encourage businesses that provide products and services desired and needed primarily by local residents.
- Promote the re-use and redevelopment of existing commercial space rather than large-scale construction of new commercial facilities.
- Discourage high traffic impact businesses in Wayland.
- Improve the overall attractiveness of business districts in order to enhance the Town's physical image, improve the viability of the businesses located there, and maintain sensitivity to the needs of the surrounding areas.
- Encourage evening activities and extended business hours in the Town centers.

## **Natural and Cultural Resources Goals**

- Preserve and protect the Town's water supply. Identify and protect potential water sources for future generations.
- Preserve, protect and maintain natural areas in order to mitigate flooding problems, provide wildlife habitat and corridors, promote environmental education, provide opportunities for passive outdoor recreation, and maintain scenic vistas and a sense of openness.
- Preserve, restore and maintain cultural and historic assets that connect Wayland with its cherished and distinctive history.
- Protect the Town's semi-rural character and scenic quality.

## **Open Space and Recreation Goals**

- Preserve, protect and maintain natural areas including water bodies, wetlands, potential municipal water supplies, wildlife habitat, and farmland.
- Advocate the public benefits and value of open space to Town residents.
- Permanently protect priority undeveloped woodland, farmland, and wildlife habitat.

- Link existing protected open space to provide corridors for trails and wildlife movement.
- Provide passive and active recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.

### **Community Services and Facilities Goals**

- Maintain and enhance a high-quality educational system that meets the needs of all students, in order to assist young people in becoming responsible citizens and in pursuing meaningful and productive lives.
- Build and maintain a sound public infrastructure, including roads, public buildings, the water supply system, waste disposal operations, recreational facilities, and other needed facilities.
- Design and utilize environmentally sound and energy-efficient products in new construction and in major renovations of Town facilities in order to enhance environmental quality and improve public health.
- Promote Wayland's financial well-being by balancing the demand for services and infrastructure with the need to retain a tax rate that is affordable to residents in a broad range of financial circumstances.
- Provide local services and general governance in an efficient manner, so as to minimize the tax burden on the Town's property owners.
- Encourage the establishment of additional cultural facilities and activities to promote cohesion and a sense of identity among Wayland's residents.

### **Transportation Goals**

- Protect the rural, scenic, and historic character of Wayland's roads.
- Provide bike paths or lanes, sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and other infrastructure that will promote walking and bicycling, thereby enhancing public health and safety and making it more enjoyable and efficient to live in, work in, or visit Wayland.
- Do not sacrifice the character of Wayland's roadways, centers, or neighborhoods to accommodate wider roads or additional traffic.
- Promote connectivity of Wayland's roads to improve circulation in the Town.
- Explore options to reduce the speed and if possible volume of traffic on Wayland's neighborhood roads.
- Explore the possibility of expanding public transportation options available to Wayland's residents and workers.