

STATEMENT OF GOALS

TOWN GOVERNMENT GOAL:

Westminster desires to have a professionally managed town government that is efficient, fiscally sound, responsive, forward thinking and accessible to all, where decision making is fair and transparent, the quality of life for its citizens is enhanced and the character of the community is respected.

TOWN GOVERNMENT OBJECTIVES:

- The Town must commit itself to following through on the recommendations contained herein and strive to maintain the Master Plan as a living document.
- Utilize an improved and transparent capital planning process in combination with a robust municipal economic development strategy to stabilize the amount of taxes paid by Westminster property owners.
- Increase inter-department communication and coordination by having department heads work collaboratively to ensure the overall excellence of municipal services and their delivery. Such efforts should include, but not be limited to collaborative grant writing, the sharing of vehicles, office space and staff, calendar planning and coordination, and setting capital planning priorities.
- Provide necessary police, fire and public services to ensure proper public safety.
- Provide a quality well-rounded education that promotes enthusiasm for learning and knowledge for all Westminster students.
- All newly appointed board and committee members should receive a Town-sponsored orientation session and take advantage of education and training opportunities that will help the new board/committee members become effective community volunteers.
- Foster an improved relationship with our legislators, neighbors, and regional and state partners to make them aware of Westminster's interests and forge a mutually beneficial relationship.
- Encourage our citizens and municipal officials to work towards finding common ground on the issues we will face in the future and create an environment where all voices are heard and respected.
- Support those community events that bring our citizens together.

WESTMINSTER MASTER PLAN 2014

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL

Westminster desires a robust and diverse local economy that provides tax revenues for the town and living wage jobs for local residents in a business friendly environment, with a timely and predictable permitting system and a municipal infrastructure capable of supporting new and expanding businesses and industries.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

- Educate residents on the importance of economic development for its contribution to the local tax base and the creation of in-town jobs.
- Upgrade and expand the infrastructure necessary to encourage new economic development.
- Develop a well-trained and educated workforce that is capable of fulfilling the regional economy's emerging employment needs.
- Design an economic development strategy that will retain existing businesses and attract new businesses that pay living wages, such as the manufacturing and biotechnology sectors.
- Utilize our existing economic zoning districts for their intended purposes: commercial operations in our existing commercial districts and industrial operations in our existing industrial districts.
- Create a vibrant New England-style village center that contains a diversity of services, restaurants and shopping opportunities.
- Commercial operations shall endeavor to seamlessly blend into Westminster's existing landscape and contribute to the character of the community.
- Encourage agriculture for a source of locally produced food and as a means of preserving the Town's rural character.
- Capitalize on our existing community resources (open space, recreation, history, agriculture and iconic businesses) to promote eco-tourism.
- Expand access to our outdoor natural landscapes as a means of encouraging recreation-related tourism.
- Take the initiative to promote ourselves while continuing to work with our state and regional partners to attract tourists and new economic development.

WESTMINSTER MASTER PLAN 2014

HOUSING GOAL

Westminster desires to ensure that housing opportunities are available that meet the needs of a diverse population having a broad range of income levels, with new housing provided in a measured, deliberate and planned manner that is proportional to the Town's ability to provide municipal services while maintaining the Town's rural character.

HOUSING OBJECTIVES

- Create more opportunities for senior housing in Town.
- Continue to promote cluster housing as a means to providing new housing opportunities while preserving meaningful and usable open space.
- Strive to achieve having 10% of the Town's housing stock qualify as affordable in order to meet the requirements of MGL Chapter 40B.
- Provide affordable housing opportunities so that young people who grew up in Westminster can continue to live in Town (starter home opportunities).
- Provide affordable housing options to Westminster residents who no longer have a need for a large home and wish to downsize to a smaller home and stay in Town.
- Revise the Zoning Bylaw to ensure that all new large-scale housing developments set aside a portion of housing units that will qualify as affordable under MGL Chapter 40B.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL

- Construct and maintain a safe road system that is consistent with the desired small village and rural character.

TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVE

- Maintain a roadway management plan to achieve maintenance oriented roadway network condition and provide a basis for establishing priorities and level of budget allocation.

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION GOALS

- Protect, conserve and enhance Westminster's farmlands and forestlands as "working landscapes" which are vital to the Town's rural character.
- Protect and preserve the cultural resources that are vital to the Town's rural character.
- Provide a broad range of recreation opportunities for all age groups and abilities.

WESTMINSTER MASTER PLAN 2014

- Identify and prioritize lands for acquisition.
- Increase public awareness of open space and recreation resources.
- Increase communication and coordination among town boards and with town residents.

LAND USE GOALS

- Westminster desires a walkable thriving New England-style village center that provides service-shopping-dining opportunities for residents and visitors alike;
- Commercial & Industrial districts that support existing businesses and industries while attracting new economic enterprises that will provide tax revenue for the Town and living wage jobs for the residents of Westminster and the region;
- A rural countryside that preserves the Town's working landscapes and scenic vistas; and
- Updated Zoning Bylaws, regulations and permitting systems that accomplish the above.

LAND USE OBJECTIVES

- Enact zoning tools that will create a vibrant and lively village center containing a mixture of residences, businesses, service providers, municipal offices and institutional uses.
- Ensure that new growth does not outstrip the Town's ability to provide quality municipal services to its residents.
- Recognize farming as an integral part of Westminster's economy and rural character, and work towards preserving the long-term viability of the Town's agricultural resources.
- Ensure that development on and near agricultural lands is sensitive to the value of the agricultural resource.
- Encourage development that provides work, live and play opportunities for residents of all income levels.
- Welcome new development that can integrate itself into the fabric of the Town and reflect Westminster's community character.
- Welcome new development that can help the Town address and achieve its municipal and infrastructure needs.