

# Citizen Survey for the Westminster Community Master Plan

## **Your Town - Your Future -Your Voice**

(please take a few minutes to help make a difference)

Dear Westminster Resident,

We have begun a process to update the Town's Master Plan, which was last updated in 2000. Westminster's new Master Plan will provide recommendations for Land Use, Zoning, Housing, Open Space and Recreation, Natural Resources, Municipal Services, Economic Development, and Transportation. The only way we can accomplish this task is by hearing from you, the citizens. Please give some thought to how you want to see the Town developed in the future and give us your ideas for the betterment of the Town. The Master Plan update is a two-year process and this survey is the start of it. Over the next 24 months we will host several public forums and gather your input so that we may craft a new Master Plan that reflects the values of Westminster citizens.

**Please mail your survey with your Town Census back to the Town Clerk's office, or you can simply drop off your completed survey with the Town Clerk. We ask that you return your survey by the END OF FEBRUARY 2012.** If you need additional copies of the Citizen Survey for other members of your household, they can be found on the Town's website [www.westminster-ma.gov](http://www.westminster-ma.gov) on the Planning Department page.

Thank you for taking the time to help us shape Westminster's future.

The Westminster Master Plan Update Committee

---

### General

1. What do you like about living in Westminster? Please rank your top 3 responses.

38 low tax rate	38 affordable housing	654 small town character
214 family ties	471 low crime rate	102 convenience to work
380 access to highways	291 open spaces	318 school system
59 municipal services	44 historic resources	85 recreation opportunities
53 community activities	6 employment opportunities	68 convenience to services
Other _____		

2. What do you find undesirable about living in Westminster? Please rank your top 3 responses.

642 high tax rate	288 lack of retail shopping opportunities
46 town center	89 lack of a community-gathering place
25 school system	94 lack of affordable housing
59 municipal services	55 lack of recreation opportunities
221 excessive traffic	196 lack of employment opportunities
127 excessive development	125 loss of small town character
Other _____	

### Land Use

3. What buildings and/or sites in Westminster do you believe are worthy of historic preservation efforts (either through the Massachusetts Historical Commission or the National Register of Historic Places)?

List as many as you like: Top choices: Cracker Factory, Upton Building, Academy Hill, Library.

4. Would you support zoning for a traditional New England village in the Town Center? (compact development, a mixture of services and residential development, buildings in front and parking in the rear, sidewalks, period lighting, etc.)

605 Yes	178 No	380 Not Sure
---------	--------	--------------

5. To preserve the Town's rural character, would you be in favor any of the following? (You can check more than one.)
- 784 protect open space  
 331 create historical districts  
 683 design guidelines for new development  
 359 add scenic roads designation for some of Westminster's rural roads
6. What types of recreation opportunities would you like to see more of in Westminster?
- |                 |                 |                      |                     |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 100 ball-fields | 344 hiking      | 207 playgrounds      | 135 tennis courts   |
| 174 swimming    | 111 boating     | 82 basketball courts | 85 soccer fields    |
| 146 fishing     | 449 bike trails | 269 ice skating rink | 258 performing arts |
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Organizational programs (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Housing**

7. What types of housing do you think Westminster needs more of? (You can check more than one.)
- |  |                                    |                       |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 287 single-family homes                        | 50 two-family homes                | 27 multi-family units |
| 81 apartments                                  | 88 condominiums                    | 433 elderly housing   |
| 104 subsidized housing for low-income citizens | 138 open space residential design  |                       |
| 258 in-law apartments in existing residences   | 376 assisted living senior housing |                       |
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you favor zoning changes that would allow for new construction/conversion of existing buildings, in order to provide housing for low/moderate income households?
- 259 Yes      493 No      391 Not Sure

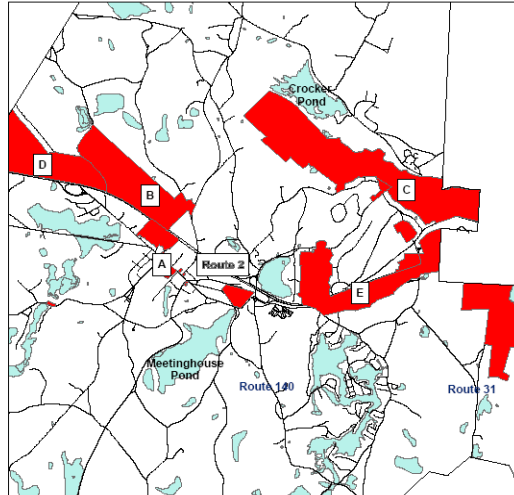
### **Energy, Utilities and Infrastructure**

9. Would you be in favor of expanding the municipal sewer & water systems for the following uses? (You can check more than one.)
- |  |                            |                             |
|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 332 commercial development                         | 261 industrial development | 464 residential development |
| 523 abatement of pollution (failed septic systems) |                            |                             |
10. How satisfied are you with the Town's access to internet services?
- |                    |                        |                   |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 324 very satisfied | 561 somewhat satisfied | 183 not satisfied |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
11. How satisfied are you with the Town's cellphone coverage?
- |                    |                        |                   |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 283 very satisfied | 570 somewhat satisfied | 281 not satisfied |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
12. What types of renewable energy would you like to see the Town support? (you can check more than one)
- |           |          |                |         |
|-----------|----------|----------------|---------|
| 804 solar | 803 wind | 387 geothermal | 98 none |
|-----------|----------|----------------|---------|

### **Economic Development**

13. Residentially-based businesses are currently allowed as of right throughout Westminster. Do you have any objections to how in-home businesses are regulated?
- 118 Yes      590 No      376 Not Sure
- If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
14. What do you see as the benefit(s) of encouraging business/industrial development in Westminster? (You can check more than one.)
- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| 723 more in-town jobs  | 940 more tax revenues to help ease residential tax burden    |
| 369 more retail stores | 593 more tax revenues to help maintain current Town services |
| 320 more services      | 527 more tax revenues to help improve Town services          |

15. What do you see as the disadvantage(s) of encouraging economic development? (You can check more than one.)
- |     |                             |     |   |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----|---|
| 676 | more automobile traffic     | 564 | changing the basic character of Westminster |
| 615 | more truck traffic          | 417 | damage to the environment                   |
| 408 | disruption of neighborhoods | 509 | loss of open space                          |
- 



To see a larger version of this map in color, please visit the Town's website at: [www.westminster-ma.gov](http://www.westminster-ma.gov). Go to the Master Plan survey on the front page and click on "survey map". Large-scale versions of this map will also be available for viewing at the Town Hall and Library.

16. Use the map above to tell us what you want for economic development and where you want it.

Type of Business/ Location	Town Center (A)	Simplex Drive Industrial District (B)	Westminster Business Park Industrial District – The Depot (C)	Route 140 Commercial District - West (D)	Village Inn Road Commercial District – East (E)
Restaurants	451	244	132	210	348
Services (tailors, dry- cleaners, printers, etc.)	331	136	98	122	150
Hardware/home improvement stores	141	309	193	233	211
Clothing stores	159	261	119	174	188
Small-scale retail stores	358	243	123	173	243
Professional services (offices for doctors, lawyers, etc.)	315	240	197	217	313
Home-based agriculture business	49	51	160	156	101
Biotechnology	14	372	338	213	100
Light manufacturing	13	397	404	251	115
Research & development	19	419	384	231	122
Warehouse & storage	10	343	366	245	108
Office parks	26	371	333	258	176

Other types of businesses and industries? \_\_\_\_\_

## **Municipal Services and Infrastructure**

17. How do you rate the services provided by each Town department?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Would you support <b>More, Less,</b> or the <b>Same</b> tax dollars for this service?
Fire	703	321	25	1	M-104, L-65, S-290
Police	685	336	32	7	M-109, L-66, S-284
Board of Selectmen – Town Administrator	178	505	184	36	M-20, L-85, S-293
Highway Dept.	303	487	166	59	M-107, L-47, S-269
Health Dept.	171	453	98	17	M-18, L-56, S-275
School System	392	470	69	13	M-157, L-64, S-212
Water	172	380	120	56	M-33, L-66, S-249
Sewer	151	317	142	75	M-48, L-67, S-234
Transfer Station	300	386	93	18	M-25, L-45, S-285
Recreation	193	471	173	35	M-97, L-48, S-234
Inspection Services	121	421	162	27	M-6, L-67, S-272
Planning	97	397	198	46	M-40, L-65, S-250
Conservation	137	453	145	34	M-69, L-63, S-226
Council on Aging	144	420	151	28	M-83, L-40, S-228
Library	397	460	76	14	M-61, L-46, S-213

18. In general, how satisfied are you with how easily you can access Town services and offices?

946 Yes      89 No

19. Have you visited the Town's **NEW** website [www.westminster-ma.gov](http://www.westminster-ma.gov) and what do you use it for?

477 Yes      614 No      Purpose for visiting: \_\_\_\_\_

20. Any suggestions for improving the Town's website? \_\_\_\_\_

21. With the Town's growth and the ever increasing complexity of managing a municipality, do you believe it is time to revise the Town Charter? (i.e., change the form of government, consolidate management of departments, etc.)

231 Yes      210 No      605 Not Sure

**LASTLY.....IN YOUR OWN WORDS** – please tell us two additional things:

- Looking ten years ahead, what are your highest hopes for the Town's future development?
- Looking ten years ahead, what are your worst fears for the Town's future development?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Attach additional sheets if necessary.

**Thank you for completing this survey. You can look forward to seeing the survey results in early April 2012.**