

Master Plan Draft Goals

For Public Review

October 2023

At their September 26 meeting, the Norfolk Master Plan Steering Committee reviewed and refined the following draft Master Plan goals, which were created based on community feedback, existing conditions data and review, and emerging best practices.

Land Use

- Support stability and incremental improvement in the commercial districts located near Route 115/1A.
- Continue to encourage community activity, development, and infrastructure investment to Town Center.
- Strengthen clusters of dense, walkable areas that can be connected by a multimodal network.
- Balance small-town feel with desire for more services and amenities by strategically locating new residential and commercial growth in existing centers.
- Pursue long-term partnership and stewardship of state-owned lands and resources in Norfolk.
- Encourage commercial growth to increase local services/amenities and reduce tax burden on individual property owners.
- Continue to modernize zoning to ensure regulations promote Town goals and address modern challenges like impacts of climate change and fossil fuel reduction.
- Identify potential future uses of land for economic development, sustainability, and/or other planning ideas.

Economic Development

- Prioritize smart, responsible, incremental development of Town Center and the Commuter Rail hub as a business district.
- Support existing and attract new small, neighborhood-serving businesses to Town Center.
- Diversify the tax base to reduce reliance on residential property taxes.
- Facilitate and incentivize new “right-sized” commercial development that supports diversity of small landlords and small developers.
- Consider adaptive reuse of underutilized town-owned facilities and historic resources for use by local small businesses.
- Foster equitable economic growth to strengthen economic diversity and sustainability.
- Collaborate with property owners to redevelop former industrial properties (Southwood, Buckley Mann) to support Town goals.

Housing

- Increase the share of Affordable Housing in Norfolk to better serve a range of household incomes.
- Expand the types of housing options that can be built in Norfolk in the context of existing infrastructure and housing need.
- Target new housing production to strategic locations, like Town Center, Route 115/1A, and the former Southwood Hospital site.
- Improve housing stability (meaning residents feel confident they can stay put) and affordability for existing and future residents.
- Promote commercial and residential development to increase vibrancy in Town Center.

Transportation

- Expand walking, biking, and rolling connections to Town Center, schools, recreation spaces, and other key destinations.
- Increase street safety for all – especially for more vulnerable residents (seniors, children, and people with disabilities).
- Prioritize funding for street and sidewalk maintenance.
- Decrease dependence on single-occupancy vehicles and increase transit connections, particularly for seniors and residents who cannot drive.
- Revise Town zoning and parking ordinances to encourage more neighborhood-oriented, pedestrian-scale businesses.
- Assess post-pandemic parking demand and commuter rail usage in Town Center to better understand opportunities for transit-oriented land uses and redevelopment.
- Plan for future transportation technologies (EVs, Avs, e-bikes, “sharing” options, etc.).

Open Space, Recreation, and Sustainability

- Improve and expand park and open space access for all
- Provide high quality parks, open spaces, recreation facilities, amenities, and programs that serve all residents
- Protect and enhance Norfolk’s natural resources and environmental systems
- Highlight and protect Norfolk’s unique historic, social, and cultural resources
- Ensure adequate resources, staff, and funding are available for maintaining Norfolk’s parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities
- Leverage existing and new open space and conservation areas to advance resiliency goals

Historical and Cultural Resources

- Strengthen understanding and documentation of historic resources and narratives.
- Prioritize funding and increased resources for historical preservation and other related activities (such as heritage tourism, etc.)

- Preserve and protect Norfolk's rich historical heritage.
- Promote more alignment between preservation efforts and town-led projects.
- Use historical landscapes as mitigation for flooding and other climate resiliency efforts.
- Sustain and expand community and cultural events (e.g., Norfolk Community Day, events on Town Hill, etc.).
- Expand Town resources to support arts and culture businesses.
- Coordinate more opportunities to highlight the regional arts and cultural resources.
- Integrate arts and culture opportunities into public space development and planning.

Community Health

- Increase the collection and use of local health data, from community and publicly available sources.
- Improve infrastructure to increase safety, walkability, and connectedness and expand opportunities for active and passive recreation.
- Expand the Board of Health's capacity to holistically support community health needs through partnerships and regional collaboration.
- Support improvements that address the physical, mental, and social health and well-being of residents, with a special focus on the unique needs of youth and seniors.
- Increase opportunities for social engagement and community connectedness.
- Sustain and expand access to local food.
- Identify and remediate sources of pollution that degrade water quality in town.

Community Facilities & Services

- Continue to refine and professionalize the Town's capital improvement and budget process.
- Identify opportunities to generate clean energy and prioritize investments that reduce the Town's carbon footprint.
- Emphasize resilience and sustainability of Town services and infrastructure by investing in areas that protect business continuity.
- Strengthen and expand the Town's enterprise fund offerings to better provide services.
- Make Town facilities and the policy and processes that drive decisions more accessible.
- Prepare for challenges in the municipal labor market and rising costs of services.
- Encourage more frequent collaboration across Norfolk Boards and Committees for increased efficiency and effectiveness.
- Target municipal investments towards Town Center and Route 115/1A to attract private investment and commercial growth.

Have feedback?

Provide comments on the draft goals online: mapc.ma/norfolk2035 or directly to project staff.

Reach out to Josh Fiala at jfiala@mapc.org or (617) 933-0760.