

Master Plan Draft Vision and Goals

For Public Review – Provide feedback by December 18th
November 2023

The Norfolk Master Plan Steering Committee has reviewed and refined the following draft Master Plan vision and goals, which were created based on community feedback, existing conditions data and review, and emerging best practices.

Vision

- Norfolk’s citizens would like . . .
- A Town Center that is the center of Town life.
- A Town that preserves its semi-rural and village character and communal aspects of small-town life.
- A Town that defines and attracts the types of services and amenities desired by residents.
- To place the Town in a better position for the next generation.
- To clearly define what is desired in each area of the Town and to be patient working toward those outcomes.
- To plan for the long term with Town investments in sustainable services and infrastructure and the legacy of investments for the next generation.
- To plan and create a connected network of open space and Town facilities.
- To plan and create a secondary Town-wide walking and biking network.
- To create opportunities for housing options for all life stages to attract and keep residents.
- To support a community where all members contribute to safety and community health.
- To improve connections to and use of the train station as a central community feature.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how well does this expanded vision capture your hopes for the future of Norfolk?

1 (not at all) 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (covers it all)

Please add anything that you would like to see included in the Master Plan Vision that is not reflected currently below.

Circle or put a checkmark next to your **top 3 goals**, to help prioritize actions.

Draft Goals by Topic Area

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.

Please add your ideas, questions, or suggestions for draft goals by topic area below.

Land Use

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.

Economic Development

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.

Please add your ideas, questions, or suggestions for draft goals by topic area below.

Housing

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.).

Transportation

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

Please add your ideas, questions, or suggestions for draft goals by topic area below.

Open Space, Recreation, and Sustainability

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.

Historical and Cultural Resources

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.

Please add your ideas, questions, or suggestions for draft goals by topic area below.

Community Health

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.

Community Facilities & Services

Have additional feedback?

Provide comments by topic area on the attached form. Return completed forms to Norfolk Town Hall.

Land Use

Economic Development

Housing

Transportation

Open Space, Recreation, and Sustainability

Historical and Cultural Resources

Community Health

Community Facilities & Services

Brainstorming strategies. For example, indicate what economic development strategies could be most effective in implementing Economic Development goals and supporting Norfolk’s businesses.

Place an “X” in the left column if you support the idea. Add new ideas at the bottom of the list.

Support?	Topic	Strategy Idea
	ED	Continue to review zoning and related regulations to identify barriers to business growth and success. <i>(Example: in-progress sign bylaw amendments)</i>
	ED	Explore incentives for property owners to invest in their properties to encourage new businesses.
	ED	Map vacant commercial sites for increased public awareness and understanding. Use the information to generate interest in redevelopment opportunities.
	ED	Continue to plan and host scheduled activities that support pop-up businesses.
	ED	Review use regulations to ensure zoning allows a variety of commercial uses in appropriate areas.
	ED	Explore ways to raise awareness of Norfolk businesses to increase customer base.
	ED	Develop an incubation hub to bring more local businesses into public visibility (e.g., co-locating rotating businesses).
	ED	Support incremental Town Center development and expansion that maintains small-town character and attracted neighborhood-serving businesses.
	ED	Engage local farming community to activate town events and explore partnerships with local schools and businesses.
	ED	Consider adaptive reuse for underutilized town-owned facilities (like the old town hall) for use by local businesses. Possible uses could include office spaces, commercial kitchen spaces, indoor winter markets, etc.
	ED	Actively market vacant lots in Shire Industrial Park to Construction Trades Businesses. <i>(From 2018 Economic Development Plan)</i>
	ED	Promote collective advertising for consumer-facing establishments. <i>(From 2018 Economic Development Plan)</i>
	ED	Identify support services for anchor businesses like ForeKicks, Pondville Medical Center, Gillette Stadium, and Patriot Place. <i>(From 2018 Economic Development Plan)</i>
	ED	Continue to improve the relationship between Town officials and businesses through Business-Friendly Norfolk Office Hours. <i>(From 2018 Economic Development Plan)</i>

