

Chicopee Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

Kickoff Meeting



Comprehensive Planning 101



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- **Vision:** Shared vision for Chicopee's future
- **Roadmap:** Guides how we get there together
- **Enhancer:** Makes the things we love about Chicopee even better
- **Fixer:** Fix the things that need to be fixed
- **Protector:** Protect the things in Chicopee that make it a great place to live, both for today's residents and future generations

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Tool to make decisions about . . .

- **Development:** What it looks like and where it happens
- **Environment and History:** Protecting environmentally sensitive areas and historic sites
- **Investments:** Prioritizing investments in community services and infrastructure
- **Equity:** Promoting fairness and opportunities for all residents to have a voice
- **Business:** Better support local business development

Why should Chicopee have a Comprehensive Plan?

- **Preparation:** Be proactive and prepare for the future
- **Stewardship:** Spend tax dollars efficiently and effectively
- **Legacy:** Make Chicopee better and stronger for the next generation
- **Policy & Regulation:** Ensure City policies and regulations support the shared vision
- **Funding:** Support for grants, financing, and private investment

What goes into the making of a Comprehensive Plan?

- **Existing Plans:** Build on existing work and pull all our best ideas into one place
- **Facts and Data:** What do local demographics and statistics tell us?
- **Needs and Desires:** What do residents need and want to live a happy and full life?

Our most important task will be hearing from YOU and your neighbors!

What does a Comprehensive Plan cover?

Traditionally ...

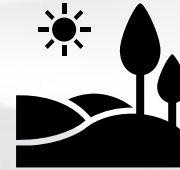
- Community Services
- Housing
- Transportation
- Future Growth
- Natural Resources
- Historic Resources
- Economic Development
- Parks & Open Spaces



What does a Comprehensive Plan cover?

More recently . . .

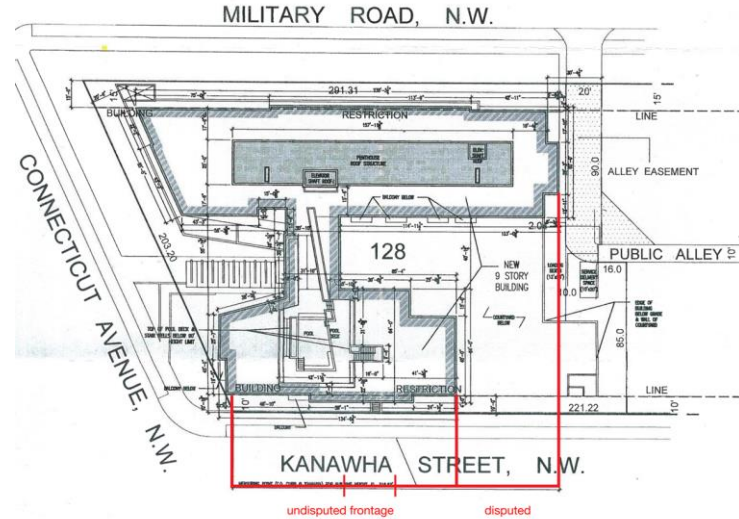
- Energy
- Climate Change
- Public Health/Food Access
- Governance
- Special Places



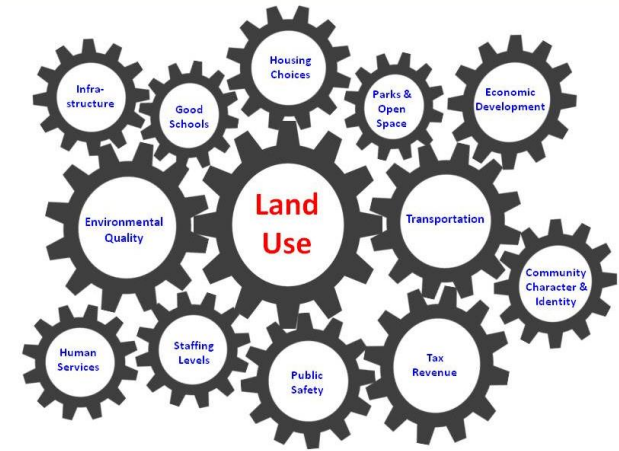
The City will look at all these things together to understand how everything affects everything else

How is a Comprehensive Plan different from a Development Plan?

Development Plan Specific Site/Construction



Comprehensive Plan Long Term Vision



How is a Comprehensive Plan different from a Development Plan?

Comp plans are living documents that include . . .

- **Vision:** Where does Chicopee want to be 20 years from now?
- **Goals:** What does Chicopee look like when its Vision is achieved?
- **Policies/Objectives:** How do we go about reaching our goals?
- **Actions:** Specific steps to implement the Plan

Examples of Comprehensive Plans – Traditional

Newton, MA – 229 Pages – 14 Chapters

NEWTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Prepared by the
Mayor's Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee
Recommended by the
Planning and Development Board
Adopted by the Newton Board of Aldermen
November 19, 2007

Mixed-Use Centers added November 7, 2011



Cover Page

- H. Encourage opportunities for innovative transit-oriented development.
- I. Recent years have seen mobility gains for those having disabilities, including improvements in sidewalks and crosswalks. To assure continuing accessibility improvements, make arrangements to have centralized staff responsibility for oversight of accessibility provisions, and a single point of contact for those having accessibility concerns, rather than dispersal of that responsibility among agencies as at present.

ESTABLISH CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DESIGN APPROACHES FOR TRANSPORTATION

Just as the above listed items are designed to gain greater transportation sensitivity in land use and development decision-making, those that immediately follow are designed to gain greater sensitivity to community context, including land use and development, in transportation and mobility decision-making.

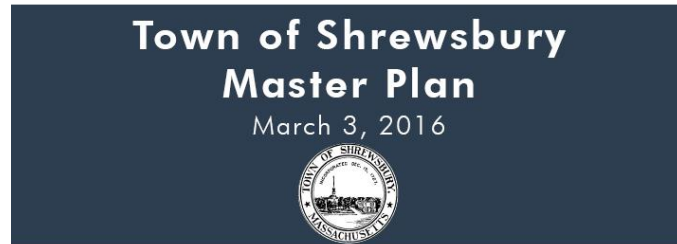
- A. Assure that the design of arterial roadway capacity improvements avoid to the extent feasible the inducement of more auto traffic passing over Newton's local streets. That is easy to articulate as an intention, but requires sensitivity to local nuances of habits and contexts that goes beyond that of the usual traffic engineering trip allocation models. That is one important reason for seeking the creation of a transportation advisory group within Newton which can provide such nuanced understanding to design considerations at regional and state level, as suggested below.
- B. Avoid increases in congestion on major roads so as to avoid displacement of through traffic onto minor residential streets. Chiefly, that means fine-tuning of intersection configurations, signage, signalization, parking controls, and other traffic engineering elements to enhance overall capacity. Road widening should be considered only as a last resort. .
- C. To the extent feasible consistent with A and B above, minimize widening of existing roads and addition of traffic signals in order to maintain an infrastructure consistent with the existing character of Newton's village centers and neighborhoods.
- D. Where despite A, B and C above cut-through traffic still seriously impacts residential streets, make wider usage of traffic calming devices as a means of slowing traffic and/or diverting its path. Such practices as speed humps, traffic circles, center island narrowing, median barriers, half-street closures, and forced turn islands are already in use in Newton. Many other newer devices, such as raised crosswalks, are in use in nearby communities, but in this City the use of calming techniques has been sparing. Requests for traffic calming efforts are a common item docketed for action by the Aldermen. Support for traffic calming appears to be strong among both residents and their officials. What is needed is a focused effort (which has begun) to clarify City policy, update ordinances as necessary, and to then move forward on specific actions in a newly comprehensive way¹².

¹² See [successor to] CPAC memo "Traffic Calming Measures," December 13, 2004.

Typical Page Layout

Examples of Comprehensive Plans – Semi-Traditional

Shrewsbury, MA – 122 Pages – 10 Chapters



Cover Page

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Plan (Map 1) illustrates future land use patterns for the Town of Shrewsbury. It is important to understand that it is not a zoning map. It is much broader and offers a framework for future zoning amendments.

Land Use Category Descriptions

Future land use patterns are depicted through land use categories. The following descriptions offer the intent of each land use category.

Residential

Nearly half of the land in Shrewsbury is categorized as Residential. These areas contain the Town's older neighborhoods that have access to municipal water and sewer service. Cluster or conservation subdivision design is strongly encouraged to accommodate and protect the natural features of the land, such as wetlands, wildlife areas, and open spaces, including farms and fields.

Lower Density Residential

Lower Density Residential areas are identified as single-family residential uses at a lower density than what is typical in the Residential designations. These areas are

dispersed along the outer perimeter of Town where the landscape is more sparsely developed. Homes are more likely to have wells for drinking water and on-site wastewater treatment systems than other areas of Town. As with Residential areas, cluster development is also strongly encouraged.

Higher Density Residential

Higher Density Residential represents areas with condominiums, townhouse, multifamily developments and apartment buildings. They are primarily found near major roadways like Main Street, Route 9, Route 540, and Route 20. Higher density residential developments should be situated near services, jobs, and transportation.

Commercial

Commercial areas accommodate a range of commercial uses and services. They are clustered along Route 9, Route 70 and Route 20 as well as the I-290 Interchange on Main Street. Establishments in these areas serve both the local neighborhoods and residents Town-wide and tend to be more auto-oriented, in that customers reach them predominately by car. Management of driveways and on-site travel lanes should be considered



Centech Park North (former Allen Farm)

Typical Page Layout

Examples of Comprehensive Plans – Innovative

Exeter, NH – 58 Pages – 5 Chapters



Town of Exeter Master Plan

Adopted
February 22, 2018



Cover Page

Exeter recognizes the importance of our local history:

- Maintaining a detailed inventory of the buildings, monuments, and other resources in the community is of paramount importance. These inventories should be maintained in high quality database formats and integrated into GIS where possible.
- Maintaining and providing easy access to the rich library of historical accounts and summaries will keep these stories alive and relevant in our community. Educating residents and visitors about our past instills appreciation and support for resource protection.
- Supporting the integrity of local historic and cultural structures and places requires technical and financial resources.
- Coordinating the goals and responsibilities of different historically focused agencies will strengthen the ability of Exeter to steward these resources.

The Arts

Exeter has a growing and vibrant arts scene with connections into the local and regional artist community, local government, and academia. In local government, Exeter maintains an Arts Committee, which is an all-volunteer committee appointed by the Selectboard to help promote the arts and artists in the region. The committee is responsible for organizing and mounting numerous shows in the historic Town Hall and its gallery and in the Town Offices building.

Another local resource is the Exeter Fine Crafts gallery, which opened for business in October, 1966. This gallery focuses on craft work unique to the region and includes furniture, glass work, jewelry, pottery, and more. The gallery also offers work space and classes in studios within the same building. At the regional level, the Seacoast Artist Association is a community of artists



and people interested in art, based in the Seacoast area of New Hampshire. Working to promote art appreciation and services, the Association encourages artists of all ages and media. A primary concern of the Association is a Scholarship Fund for the benefit of Seacoast area high school seniors interested in the further pursuit of art. Students present their portfolios for judging in April of each year.

Phillips Exeter Academy is not only an important educational institution, but it also brings a strong emphasis on arts opportunities for its student body. "Arts at Exeter" provides

"The mission of the Exeter Arts Committee is to promote art in public life and to work with local artists to develop an environment that supports their work. This includes visual art, music, dance, and poetry, among others."

-Committee Website

Typical Page Layout

What is the role of the Steering Committee?

- **Provide Perspective:** Ensure that a variety of stakeholders and residents in Chicopee participate in the planning process
- **Review:** Baseline Report, Plan, and other documents
- **Guide Public Outreach:** What are the best ways to share information and hear what the community has to say?
- **Guide Plan Format:** Help us determine a format that everyone can understand and relate to
- **Implementation:** Help identify the actions the City needs to take to implement the plan
- **Present:** Support City staff in presenting a draft Plan to the Planning Board/City Council
- **Network & Recruit:** Make connections in the community so that more people take part in the process
- **Advocate:** For proactive planning across the City and for the groups you represent

What is the role of City staff?

- **Project Management:** Make sure things run on budget, on time, and on scope
- **Internal Communications:** Manage communications between the consultant team and the Steering Committee
- **Public Communications:** Manage communications with the public
- **Public Engagement:** Manage logistics for public events, help with staffing
- **Municipal Collaboration:** Make sure we have all the information we need from City sources
- **Finding Champions:** Make sure that specific groups and people are committed to implementing the plan when it's ready
- **Present:** Draft Plan to the Planning Board/City Council
- **Implementation:** Work with champions to make sure actions are completed

What is the role of the Consultant team?

- **Serve:** Help capture the needs and ideas of the community and translate that into a plan
- **Research & Write:** Compile data and research and prepare the Baseline Report, Comprehensive Plan, and Implementation Plan
- **Listen & Learn:** From the best experts on Chicopee –YOU!
- **Advise:** On common pitfalls or mistakes that could occur if certain ideas are pursued
- **Report:** On successful practices in other communities that may be applicable to Chicopee
- **Provide Guidance:** For ways to address the issues brought up by the community
- **Provide Technical Expertise:** On topics like transportation, economic development, housing, etc.

The Planning Process

Three Major Products

Baseline Report

- Facts
- Data
- Demographics
- Statistics
- Inventories
- Trends

Comprehensive Plan

- Community Input
- What do the facts tell us?
- Vision
- Goals
- Objectives
- Actions

Implementation Plan

- Summary of all the Actions
- Time Frame
- Cost
- Who (specifically!) is responsible?

Process for the Steering Committee

Baseline Report

Consultant
Team and
Staff

Next SC Meeting

Scheduled
when
baseline is
ready for
review

Monthly Meetings

What
date, time,
location
work best?

Subcommittees

Will be
created as
needed

“Branding” the Plan

- **Name:** What should the planning process be called?
- **Logo:** Develop a logo for the project website and materials to “brand” the process and the comprehensive plan
- **Giveaways:** Should we invest in “giveaways” (magnets, pens, etc.) to remind people of the project?

Next Steering Committee meeting will discuss key messages – how do we all talk about this plan?

Kickoff Survey

- **Responses so far:** 15 online and 8 hard copy : (
- **GetDown:** Passed out over 200 postcards and fliers about the plan and the survey
- **Other Outreach Methods:** What can we do to kick this survey off again??

