

2021 Norton Master Plan

What is the Master Plan?

The Master Plan is a non-binding document which serves as a framework to help guide the towns objectives during the next decade.

As noted in Massachusetts Law (Chapter 41, Section 81D) “They provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality.”

Background on the 2021 Master Plan

Norton’s previous Master Plan was completed in 1998.

The Master Plan was developed with SRPEDD using grant funding of \$70,000 and \$30,000 dollars in Town funds.

Information was collected during 5 public sessions held between September 2019 through June 2021. It started as a physical meeting and ended up becoming virtual when the pandemic hit. There were over 150 participants in the audience and there was a continuous online presence.

Overview of the Norton Master Plan

Norton’s Vision

Land Use

Encourage development to help Norton to grow as a vibrant, walkable, and recognizable place, particularly at its nodes and corridors, while protecting Norton’s natural and cultural resources and neighborhoods.

Housing

Increase and diversify Norton’s housing supply, particularly for seniors, young families, and first-time homebuyers.

Economic Development

Support local businesses and encourage appropriate economic development projects that expand the tax base at key locations.

Open Space & Recreation

Improve access to the Town’s parks, water bodies, and other natural areas.

Natural & Cultural Resources

Build on Norton’s strong tradition of environmental conservation by preserving historic and cultural assets that represent Norton’s heritage.

Services & Facilities

Ensure that Norton’s infrastructure and town services meet the demands of growth and change.

Transportation & Circulation

Improve circulation, safety, and appearance for all users of Norton’s roads; promote alternatives to driving when enjoying Norton’s natural and recreational spaces.

How we plan on achieving our goals

Some of these items are focused – such as creating a user-friendly Development and Permitting Guide to facilitate housing and business development – and some will take years of planning and multiple phases – such as resolving the alignment of the Route 123/140 intersection.

Some of them are already in motion – such as constructing a new town hall and Senior and Community Support Center Building. And some are ongoing – such as continuing to protect Conservation Lands managed by the Conservation Commission.

Every action within the plan will require further actions – either via Town Meeting or other means, and the implementation plan specifies more than 25 different committees, boards, and other stakeholders as “responsible parties” charged with putting these goals on the path toward completion.

Town Meeting approving the Master Plan changes nothing about the town’s bylaws or rules by itself. Approving the plan is an endorsement of the direction of the plan as a whole, with the understanding that each of the parties highlighted will be bringing formal bylaw changes or other programs forward throughout the next decade.

Any questions or interested in wanting to help please contact

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And if interested in knowing more about the Master Plan go to

<https://www.nortonma.org/planning-board/pages/norton-master-plan>