

# *Town of Greenfield*



## **Master Plan**

**October 2001**

*Prepared by: The Greenfield Planning Board*

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# Introduction

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This Master Plan is a statement of the community values of Greenfield. It is a directive for the physical development of Greenfield that describes how, why, where and when to build, rebuild or preserve the town. It addresses all of the operational issues of our town, including land use, housing, economic development, natural, cultural and historic resources, open space and recreation, public services and facilities, and transportation.

Perhaps the term *Policy Plan* is a better label than Master Plan for expressing the working nature of this document. It is hoped that by ratifying the Master Plan, the Selectboard and Town Council have adopted the following goals and objectives to provide direction to those responsible for making decisions that will affect the future character of Greenfield. It will enable town planners to more accurately meet community desires.

The Master Plan is not a by-law, ordinance or regulation, not a budget, or a capital improvement plan. It is however, the basis for the development of these operational tools. It creates a common ground of agreement for the many individuals and groups involved in preparing and achieving plans in Greenfield.

This Master Plan reflects the future of the town for the next five to ten years, which is a time frame to which people can relate. It is the hope of this Planning Board that the Master Plan will be a “living” document that will be continually updated as goals are implemented or discarded in view of changing situations.

# Land Use Section

## Goals:

- I. Encourage development in and around Greenfield's historic downtown.
- II. Encourage business development where infrastructure will support it.
- III. Preserve agriculture.
- IV. Promote both housing choice and natural resource protection through careful site planning in outlying areas.
- V. Where the carrying capacity of the land is greatest, site land uses that provide the most benefit to the community.

## Objectives:

- Objective 1:** In and around downtown encourage and support development and redevelopment whose scale and mix of uses is compatible with Greenfield's traditional town center.
- Objective 2:** Identify areas for desired businesses that do not fit in the downtown.
- Objective 3:** Throughout Greenfield encourage and support viable reuse of historic and other existing buildings.
- Objective 4:** Encourage and support continued active agriculture.
- Objective 5:** In outlying areas seek a compatible mix of preserved natural resource systems, agriculture, and rural housing development.
- Objective 6:** In residential areas consider small-scale neighborhood mix of uses to provide recreation and other services to nearby homes.
- Objective 7:** Work for land use regulations and administration that are clear, "user-friendly", and achieve results.
- Objective 8:** Establish clear policies for the extension, expansion, and other improvements to infrastructure systems.
- Objective 9:** Determine under what conditions the Town should extend the municipal sewer system.

## Implementation Measures:

- Objective 1: Initiate an assertive, coordinated, on-going acquisition and redevelopment plan for underutilized or vacant commercial, industrial, and/or residential properties.
- Objective 1: Encourage communication with property owners and among the business community regarding what are the specific obstacles to expanded use, reuse, and/or redevelopment of the properties. Carry out cooperative and coordinated public/private efforts to address those obstacles. Assist the process of redevelopment by seeking creative ways to meet requirements for barrier free access.
- Objective 1: Review the Town's zoning provisions to facilitate improved residential and nonresidential uses in the Town center.

- Objective 2: If necessary, rezone the identified areas where the infrastructure will support new business development. (Be explicit regarding the trade-offs involved in this change in land use. Work with nearby property owners to identify and implement ways to mitigate negative impacts on nearby properties.)
- Objective 3: Consider the establishment of a design review board, the composition to be determined, for the purpose of maintaining the aesthetic quality of all future development and redevelopment.
- Objective 4: Establish an on-going dialogue with farmers and owners of land in agriculture regarding what is needed to continue active agriculture in Greenfield. Identify and act on the steps the Town can take to gain resources needed and to mitigate problems facing the farming community.
- Objective 5: Guided by the findings and recommendations of the Town's *Open Space and Recreation Plan*, initiate an assertive, coordinated, on-going open space resources acquisition and preservation plan. Correlate the list of priority resource areas with a range of acquisition and preservation techniques, including: fee simple acquisition, purchase of development rights, conservation easements, flexible development [e.g. cluster], other regulatory incentives for application during the development review and permitting process. Make available to landowners information regarding tax and other advantages of alternatives to Town sale through the private market. Map the resource corridors and trail systems that will piece together over time through the development review process and through acquisition.
- Objective 7: With continuous input from property owners and the development community, seek ways to achieve cluster development as a preferred development pattern. Options include: density bonuses, perhaps in conjunction with a specific list of benefits to be gained in exchange for the increased number of units; increasing the minimum lot size for non-clustered housing developments in the RC zoning district with Cluster being a "by right" versus special permit use; mandatory cluster overlay zone for areas with specific attributes of public interest such as water resource protection, agriculture soils, landscape character, wildlife habitat and corridors.
- Objective 7: Convene a working group of representatives from the Town's land use departments, the business community, the development community, and local residents to review and update the "manual" of development review and permitting procedures. Make this manual easily and widely available. Ask this group also to note where the current regulations and procedures appear unclear, inconsistent, onerous to the applicant, and/or difficult to administer.
- Objective 9: Stay current on the state of alternative sewage treatment technologies, and update the Town's policies and regulations accordingly.
- Objective 9: Update the Town's comprehensive sewer plan.
- Objective 9: Implement the comprehensive sewer plan when conditions are met to extend the sewer.

# Housing Section

## **Goal:**

**Improve the condition of existing residential neighborhoods and encourage new residential development to provide a range of housing choices.**

## **Objectives:**

- Objective 1:** Encourage and support the development and redevelopment of housing on the upper floors of buildings in the downtown.
- Objective 2:** Site medium density housing adjacent to the Town center.
- Objective 3:** In outlying areas, encourage and support flexible site planning for varied housing choices, recreational opportunities, and open space preservation.
- Objective 4:** Maintain the attractiveness, safety, amenities, and physical well being of residential areas throughout Greenfield.
- Objective 5:** Encourage the transition of subsidized housing complexes to individual owner occupied housing units.
- Objective 6:** Provide adequate living situations for elderly and indigent residents.
- Objective 7:** Encourage the development of residential properties with a value greater than \$200,000.
- Objective 8:** Upgrade and expand the municipal infrastructure system to facilitate long-term housing development within the Town.

## **Implementation Measures:**

- Objective 1: Promote tax and other incentives to upgrade downtown buildings including the installation of elevators.
- Objective 1: Coordinate a centralized system to advertise Greenfield rental properties.
- Objective 3: Revise zoning and zoning by-laws, as well as the subdivision regulations, to encourage construction of single-family homes in order to support the tax base.
- Objective 3: Develop mini subdivision regulations and promote cluster subdivisions.
- Objective 4: Have more aggressive building code enforcement.
- Objective 4: Promote neighborhood policing and a neighborhood watch programs.
- Objective 4: Improve the facilities of municipal neighborhood parks and recreation areas.
- Objective 5: Promote mixed use development projects for retired people.
- Objective 6: Promote and enhance assisted living opportunities.
- Objective 7: Open communication lines with developers to improve the image of the Town.
- Objective 8: Define what is meant by infrastructure.

# Economic Development Section

## **Goal:**

**Seek a vibrant and diversified economic base that provides quality employment, offers a wide range of goods and services, creates a strong tax base, and fits within Greenfield's desired land use pattern.**

## **Objectives:**

**Objective 1:** Retain and enhance Greenfield's manufacturing sector.

**Objective 2:** Identify and attract promising new economic sectors, including but not limited to high tech, educational, health services and light industry.

**Objective 3:** Offer a "menu" of buildings, developable sites, and costs that meet the needs and resources of a wide range of business types.

**Objective 4:** Promote tourism.

**Objective 5:** Promote retail and services.

**Objective 6:** Upgrade and expand the municipal infrastructure system to facilitate long-term economic development within the Town with special emphasis on the northern part of Town.

## **Implementation Measures:**

Objective 1: Establish more specific methods to retain and work with local businesses.

Objective 2: Work with existing economic sectors in order to identify promising new economic sectors. Identify specific tax options to attract new economic sectors.

Objective 2: Develop a town-wide broadband Internet infrastructure.

Objective 3: Establish a team/group consisting of Realtors, the GBA, the GRA and the Director of Planning to facilitate this objective.

Objective 4: Coordinate tourism efforts with neighboring communities.

Objective 4: Develop the Rocky Mountain Ridge area as a destination for recreational tourism.

Objective 5: Promote the downtown area as a destination for dining, art, and entertainment.

Objective 5: Encourage public/private partnerships to retain and enhance all retail and service businesses.

Objective 6: Define what is meant by infrastructure.

Objective 6: Extend services to those areas of Town with the greatest development potential.

# Natural, Cultural, & Historic Resources Section

## **Goal:**

**Protect and enhance Greenfield's natural resource systems, cultural resources, and historic buildings.**

## **Objectives:**

- Objective 1:** Encourage the preservation, restoration, continued use, and reuse of historic buildings and areas, and other existing buildings.
- Objective 2:** Protect environmentally sensitive areas. Seek to site development away from or buffered from them.
- Objective 3:** Work to make historic protection and cultural promotion compatible with the Town's economic development goals and objectives.
- Objective 4:** Protect and enhance the Rocky Mountain Park, Poet Seat, Beacon Field, Highland Park and other significant landmarks.
- Objective 5:** Highlight Greenfield's cultural resources when planning for development, redevelopment, streetscape improvements, and Town programs and services.

## **Implementation Measures:**

- Objective 1: Create a local historic district based on the two existing National Historic Districts located in the downtown area.
- Objective 2: Enforce the Town's zoning bylaw and existing environmental regulations.
- Objective 3: Create a cultural center in the downtown area for performance and gallery space and to art and music classes.
- Objective 4: Actively maintain and secure the Rocky Mountain Park, Poet Seat, Beacon Field, Highland Park and other significant landmarks.

***See attached letter from ARTSPACE Community Arts Center dated 6/1/00 and the Historic District Inventory tables and maps.***

# Open Space & Recreation Section

## **Goals:**

- I. **Preserve and provide open space to enhance Greenfield's overall environmental quality.**
- II. **Provide a balanced year-round recreational program encompassing a full range of activities and facilities for all ages.**

## **Objectives:**

- Objective 1:** Develop a system of permanent open spaces that link recreational and institutional uses together with the population centers and residential neighborhoods.
- Objective 2:** Support development of bikeways and parks.
- Objective 3:** Encourage and solicit private support and private provision of recreational activities.
- Objective 4:** Increase public awareness pertaining to recreation and conservation opportunities and educate public in regards to the protection of the environment.

## **Implementation Measures**

- Objective 1: Work with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) and other entities on coordinating regional open space efforts.
- Objective 2: Support interest groups and non-governmental organizations, and help seek and obtain financing.
- Objective 3: Increase funding and empower the Recreation Department to encourage and solicit private support and private provision of recreational activities.
- Objective 4: Develop a user-friendly recreational map for the Town showing where recreational areas and facilities are located and the services available with references to the various Town agencies responsible for each area or facility. Also, develop a delivery venue where the maps would be available.

# Facilities Section

## **Goal:**

**Provide a complete range of health, public safety, education and social welfare services and facilities that will adequately and efficiently serve the residents of Greenfield.**

## **Objectives:**

- Objective 1:** Provide adequate sewerage, water, gas, electrical and other facilities and services to meet the current and anticipated demands of all areas.
- Objective 2:** Make educational facilities and services a priority.
- Objective 3:** Provide access and support for health services to all citizens of Greenfield with an emphasis on senior citizens and youth.
- Objective 4:** Provide adequate public health and safety for all citizens in Greenfield.

## **Implementation Measures**

- Objective 1: Promote alternative sewage treatment technologies and update Town policies and regulations accordingly.
- Objective 1: The Town should pursue developing a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan.
- Objective 1: Pursue funding to develop a Town-wide Geographic Information System (GIS) that would be available to all Town departments.
- Objective 1: The Town should pursue developing a storm water management plan.
- Objective 1: The Town should actively seek a new site for the Senior Center.
- Objective 1: Continue to develop and expand the capability of the Town's web site.
- Objective 2: Promote a long-range school-planning program in order to provide sufficient educational facilities for the future.
- Objective 2: Expand educational programs to provide opportunities for job training and re-training in occupational areas of anticipated future economic growth.
- Objective 3: Continue to support outreach programs at the senior center.
- Objective 4: Develop a satellite fire station in the northern area of Town.

# Circulation Section

## **Goals:**

- I. Seek a regional and local system that provides for public and private transportation in a manner consistent with other goals of the Master Plan.**
- II. Provide for vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian, and other modes of circulation.**

## **Objectives:**

- Objective 1:** Insure that adequate parking facilities are provided for all new development based on current standards for such facilities.
- Objective 2:** Work for a town-wide system of trails, paths, sidewalks, and bikeways with connections into a broader regional system.
- Objective 3:** Provide safe and convenient pedestrian access throughout the Town.
- Objective 4:** Expand and enhance the public transportation system.
- Objective 5:** Improve vehicular circulation in congested areas.
- Objective 6:** Whenever possible seek grants for traffic improvements.

## **Implementation Measures:**

- Objective 1: Evaluate means whereby private development can assist in funding required transportation improvements.
- Objective 1: Work to develop an attractive shared intermodal center/parking garage facility in the downtown area.
- Objective 1: Enforce all existing parking regulations.
- Objective 2: Work on implementing and expanding Greenfield's bikeway network.
- Objective 3: Continue to maintain and improve Town sidewalks and make them ADA compliant.
- Objective 4: Work towards developing direct bus connections between Greenfield Community College's Downtown and Colrain Road campuses.
- Objective 4: Work towards developing a direct bus link between Greenfield and the University of Massachusetts.
- Objective 4: Work with the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and others to develop passenger rail through Greenfield.
- Objective 5: Improve the traffic flow along Main and Federal Streets through signal improvements at major intersections.
- Objective 5: Consider a cross-town roadway to ease congestion along Main Street.

## References

- Greenfield Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2000
- Land Use/Growth Study, January 2000
- Greenfield Zoning Map
- Consensus '96 Final Report – Vision, Goals, Action Plan for Economic Development
- Greenfield Master Plan Update, 1974
- 2000 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP): Franklin Regional Council of Governments
- The Greater Franklin County Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Franklin Regional Council of Governments, June 2000

### References available at:

**Office of Planning & Community Development,  
253 Main Street, Greenfield, MA 01301  
(413) 772-1548**

## Attachments

- Land Use/Growth Study Executive Summary, January 2000
- Why Do A Master Plan – Land/Use Growth Study, January 2000
- Map of Remaining Developable Land – Land Use Growth Study, January 2000
- Map of Greenfield Zoning
- Map of Greenfield Land Use
- Housing Inventory, May 2000
- Existing Year 2000 Housing Stock
- Consensus 96 Introduction and Vision Statement
- Letter from the Artspace Community Arts Center
- Locus Map of the Town’s Historic Districts
- Map of the East Main/High Street Historic District
- Inventory Table of the East Main/High Street Historic District
- Map of the Main Street Historic District
- Inventory Table of the Main Street Historic District
- Plan Summary – Greenfield Open Space and Recreation Plan 2000
- Map of Scenic Landscapes – Greenfield Open Space and Recreation Plan 2000
- Map of Open Space Breakdown – Greenfield Open Space and Recreation Plan 2000