



Town of Newmarket  
2015 Master Plan Visioning  
Process

APPENDIX A

Prepared by Strafford Regional Planning Commission

October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015

# Outreach and Visioning Process

## Visioning Process

The Town of Newmarket, with support from the Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) and the Planning Committee, developed and implemented a process to engage residents in envisioning Newmarket's future. This process enabled the Town to gain a better understanding of residents' near and long term views of the community. It also provided the Town with ideas for addressing current and future challenges and taking advantage of the community's strengths, resources, and assets.

SRPC incorporated the comprehensive four-step process of the Oregon Model for community visioning into the visioning process in Newmarket. The four steps and driving questions of this model are described below:

**Step 1. Profiling the Community: *Where are we now?***

**Step 2. Analyzing the Trends: *Where are we going?***

**Step 3. Creating the Vision: *Where do we want to be?***

**Step 4. Developing an Action Plan: *How do we get there?***

Eight key planning areas were addressed within each of the four steps of this framework: Natural Resources and Environment; Economic Vitality; Sustainable Development and Land Use; Recreational, Cultural, and Historic Resources; Community Services and Facilities; Housing and Demographics; and Transportation. These planning areas are important components of the long term cultural, economic, and environmental health of a community<sup>1</sup> that influences quality of life.

Through a combination of interactive forums with presentations, small group discussion, live polling, and an online survey, SRPC solicited input from over 455 residents. Residents expressed appreciation for the opportunity to provide input and contribute to the development of the Master Plan.

The visioning process provided the Town and SRPC with a robust set of visionary statements and strategies that served as the foundation for the Master Plan Vision Statement and vision for each of the key planning areas.

### Why a Visioning Process?

*"The primary purpose of a visioning process should be to develop a set of vision statement, community goals, and objectives that best articulate the desires of the citizens about the future of the community. These vision statements serve to direct the other sections of the master plan, as required by RSA 674:2 II. They offer the guiding principles and priorities upon which the master plan is based."*

(Source: "Preparing a Master Plan for Your Community." (2004) Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission)

The **Planning Committee** consisted of the Town Planner, one Planning Board member, and one Planning Board alternate.

### Key Planning Areas:

1. Natural Resources and Environment
2. Economic Vitality
3. Sustainable Development and Land Use
4. Recreational, Cultural, and Historic Resources
5. Community Services and Facilities
6. Housing and Demographics
7. Transportation
8. Leadership, Volunteerism, and Engagement

<sup>1</sup> These planning areas were adapted from the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension and tailored by SRPC and the Planning Committee for the Town of Newmarket. See [http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource004125\\_Rep5885.pdf](http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource004125_Rep5885.pdf)

## Visioning Process Timeline

<b>March</b>	<i>Convene Planning Committee</i>
<b>March-April</b>	<i>Plan Visioning Process</i>  <i>Develop Branding and Outreach Material</i> <i>Review of 2001 Master Plan Vision Statement</i> <i>Compile Existing Conditions and Trends Data</i> <i>Survey Preparation</i>
<b>April 18</b>	<i>Visioning Forum #1</i>
<b>April 21-May 8</b>	<i>Survey Open</i>
<b>May</b>	<i>Compile and Analyze Data from Forum #1 and Survey Public Input</i>
<b>May 12</b>	<i>Report Visioning Findings to Planning Board</i>
<b>May-June</b>	<i>Plan Visioning Forum #2</i>
<b>June 16</b>	<i>Visioning Forum #2</i>
<b>June-July</b>	<i>Compile Forum #2 Public Input</i> <i>Draft Vision Statement</i>
<b>July 14</b>	<i>Report Visioning Findings to Planning Board</i>
<b>August</b>	<i>Worksession on Vision Chapter with Planning</i>

### Outreach and Branding

A logo and flyers were created to generate awareness of and interest in the visioning process. Flyers were distributed around downtown Newmarket and posted on the Town's website. SRPC sent out e-blasts and emails to its list serves and forum participants with information about the survey and Forum 2.



## Outreach Components

### Forum #1

The first visioning forum was held on Saturday April 18, 2015 from 9AM-12PM at Town Hall in Newmarket. SRPC facilitated the forum. The primary objective of this forum was to engage residents in Steps 1 and 2 of the community visioning process. During the forum, SRPC provided an overview of the visioning process and described how the information residents provided would be used to develop the Vision Chapter and to inform the Future Land Use Chapter of Newmarket's Master Plan. SRPC prepared and presented data and trends in each of the eight key planning areas in order to prepare residents for the interactive elements of the forum: a live polling session and small group discussions.

During the live polling sessions, participants responded to 13 multiple choice questions using TurningPoint software. The polling session provided residents with the opportunity to share their opinions and allowed participants and forum facilitators to instantaneously view and discuss the results of the poll during the forum. This technology proved to be a useful tool for soliciting information from large groups. It also helped to ensure that the voices of individuals who are less likely to speak up in a large or small crowd are heard. A total of 31 individuals participated in the polling session.

#### **Polling Results**

See pages 3-9 of the 2015 Master Plan Visioning Public Input document for polling questions and responses.

Participants were asked to sit at one of eight tables in groups of four to six for a strategic planning exercise. Participants were provided a copy of the data and trends presentation to guide their discussions during the exercise. During three 20-minute sessions, participants discussed and recorded strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, known as a (SWOT analysis) associated with one of the eight key planning areas. The exercise engaged residents in identifying and articulating assets and challenges in their community. Over 400 comments were recorded during the SWOT analysis.

#### **SWOT Analysis Results**

See pages 10-17 of the 2015 Master Plan Visioning Public Input document for SWOT analysis comments.

### **Survey**

Public input on issues in each of the eight key planning areas was collected through an online survey. The survey was available on the Town's website from April 18 – May 8, 2015 as well as in hard copy form in Town Hall. The survey consisted of 18 questions including four open response questions and 12 multiple choice questions. The survey provided the opportunity to engage and hear from individuals who were not able to attend the first forum. A total of 400 individuals completed the survey.

#### **Survey Results**

See pages 18-54 of the 2015 Master Plan Visioning Public Input document for survey results.

### **Forum #2**

SRPC facilitated a second forum on Tuesday June 16, 2015 from 6:30-8:30PM at Town Hall in Newmarket. The primary objective of this forum was to engage residents in Steps 3 and 4 of the community visioning process. SRPC reviewed the visioning process and presented a summary of results from the first forum. Participants were asked to sit in groups of 4-5 for a brainstorming activity. Participants were provided with results and a summary of results from the forum 1 and the survey as reference material for the small group activity. Participants were first asked to develop visionary statements for each of the eight key planning areas. After 40 minutes, participants were asked to report out on their visionary statements. At this time, all participants were asked to brainstorm short and long term strategies to realize each vision. SRPC facilitated the brainstorming and recorded all strategies. Participants identified 42 visionary statements and 52 strategies. A total of 19 residents participated in the activity.

#### **Forum 2 Statements and Strategies**

See pages 55-58 of the 2015 Master Plan Visioning Public Input document for survey results.