

Vision

Town of Newmarket Master Plan



Master Plan: Vision Chapter

Town of Newmarket, New Hampshire



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Foreword

More than ten years have passed since Newmarket evaluated its community vision and future direction as part of the Town's master planning process. The 2001 Master Plan was intended to serve as a guide to build upon the community's qualities and values, while continuing to create opportunities for securing a vital, healthy future for current and future residents. In this right, the plan has been a successful tool used to advocate for significant redevelopment efforts and improve the overall appearance and character of the downtown. Through proactive land use planning, Newmarket has maintained its small town atmosphere and preserved valuable community assets.

In 2015, 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. A detailed description of that process and summary of results is available as an appendix to this chapter.

Relevant goals and recommendations established during the development of the previous plan, supplemented with specific feedback derived from the Town's visioning exercises, were used to generate a broad, updated community vision. They represent the culmination of the hard work of many devoted volunteer, elected, and municipal stakeholders. This vision outlines ideas regarding land use and future planning activities for Newmarket in the context of year 2025. The following statements are constructed in a way that is intended to present the Town's 2025 visions as realized.



Newmarket's Vision Statement

In 2025, Newmarket continues to encompass the characteristics of a traditional New England coastal town that offers residents a high quality of life. The historic downtown is in the heart of the community and supports a diverse business mix that helps sustain the local economy. A multi-modal transportation system provides residents with a variety of options. Public transit routes, improved sidewalks, and an extensive bike network are strategically connected to allow for access between downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.

Newmarket offers attractive and affordable housing opportunities that are compatible with the town's existing development and character. New development is focused in areas that already have infrastructure and is intelligently designed to reduce negative environmental impacts to the Great Bay and surrounding watershed. The community is more resilient against coastal and riverine flooding in large part due to local land use policies and regulations that reduce risk and vulnerability.

Newmarket's valuable natural resources and open spaces are well protected and offer outdoor enthusiasts a variety of water and land-based recreational opportunities. Residents and visitors benefit from small agricultural activities that offer access to fresh, local foods year-round.

A strong sense of place is maintained through an active and engaged citizenry. Public involvement during civic activities generates enthusiasm and promotes innovative planning for the future of the town.



Newmarket's Vision for the Future

Based on the feedback that was collected throughout this visioning process, SRPC developed a series of vision statements for each of the eight key planning areas that influence quality of life. These statements provide the framework for the overall vision of what Newmarket will look like in 2025 and serve as a guideline that represents a variety of town interests.

Natural Resources and Environment

Newmarket's valuable natural resources continue to support a variety of habitats and crucial ecosystems that play an essential role in the environmental health and long-term sustainability of the Great Bay estuary. Through numerous environmental protection measures – including the adoption of local stormwater regulations, conservation of land and preservation of open spaces, oyster bed restoration projects, and upgrades to the wastewater treatment facility – the town's ongoing drinking and other water quality goals are being met.

Public engagement, stewardship campaigns, and collaboration with regional environmental organizations have led to a greater awareness of the current state of the Great Bay and the impacts of stormwater runoff, as well as the benefits of healthy oyster populations and eelgrass cover.

The integration of climate adaptation measures into municipal programs, policies, and operations reflect Newmarket's commitment to reduce community risk. Smart development has led to a greater resilience against adverse impacts and infrastructure vulnerability associated with climate changes, such as sea level rise and increased flooding.

Economic Vitality

Newmarket is served by diverse business mix that complements and is compatible with home-based business and occupations while encouraging residents to shop locally. Local employers provide livable wages for both residents and non-residents, allowing them to contribute to the local economy.

The town's business mix is complemented by significant investment in downtown redevelopment and mixed use development in an attractive and walkable environment that balances alternative and traditional transportation access. Additionally, efforts within and outside of the downtown core, including the waterfront, have created flexible office, collaboration, and incubator spaces for growth and development, while strong and resilient infrastructure investment attracts innovative businesses to the community.

These efforts are supported by attraction and retention efforts that market Newmarket as an economic development friendly community having a real competitive advantage due to the proximity to the resources of the University of New Hampshire and access to transportation networks and other regional employment centers.

Sustainable Development and Land Use

Newmarket continues substantial efforts to preserve natural resources in a thoughtful manner through conservation and the promotion of compatible infill development. Smart growth principles including sustainable site design and green building techniques are used to plan for development/redevelopment in ways that ensure balanced, intelligent, and creative preservation of open space and rural character. A vision



for the town's energy future has been established as part of the community's master planning efforts. That commitment has also led to development and endorsement of a Town energy policy that guides renewable and traditional energy infrastructure development and implementation.

Significant investments have been made in the downtown area and are supported by improvements in both traditional and alternative transportation infrastructure and connections including: parking, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, and wayfinding. The Town has strategically identified and worked to improve transportation access between the downtown core and adjacent neighborhoods.

The Town has reinforced zoning and land use policies in the downtown and peripheral areas that are not only harmonious with Newmarket's existing development patterns and community character, but also minimize demand on municipal services and negative impact on tax rates.

Recreation, Cultural, & Historic Resources

Newmarket's residents enjoy outstanding water and land-based recreational resources. Numerous events and celebrations, such as the Heritage Festival, are widely-known as community favorites. The town's continued commitment to historic preservation and the restoration of valuable, historic structures contribute to Newmarket's unique community character.

Improvements to the manner in which the Town promotes and markets its community assets have led to more public awareness and collaboration of regional opportunities. Newmarket is a destination site for outdoor enthusiasts visiting the Seacoast. Visitors enjoy walking trails, use the playing fields and other recreation facilities, along with conservation lands and open space. Residents have access to boating, kayaking, and fishing opportunities along the coastal waterways in town with access to the bays and Atlantic Ocean beyond.

Newmarket citizens benefit from an improved boat launch and river access, which is used for organized public events focused around the waterfront.

Community Services and Facilities

Newmarket has strategically invested in community services, schools, and other facilities that attract and retaining a diverse group of citizens while maintaining and improving the community's overall health and quality of life. All investments are prioritized through a balanced approach that incorporates thoughtful community growth and preservation strategies.

The town strives to make its community profile competitive with surrounding towns in order to meet the needs and expectations of current and prospective residents. These efforts are supported by an active and engaged citizenry focused on facilitating community consensus and capacity building.

Progressive, innovative, and efficient Town staff, elected officials, and volunteers have together taken steps to address impacts of coastal flooding on infrastructure by promoting resiliency through proactive land use planning and capital investment programs.

Housing and Demographics

The community continues to provide opportunities for owners and renters to live in attractive and affordable spaces in both the downtown and outer areas.



Newmarket has innovatively planned for and adapted to changing demographics through the provision of flexible housing stock for an aging population while maintaining the attractiveness of the community as a destination for both young professionals and young families. The result is a space in which residents can truly 'age-in-community' and continue to contribute to the growth and development the community.

Housing options are strategically and intuitively connected to transportation options, community services, and other amenities in a thoughtful manner that reduces negative environmental impacts and mitigates potential environmental threats such as coastal flooding.

Transportation

Newmarket's residents have access to a robust, energy efficient, multi-modal transportation system, which includes motorized and non-motorized networks. Public transit continues to provide valuable transportation opportunities, while a well-maintained network of bicycle and walking trails connects town corridors and small neighborhoods outside the downtown core. Additional parking near the downtown lessens traffic congestion and leads to more local business activity.

The community is bicyclist and pedestrian friendly and widely-recognized as having one of the most walkable downtown areas in the Seacoast. Safety improvements and consistent maintenance of existing infrastructure offer citizens excellent pedestrian accommodation and accessibility.

Leadership, Volunteerism, and Engagement

Newmarket benefits from a diverse and active citizenry. Established volunteer groups and programs promote civic pride and a sense of unity and place. Through volunteer efforts and community events, these groups partner with local businesses, community organizations, and the school system to strengthen engagement. Parent and student involvement provide renewed energy, enthusiasm, and innovative ideas for the future.

Improvements to town-wide communications and public outreach through social media and other online platforms have led to the recruitment of new volunteers, additional resources, and expansion of opportunities for residents to be engaged.

Municipal leadership remains strong, with a continuity and expansion of community leaders, which fosters consistency and community momentum.