

## **\*\*Residential Concerns Addressed in the Comprehensive Plan\*\***

The adopted Comprehensive Plan addresses several key residential concerns highlighted in the survey comments:

### **1. \*\*Traffic and Safety Issues\*\***

- **\*\*Concern:\*\*** Residents emphasized unsafe traffic conditions, pedestrian safety, and poor traffic flow, particularly in North Windham and Route 302.

- **\*\*Plan Response:\*\*** The Comprehensive Plan focuses on improving traffic safety and flow, especially through the **\*\*21st Century Downtown Plan\*\*** for North Windham. This includes pedestrian and bicycle networks, traffic calming measures, and parallel road connections to ease Route 302 congestion.

### **2. \*\*Preservation of Rural Character and Open Space\*\***

- **\*\*Concern:\*\*** Many residents are worried about overdevelopment leading to the loss of Windham's rural character and open space.

- **\*\*Plan Response:\*\*** One of the "4 Big Things" in the Plan is to **\*\*Invest in Rural Windham to Keep it Rural\*\***, which includes identifying and preserving critical open spaces and working lands through public-private partnerships.

### **3. \*\*Increased Residential Development and Overcrowding\*\***

- **\*\*Concern:\*\*** Residents expressed frustration with rapid residential growth, school overcrowding, and infrastructure strains.

- **\*\*Plan Response:\*\*** The Plan designates **\*\*Growth Areas\*\*** (North Windham, Windham Center, South Windham) where future residential growth will be focused while protecting **\*\*Residential Transition Areas\*\*** and limiting sprawl.

### **4. \*\*Community Facilities and Programs\*\***

- **\*\*Concern:\*\*** Residents highlighted the need for improved recreational facilities, parks, and community spaces for families and seniors.

- **\*\*Plan Response:\*\*** The Plan prioritizes investment in community facilities, including sports fields, community centers, and indoor recreational spaces to support Windham's growing population.

### **5. \*\*Affordable Housing\*\***

- **\*\*Concern:\*\*** Affordable housing was noted as a challenge for families and seniors.

- **\*\*Plan Response:\*\*** The Plan encourages **\*\*higher-density housing\*\*** in designated growth areas with access to infrastructure to create affordable and workforce housing options.

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## **\*\*Residential Concerns Potentially Missed or Underemphasized\*\***

Despite addressing significant concerns, the Plan may not fully address the following issues raised by residents:

### **1. \*\*Road Maintenance on Private Roads\*\***

- Residents living on private roads are frustrated by the lack of winter maintenance and the challenge of maintaining these roads themselves.
- **\*\*Potential Gap:\*\*** The Plan does not provide concrete solutions or funding mechanisms to support residents on private roads.

### **2. \*\*Property Taxes and Cost of Living\*\***

- Many respondents cited concerns about rising property taxes, particularly for seniors on fixed incomes.
- **\*\*Potential Gap:\*\*** While the Plan emphasizes economic development, there is limited discussion on mitigating property tax burdens for vulnerable groups.

### **3. \*\*Vacant and Deteriorating Commercial Spaces\*\***

- Residents noted that vacant commercial properties contribute to a decline in aesthetics and community vibrancy.
- **\*\*Potential Gap:\*\*** Although the Plan emphasizes revitalizing North Windham, it lacks specific strategies for repurposing or upgrading existing vacant commercial properties.

### **4. \*\*Water Supply and Environmental Concerns\*\***

- Several residents raised concerns about water quality, invasive species, and the impact of development on lakes and watersheds.
- **\*\*Potential Gap:\*\*** While the Plan includes water protection goals, it could include more aggressive measures for lake preservation and addressing water supply strain.

### **5. \*\*Lack of a Cohesive Community Feel\*\***

- Residents expressed a desire for a central, walkable town area with small businesses, cafes, and community spaces.
- **\*\*Potential Gap:\*\*** While the Plan aims to revitalize North Windham, it focuses primarily on economic growth and traffic rather than creating a traditional small-town community feel.

## Summary

The Comprehensive Plan successfully addresses many residential concerns, particularly those related to **\*\*traffic, preserving rural character, residential development, and community facilities\*\***. However, concerns around **\*\*property taxes, water supply, private road maintenance, and revitalizing vacant spaces\*\*** could benefit from more detailed strategies and stronger commitments.

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