

# ***PLAN WINDHAM***



## ***2016 UPDATE***

# **COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN**

# Town of Windham

Planning Department  
8 School Road  
Windham, ME 04062

voice 207.894.5960 ext. 2

fax 207.892.1916

January 19, 2017

To our fellow Windham residents and members of the greater Windham school and business community:

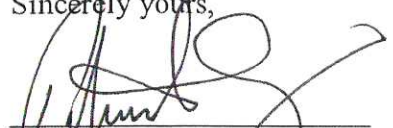
We, the members of the Comprehensive Plan Review Team, are pleased to submit this plan for your review and consideration and ultimate adoption by the Town Council as the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Windham.

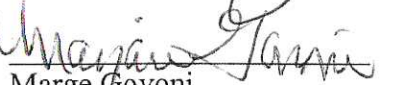
This plan has been written based on an extensive public participation process that started with a Community Survey and two visioning forums in 2014, focus group “mini-forums” and community group meetings through 2015, and presentations of draft materials and findings to both members of Windham’s official family of board and committee members and more community groups in 2016. A draft plan was presented for review and comment at a forum held at the Windham High School in October 2016. Our key responsibility has been to maintain the integrity of those views, values, wishes, concerns and recommendations from all of these efforts and make sure they are acknowledged and considered.

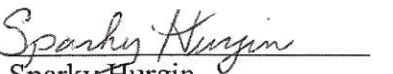
This does not mean that everyone’s ideas made it into the final plan and there is no one person who agrees with every single recommendation, goal or strategy in the plan. However, though discussions held in good faith since our first meeting in September 2014, we have reached consensus on the important issues in this planning document. Our intent is that this document will build on all of the policy and planning work that Windham has undertaken over the years, which have also informed and shaped this planning effort. Our hope is that this most recent planning effort will serve as a valuable policy guide for staff and elected and appointed policy makers over the coming years.

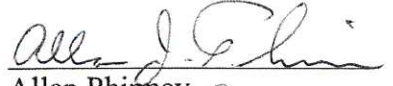
Thanks goes to all who participated by coming to meetings, sending emails, completing surveys and meeting with staff. Your efforts shaped this plan. Thanks also to the members of Windham Town Councils since 2014 who directly supported this effort, and members of previous Town Councils who set the stage for this work. Thanks to Windham’s senior staff members, who provided valuable insights on the challenges and opportunities that they face in their own departments, and the technical support provided during the analysis of public input and the state data set and the drafting of the plan.

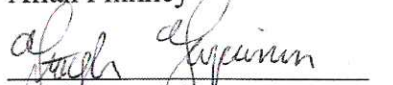
Sincerely yours,


  
Patrick Corey

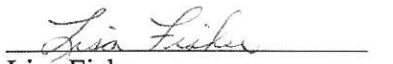
  
Marge Govoni


  
Sparky Hurgin

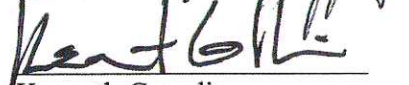
  
Allan Phinney

  
Frayla Tarpinian


  
Ben Smith, AICP  
Planning Director

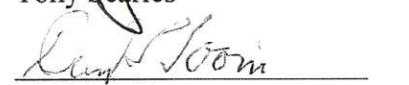
  
Lisa Fisher  
Administrative Assistant

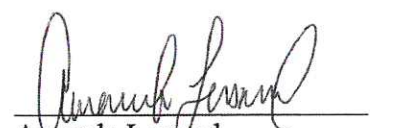
  
Michael Duffy

  
Kenneth Grondin

  
David Nadeau

  
Tony Searles

  
David Tobin

  
Amanda Lessard  
Planner



# 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

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## **INTRODUCTION**

**The Town Council approved the charge of the Comprehensive Plan Review Team on March 25, 2014. THIS GROUP WAS CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY:**

*To assist in drafting an update to the Town of Windham's 2003 Comprehensive Master Plan, consistent with the State's Growth Management Act and direction of the Town Council.*

*To report periodically to the Council regarding its progress, issues and problems.*

*To submit a recommended draft to the Town Council for its acceptance and adoption.*

*This document, along with the 21st Century Downtown Plan for North Windham (adopted by the Town Council in 2013) and the Windham Economic Development Strategic Plan (adopted by the Town Council in 2013), represent the updated Comprehensive Plan for Windham.*

*The 21st Century Downtown Plan and the Economic Development Plan are included as Appendices to this plan document.*

## **PRIOR PLANNING EFFORTS**

**Since the adoption of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the Town has been very active in planning on many fronts for the community. This update of the Comprehensive Plan builds on these efforts, which are listed below.**

- **Comprehensive Assessment of Housing in Windham (2003)**
- **Comprehensive Water System Master Plan for Town of Windham (2003)**
- **Service Road Study (2007)**
- **Wastewater Facilities Plan & Windham Sewer Route 302 Corridor Schematic Design (2011)**
- **Town of Windham Energy Plan & Energy Inventory (2011)**
- **Forest Stewardship Management Plan for Lowell Preserve (2011)**
- **North Route 302 Corridor Plan (2011)**
- **Pleasant River Watershed Management Plan (2011)**
- **Lakes Region Transit Service Study (2011)**
- **Economic Development Strategic Plan (2013)**
- **21st Century Downtown Plan for North Windham (2013)**
- **Space Needs Master Plan (2014)**



## **THE 4 BIG THINGS!**

*There are many Goals laid out in the Inventory Chapters that follow, and associated strategies to implement these Goals. Many of these are required by Maine's Growth Management Act and associated departmental rules that lay out what the State would like to see addressed in a municipal plan. The Goals and Strategies at the end of each of the Inventory Chapters are related to the specific topic of that chapter, so that Transportation goals are included in the Transportation Chapter, Public Facilities and Service goals are in the Public Facilities and Service Chapter, and so on.*

*Based on all the public comment we have received, we have tried to boil all of these goals and strategies to their most essential essence. The goal of this Plan is to present a manageable number of high-priority, crosscutting challenges to meet over the next few years, rather than present a long and unprioritized laundry list of items to pick off over the next ten or more years. By moving the ball forward on these focused areas, the Town will be making progress on the most important issues Windham faces right now.*

*Each of the Big Things are high priority subject areas, meaning that they are not presented in a prioritized list. They are all important, and the list is small enough that it should be possible to make progress on all of them at the same time.*

*With these aims in mind, here are the Big 4 things that the Town Council and community at large need to work together on in the short term.*

### **BIG THING NUMBER 1**

**Change the game for Windham's Growth Areas: North Windham, Windham Center, South Windham**



Photo By: Kevin Murphy <sup>1</sup> • Cecilia Brown <sup>2</sup> • James Jones <sup>4</sup> • Ray Monahan <sup>5</sup>

*Windham needs to begin thoughtfully and proactively laying the groundwork for these three traditional activity centers to become true centers for Windham. As envisioned above, these three areas are very unique within Windham, and these differences are great strengths that allow for different types and scales of neighborhood development that will truly make Windham a community for all people, ages, and economic means.*

*This Big Thing is all about expanding the range of options available for people to choose from when considering Windham for a home or a place to start or expand a business.*



## **BIG THING NUMBER 2**

### **Create a North Windham to be proud of**



Photo By: Ray Monahan <sup>2</sup> • Cecilia Brown <sup>3</sup> • James Jones <sup>5</sup>

*North Windham is the economic and social center for the community. Here you will find two major supermarkets, almost all of the restaurants, clubs and social organizations in the community, multiple department stores and almost all of the smaller scale retail uses, the movie theatre, building supply and hardware stores, an amusement park and more. Most in the community feel that we should be building on North Windham's success to ensure that it is successful economic and social center for future generations to come. In order to create a place that inspires pride of place and transforms North Windham from a major convenience retail center to a place where people chose to also spend time, play and recreate, work and live, improvements and investments need to be made.*

*These upgrades include changes to North Windham's transportation network, installation of new infrastructure for wastewater treatment and high speed broadband, and doing our best to ensure that when new development or redevelopment is proposed, sites are designed to become high-quality assets to the community.*

## **BIG THING NUMBER 3**

### **Invest in Rural Windham to keep it rural**



Photo By: Ray Monahan <sup>1,2,3,4</sup> • Ben Gross <sup>5,6</sup>

*Preservation of rural character and protecting important open spaces and scenic views has been enshrined in all of Windham's past Comprehensive Plans. These are the places that tie long-time residents to the land, places where traditional outdoor recreational activities and access have been available for many decades, working land that has been passed down through generations, and the very places that have made Windham an attractive location for new families in the greater Portland area since the 1970s. There is also an understanding among many community members that rural land has a much lower demand for municipal services than house lots or commercial development and therefore keeping rural spaces in the town can be a way to avoid the costs of new or expanded municipal services. We need to get serious about open space and preserving working land within the time horizon of this plan or there will be little left to preserve and protect going forward. Getting serious about*



*Rural Windham means making investments to purchase outright, or at least the develop rights, to the most special and iconic rural land in the community, knowing that it is not practical to keep all of the undeveloped land in Windham in its current undeveloped state. Getting serious also means working with farmers, wood lot owners, and others who earn their living from the land to make it easier to establish other rural uses and accessory uses to provide additional income streams to their operations. When rural land is productive and profitable, it is much easier to perpetuate into the future.*

## **BIG THING NUMBER 4**

### **Focus on Community Facilities and Programs**



Photo By: Madelyne Hancock <sup>1,3</sup> • James Jones <sup>2</sup> • Taelor Freeman <sup>4</sup> • Ben Gross <sup>6</sup>

*There are really two components to this Big Thing. The first is prioritizing the basic maintenance of existing facilities, which include roads, municipal and school buildings, and park and recreation lands. Windham is currently building a new larger South Windham Fire Station from an existing steel building in South Windham Village.*

*This is the first new municipal facility since 1989, almost 30 years ago. The Town faces a backlog of deferred maintenance on many of the Town's buildings and there are many efficiency related improvements that could pay for themselves in 5-10 years but need to be budgeted for. In addition the School District faces its own facility needs and the School Board is recommending a new Middle School in the near future. The Town's roads are in relatively good shape, and the Public Works Department is flat out every construction season milling and paving local roads and conducting ditching and mowing operations around the community. It is imperative that Windham keep up on local road maintenance which costs a fraction of complete road rebuilds when maintenance is deferred too long.*

*Secondly, the Town needs to address the needs of a growing community from the standpoints of athletic facilities and community center space. The Town recently sold the Gambo Road Soccer Fields to the Windham Youth Soccer Association. This leaves the community with the Falmouth Road Little League Field as the only municipally owned playing field. The rest of the playing fields in Windham are on school district properties. There are public playgrounds at the Primary School and Town Office properties in Windham Center at the East Windham Fire Station and at the Manchester School and Donnabeth Lippman Park in North Windham. The community needs to invest more in recreational space for organized youth and adult sports. There is a similar shortage of indoor recreational facilities, along with a shortage of community meeting and flex space for senior, youth, and general community activities and events. It has been suggested several times in recent years that a Community Center could serve many purposes in Windham, and data from the Community Survey indicates support for the concept. All of these needs are the result of sustained residential growth, and all indications are that Windham will remain on a growth path for at least the remainder of this planning period.*



## **OUR VISION FOR WINDHAM**

*Windham continues to evolve as a community. Windham is one community but it is a community of different neighborhoods and different areas, each with a distinct character. As the Town grows, this diversity is maintained and even reinforced. This provides the opportunity for a range of residents and businesses to call Windham home.*

*We are a proud, dynamic town. We are a town where young families and seniors can find community and live healthy, fun and engaging lives. We are a growing, exciting community that still retains the qualities of a small town. We take care of each other and we respect and celebrate our heritage. We support our schools, local arts and cultural events and the community that they create. We want to continue to improve as a community, and be a place where we are proud to say "I live in Windham" or "My business is located in Windham."*

*Windham continues to grow and develop but our development is balanced by the preservation of important open space and agricultural land to maintain the rural character of our Town and to provide scenic, recreational, and economic benefits for our residents.*

## **A Tour through Windham in 2030**

*While no one can foresee the specific property by property changes that will take place over a decade of continued growth, Our Vision for Windham can be translated down into images of what specific parts of Windham will become. Continued growth will bring change to all corners of Windham, but the pace of change and how much development occurs in specific areas will not be equal. Some parts of Windham will remain relatively unchanged over this time period, while others will see much more intensive development.*

*In that spirit, imagine that you have to temporarily move or go on a trip that takes you away from Windham for the next ten years or so. The Windham you return to will be very recognizable but you will also notice some significant changes. There has been ten years of population growth with the commensurate demand for new housing. There has been ten years of new commercial development around the community. The community has made targeted investments that have resulted in community and neighborhood improvements. Let's start the tour!*

*North Windham continues the transformation that has already begun from a regional retail and convenience center to true town center with a mix of uses and activities that is a destination within the Greater Portland region. As the 21st Century Downtown Master Plan is implemented, North Windham evolves into a place where people chose to live, work and play due to improved traffic flow, the creation of pedestrian and bicycle networks, quality architecture and streetscapes, and open space. Activity in North Windham is bolstered as more homes and mixed-uses develop within the core commercial area. Residents find a more diversified jobs center in North Windham. The diversification in jobs is led by the traditionally strong retail sector and supported by gains in manufacturing, restaurants, and professional offices. This growth as a job center is enabled by smart investments in infrastructure needed to support these activities.*

*South Windham attracts new village-scale residential growth by capitalizing on the neighborhood's assets including a rebuilt River Road, the existing sewer system, improvements to Town-owned spaces (including streets), improvements to the Mountain Division Trail, and access to the Presumpscot River. New single family homes on small lots and town-house style multifamily unit*



*buildings are built next to and among the existing, upgraded and refurbished housing stock. New residents support small, local businesses on Main Street. Cooperation with the Town of Gorham and the Little Falls community on the other side of the Presumpscot ensures that a revitalized South Windham melds with Little Falls as a single community.*

*If North Windham is the commercial core of Windham, then Windham Center is the civic core. Windham Center takes advantage of the location of school and municipal facilities, along with the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust's Black Brook Preserve, the skate park, and the Community Garden, to become a different type of "village" in the geographic center of the Town. This "civic village" focuses on increasing the number of single- and two-family homes on smaller lots, resulting in a neighborhood that is attractive to families with school-age children who want to live within walking distance of schools, the library, recreation facilities, playing fields, and conserved open-space.*

*Other existing residential neighborhoods (such as those in the Varney Mill Road area, the Cornerbrook and Brookhaven neighborhoods just off Roosevelt Trail, and the Timberhill and Evergreen neighborhoods along Park Road) are valued for their sense of community. The character of these areas remains essentially unchanged. These neighborhoods accommodate limited additional single family homes that fit the existing character of these neighborhoods, either within the neighborhoods as "infill" development or on adjacent parcels that are incorporated into the existing neighborhoods.*

*Rural areas of Windham are valued by the community for the recreational, scenic, cultural, and quality of life benefits they provide. The Town continues to recognize that agriculture and forestry are important pieces of the local economy and works to encourage and support new agricultural uses on the rural landscape. The community identifies the most important and scenic open spaces and undeveloped properties including agricultural land, and works with land owners and partners in the non-profit community to permanently protect these areas to proactively ensure that there will be conserved open space and productive working farmland available for future generations, and that the most scenic and iconic views of rural Windham are preserved.*

## **Future Land Use Map**

*Mapping out where growth and changes are desired and where they are not desired in a central component comprehensive planning. It is graphic that shows the general areas of Windham that should be targeted for growth and those that are important to the community to keep at low development levels.*

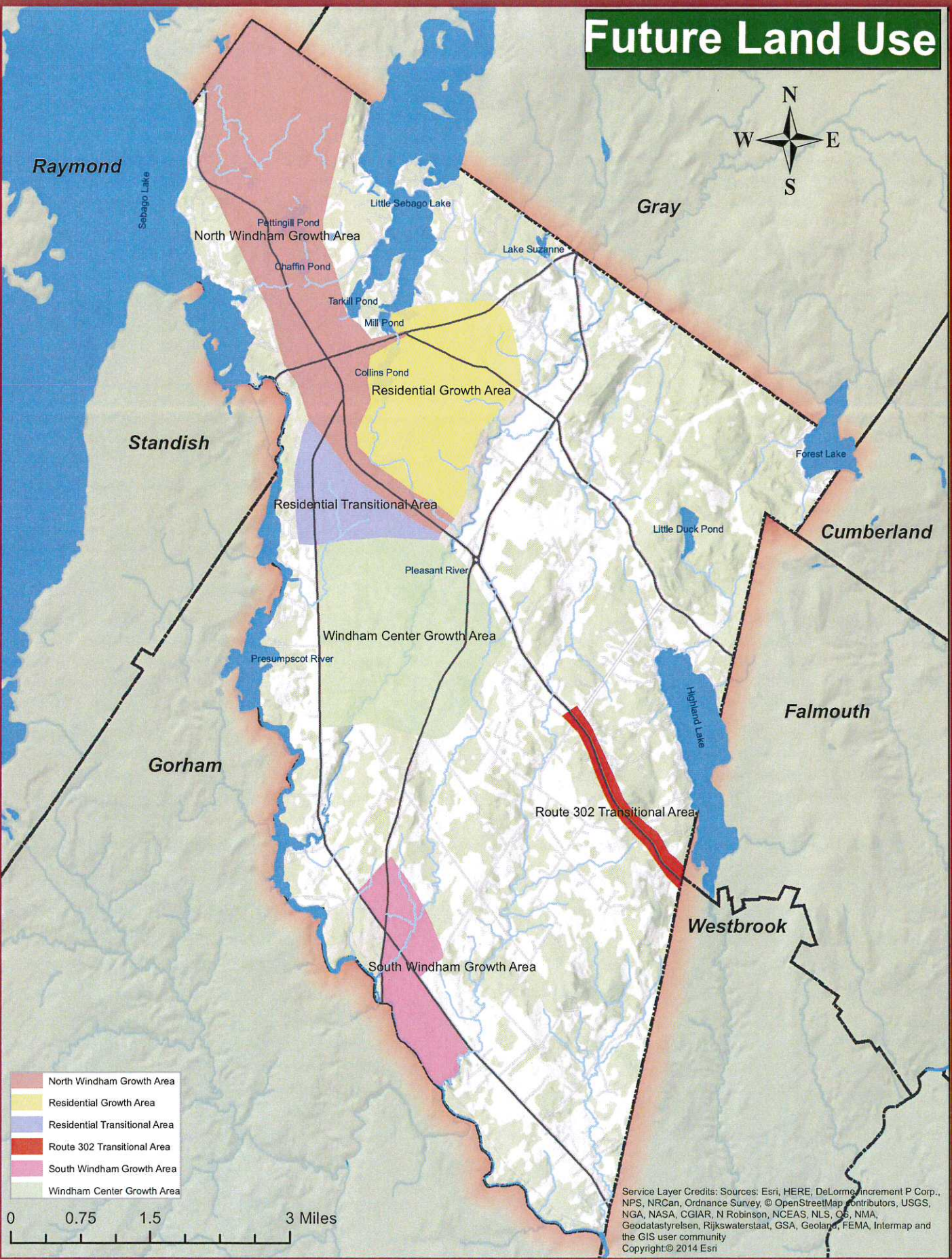
*As noted earlier, change and development pressure will not be felt equally across the entire town. Part of that is based on market demands and partly by circumstance. Through this Plan, the Town will make certain that community character and cost to provide services will also factor into where future growth occurs.*

*Growth Areas are the parts of the community where most of Windham's future growth is to be targeted and encouraged or incentivized. It is also where most of the investment in new community infrastructure and facilities should be located. Later in the Economy Chapter of the Plan, these are referred to as Activity Areas. On the other hand, Rural Areas are the places where future development is to be directed away from. Transitional Areas are the places between the Growth and Rural Areas, where further development will not necessarily be encouraged or discouraged. Moderate growth is appropriate for these areas.*

*Another way to think about these areas might be that Growth Areas will have a relatively faster rate of change and that Rural Areas will have a relatively slower rate of change.*



# Future Land Use



- North Windham Growth Area
- Residential Growth Area
- Residential Transitional Area
- Route 302 Transitional Area
- South Windham Growth Area
- Windham Center Growth Area

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# VISION & VALUES

## Core Values

*During the discussions about the future of Windham, a number of values emerged over and over again. These core values represent what the residents of our Town feel strongly about – what is important to them about Windham as a community.*

Photo By: Ray Monahan



**Open fields, forested land, and working farms are important to residents.**

*These resources are valued for the recreational, scenic, and quality of place benefits they provide. These lands provide a connection to Windham's rural past as well as a bridge to the future. As Windham continues to grow and develop, it is imperative that the most important of these areas be preserved for the future.*

**Implication: We should preserve important open spaces, forested lands and working farms.**



**Residents value the accessibility and convenience that Windham provides.**

*At a regional level, this means the ease of access to Portland and the amenities of the Lakes Region and White Mountains. On a local level, it means the convenience of local shopping, dining, services, and entertainment as well as access to nature, trails and the water, such as the Mountain Division Trail and Dundee Park.*

**Implication: We should preserve and improve accessibility and connections to local and regional destinations.**



**Residents appreciate that Windham is a growing regional jobs center.**

*They recognize the need for investments to enhance this regional economic role and to increase and diversify the job opportunities found here.*

**Implication: We should increase Windham's role in the regional economy by increasing the numbers and types of jobs available in Windham.**



Photo By: Ray Monahan



**Residents value that Town services are provided in a fiscally responsible manner.**

*The Town must make targeted investments in roads and other infrastructure to enhance the quality of life for residents and to support economic and job growth, while being mindful of the property tax implications of these investments.*

**Implication: We should make smart, targeted investments in infrastructure to shape future growth and to improve municipal services.**

Photo By: Kevin Murphy



**Windham is, and should continue to be, a community for people of all ages and economic means.**

*More diversity in housing types will serve Windham well and maintain a diversity of ages and income levels in the community. Single family homes will continue to be the predominate style of residential development in Windham, but there is a recognition that building on smaller lots and building more apartments, townhouses, and senior housing in proximity to the existing built-up areas, where infrastructure allows, will add to the economic vitality and community life of areas like North Windham and South Windham Village.*

**Implication: We should increase the availability of housing options beyond single family homes.**

Photo By: Ray Monahan



**Residents value Windham's heritage and its rural roots.**

*They want to assure that the connections to its past are both preserved and celebrated.*

**Implication: We should celebrate community and connections to Windham's past.**



## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

*Of course, this document includes many policy goals and suggested strategies that will allow the town to make progress toward each of those goals. What we should care about, though, and what we want to measure, are the things that the community told us they care about. We want to be able to show progress in areas that are most relevant to the people of Windham.*

*These performance measures should be updated and reported out to the Town Council and community on an annual basis.*

Photo By: Ray Monahan



### **Preserve important open spaces, forested lands and working farms**

- **Number of acres of land protected through the acquisition of development rights, conservation easements or Town gift/purchase.**
- **New dwelling units permitted in growth areas relative to rural areas**



### **Increase Windham's role in the regional economy and increase and diversify the jobs available in Windham**

- **Total number of jobs in Windham**
- **Ratio of the number of retail jobs relative to the total number of jobs in Windham**



### **Preserve and improve accessibility and connections to local and regional destinations**

- **Feet of new sidewalk constructed in Growth Areas**
- **Ridership on Lakes Region Explorer**



### **Make smart, targeted investments in infrastructure to shape future growth and improve municipal services**

- **% of infrastructure funds spent in growth areas**
- **Number of residential and non-residential connections to a public sewer system.**





### Windham should continue to be a community for people of all ages and economic means

- Number of age-restricted dwelling units permitted as a percent of total dwelling units.
- Number of multiunit dwellings built relative to single family homes
- Number of accessory dwelling units permitted

Photo By: Kevin Murphy



### Celebrate community and connections to Windham's past

- Estimated number of attendees at community events like Summerfest and the Tree Lighting.
- Number of attendees at Windham Historical Society events.
- Number of Windham youth sports participants
- Estimated number of library patrons or number of items checked out.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

*The success of a plan is measured in how well it is implemented. Many comments were heard during the Visioning process that had to do with follow through on planning efforts. Comments similar to "Why are we doing a whole new plan when we still have so many items from the last plan that haven't been done yet?" or "Why bother planning for improvements/facilities/infrastructure when we know we can't afford to pay for them?" or "Why go through effort of planning only to produce another document that will sit on the shelf for 10 years?"*

*This Plan is not meant to be a document on a shelf. This Plan is a tool for community decision makers to use for making progress in the areas Action Plan that will have the biggest positive impacts for Windham's current and future residents.*

*The Comprehensive Plan Review Team recommends that the Town Council adopt a charge for and appoint members to a Long Range Planning Committee. A charge for this group should include coordinating the implementation of the Big Ideas detailed in this update to the Comprehensive Plan, implementing other Town plans and policies, such as the Complete Streets Policy adopted in 2015 and recommendations from the Energy Plan adopted in 2011. This group should be tasked with preparation of any of the district or topical plans or studies called for in this Comprehensive Plan.*

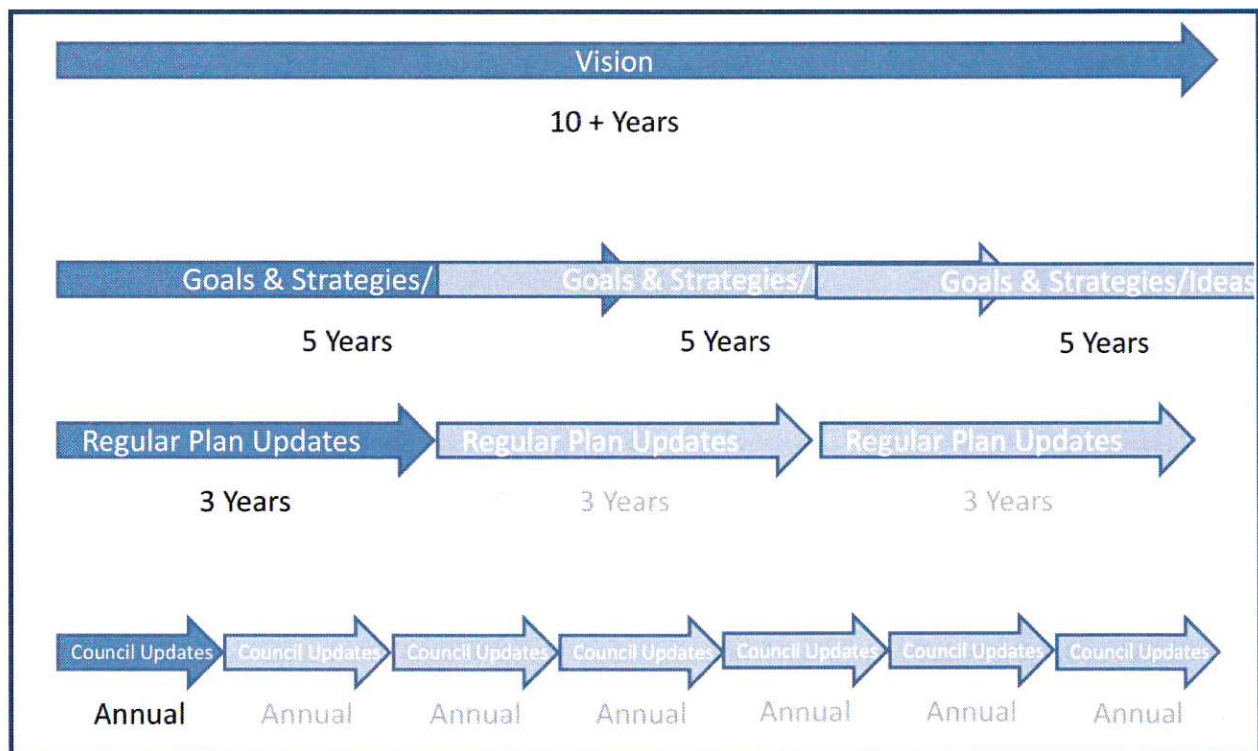


## ***FUTURE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES***

*The Long Range Planning Committee should be charged with annual reporting on the performance measures suggested above, as well as adding to or changing the performance measures to improve how progress implementing the plan is moving forward.*

*The Plan should also be updated on a regular basis, perhaps every three years or so, to keep the information in the inventory chapters current and to add or change to the Big Ideas as they are implemented or priorities change or new opportunities present themselves.*

*Going back out to the community for structured input in the form of surveys and visioning sessions is also recommended, though the Community Values and Vision should be considered to be more constant than the underlying technical information in the Inventory Chapters. As such, the community might not need to update that portion of the plan for a longer time period.*



*Figure 1 - Recommended Update Schedule*

## ***PUBLIC PROCESS***

### **Comprehensive Plan Review Team**

*The Review Team was a 15-member committee whose members were appointed by the Town Council on July 24, 2014. This group met approximately once per month from September 2014 to June 2016 organize visioning sessions, coordinate the annual Summerfest presence for this planning effort, and to review and provide comments on draft plan chapters. This group was made*

*up of experienced planners and newcomers, long-time residents and those who have only been in Windham for a short amount of time. Members came from all corners of community, from private roads and public roads, and from rural areas and established neighborhoods.*

## **Community Brainstorming and Visioning**

*Early efforts at public outreach began in 2013, with the Planning Department's experiment with Mindmixer, an online interactive community engagement tool. It allowed staff to post questions, polls, and surveys for all registered users to participate in.*

*The low-tech version of Mindmixer was used in the first half of 2014. These were the Town Post-It note boards that rotated locations around the Town Office and Library. Specific questions like, "What do you love about Windham?" and "What is your big idea for Windham?" solicited lots of great feedback.*

*The Review Team held two community scale Visioning Forums in November 2014. These were held on the evening of Wednesday, November 19, at the Manchester School in North Windham and the Town Office Gymnasium/Community Center on Saturday morning, November 22, 2014. The Forums were structured so that an introductory presentation provided everyone with a baseline of information and context for the planning work they were about to participate in, and the remainder of the time was dedicated to small table work facilitated by members of the Review Team and reporting back to the large group.*

*A complete summary of the visioning process and information collected is included in an appendix to this plan.*

*Critical Insights, a Portland based polling and public opinion company, was hired to design and administer a survey of Windham households and businesses in 2014. Two focus groups were held in September 2014 to give the organization a sense of important issues and attitudes that should try to be quantified in the larger survey effort. The survey period was open in October and November of 2014, and surveys were mailed to 6,856 households and 529 businesses.*

*Respondents could respond to the survey by phone or online. Responses were received from 1,024 residential households (14.9% response rate) and 42 businesses (7.8% response rate). Because of the impressive response rate on behalf of Windham households, the community can have a high level of confidence that the responses received are representative of the community at large. A report of focus group discussions and final report of survey results are included as an appendix to this plan.*



# **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

## **WINDHAM TOWN COUNCILS: 2013-2017**

### **TOWN MANAGER & STAFF PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

#### **Members of the Comprehensive Plan Review Team**

Patrick Corey  
Michael Duffy  
John Eddy\*  
Marge Govoni  
Kenneth Grondin  
Sparky Hurgin  
David Lavigne\*  
Shawn Morrison\*  
David Nadeau  
Allan Phinney  
Tony Searles  
Frayla Tarpinian  
Gene Tanguay\*  
David Tobin  
Elizabeth Wisecup\*

*\*though all appointed at the same Council meeting in July 2014, not all committee members were able to participate through completion of the plan drafting process. Those who had to step away from the process before delivery of a plan document to the Council are noted above.*

**Windham Veterans Center and the Little Meetinghouse for hosting early meetings of the Review Team, and the RSU for providing a regular meeting place for the Review Team from 2015-2016.**

**Mark Eyerman, Planning Decisions, Inc., for assistance with meeting facilitation and organization of the Visioning Forums.**

**Critical Insights, Inc., for development and administration of the Community Survey.**

**Thanks to the greater Windham community, including residents, business owners & students for providing input and feedback throughout the planning process!**



## Introduction

The Town Council approved the charge of the Comprehensive Plan Review Team on March 25, 2014. This group was charged with the responsibility:

- To assist in drafting an update to the Town of Windham's 2003 Comprehensive Master Plan, consistent with the State's Growth Management Act and direction of the Town Council,
- To report periodically to the Council regarding its progress, issues and problems, and
- To submit a recommended draft to the Town Council for its acceptance and adoption.

This document, along with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan for North Windham (adopted by the Town Council in 2013) and the Windham Economic Development Strategic Plan (adopted by the Town Council in 2013), represent the updated of the Comprehensive Plan for Windham. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan and the Economic Development Plan are included in this plan document as Appendices A and B, respectively.

## Recent Planning Efforts

Since the adoption of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the Town has been very active in planning on many fronts for the community. This update of the Comprehensive Plan builds on these efforts, which are listed and summarized below. All are plans undertaken by the Town or on behalf of the Town, unless a lead agency is noted below.

- Comprehensive Assessment of Housing in Windham (2003)
- Comprehensive Water System Master Plan for Town of Windham (2003)
- Service Road Study (2007)
- Wastewater Facilities Plan & Windham Sewer Route 302 Corridor Schematic Design (2011)
- Town of Windham Energy Plan & Energy Inventory (2011)
- Forest Stewardship Management Plan for Lowell Preserve (2011)
- North Route 302 Corridor Plan (2011)
- Pleasant River Watershed Management Plan, by Cumberland County Soil & Water Commission (2011)
- Lakes Region Transit Service Study, by Regional Transportation Program (2011)
- Economic Development Strategic Plan (2013)
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan for North Windham (2013)
- Property Condition Assessment Report (2013)
- Municipal Facility Space Needs Study and Master Plan (2014)

## Public Process

This Comprehensive Plan update has been built on a public participation and awareness program that is really unprecedented for Windham.

### Comprehensive Plan Review Team

The Review Team was a 15-member committee whose members were appointed by the Town Council on July 24, 2014. This group met approximately once per month since September 2014 to organize visioning sessions, coordinate the annual Summerfest presence for this planning effort, and to review and provide comments on draft plan chapters. This group was made up of experienced planners and newcomers, long-time residents and those who have only been in Windham for a short amount of time. Members came from all corners of community, from private roads and public roads, and from rural areas and established neighborhoods.

### Community Brainstorming and Visioning

Early efforts at public outreach began in 2013, with the Planning Department's experiment with Mindmixer, an online interactive community engagement tool. It allowed staff to post questions, polls, and surveys for all registered users to participate in. Use of this system was relatively limited due to the amount of time between starting that process and the official start of the planning process, even though it was initially publicized well and had a good number of registered users. Use was also likely limited by having a system in place that required registered users and log ins to participate.

The low-tech version of Mindmixer was used in the first half of 2014. These were the Town Post-It note boards that rotated locations around the Town Office and Library. Specific questions like, "What do you love about Windham?" and "What is your big idea for Windham?" solicited lots of great feedback.

The Review Team held two community scale Visioning Forums in November 2014. These were held on the evening of Wednesday, November 19, at the Manchester School in North Windham and the Town Office Gymnasium/Community Center on Saturday morning, November 22, 2014. The Forums were structured so that an introductory presentation provided everyone with a baseline of information and context for the planning work they were about to participate in, and the remainder of the time was dedicated to small table work facilitated by members of the Review Team and reporting back to the large group. Excluding Review Team members, Town staff and officials, about 45 people attended the Wednesday evening session and about 30 people attended the Saturday morning session.

After reviewing the attendee lists for both of these Visioning Forums, the Review Team suggested several "mini-Visioning Forums" with members of specific interest groups that were either under represented or not represented at all at the two larger Forums. These sessions were organized as structured focus groups. Staff and Review Team members conducted three of these sessions with Windham High School students, youth sports and recreation stakeholders, and members of Windham's farming community. In December 2014, and January 2015.



A complete summary of these visioning efforts and information collected is included as Appendix C to this plan.

### **Community Survey**

Critical Insights, a Portland based polling and public opinion company, was hired to design and administer a survey of Windham households and businesses in 2014. Two focus groups were held in September 2014 to give the organization a sense of important issues and attitudes that should try to be quantified in the larger survey effort. The survey period was open in October and November of 2014, and surveys were mailed to 6,856 households and 529 businesses. Respondents could respond to the survey by phone or online. Responses were received from 1,024 residential households (14.9% response rate) and 42 businesses (7.8% response rate). Because of the impressive response rate on behalf of Windham households, the community can have a high level of confidence that the responses received are representative of the community at large. A report of focus group discussions and final report of survey results are included as Appendix D to this plan.

### **Town Council Check-in Workshops**

The Review Team endeavored to keep the Town Council and members of the public up to date on planning progress through a series of regular update memos and Council workshops at key project milestones.

- February 24, 2015. Draft Core Values and Vision Statement review workshop.
- August 25, 2015. Request for an amended timeline, so that a Review Team submission to the Town Council should be expected in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2016, rather than the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.
- March 15, 2016 Draft Future Land Use Map workshop. Staff highlighted similarities and differences between the draft map approved by the Review Team as part of the 2016 update and the Future Land Use Map in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.
- August 23, 2016, Presentation on 1<sup>st</sup> Draft of Plan Summary. This update included a wrap up of what we have learned about the community, what we have learned from the community, and a discussion of the “4 Big Things” which are the high priority policy areas identified in the Plan update.

### **Ongoing Community Engagement**

In addition to all of the public outreach in support of the visioning process and the Town Council updates, the Review Team made efforts to ensure that residents remained up to date with the planning efforts.

### **Summerfest**

Summerfest is a volunteer led effort to bring Windham residents out for a fun day of activities and socializing on a Saturday in June each year. Planning staff reserved booth space at Summerfest over the last several years, getting in front of several thousand members of the greater Windham community each year.

Summerfest 2014 was held right before members of the Review Team were appointed by the Town Council. Staff brought the idea boards described above and conducted a series of one minute interviews, asking “what’s your big idea for Windham?” and “what do you love about Windham?”

In 2015, members of the Review Team held a Windham Trivia Challenge. Passer-bys had the opportunity to answer ten multiple choice questions about the town, based on the information gathering and inventory work associated with the plan update. Questions included “what is the largest park of preserve in Windham?” and “when was Windham incorporated as a township?” and “how many building permits for new dwellings were issued in 2014?” The answers are Lowell Preserve, 1762, and 104, respectively. The complete list of questions and answers are included at the end of the Appendix C.

For the 2016 edition of Summerfest, staff and Review Team members handed out reusable shopping bags that were printed with the logo for the plan that showed the 4 Big Things and some representative policies to make progress on the 4 Big Things. In addition, the booth was set up to display entries received for the Photo Contest sponsored by the Planning Department to build awareness of the Comprehensive Plan update. Images received from that effort are included throughout this planning document.

### *Summer Roadshow Presentations*

The Planning Department also sponsored a series of meetings with community stakeholder groups in from August – October 2016. Many of these meetings were with members of Windham’s “official family,” meaning elected and appointed boards and volunteer groups. These smaller format meetings included presentations on the work and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan Review Team and time for questions and suggestions. Presentations worked out as follows below:

- August 15 – Energy Advisory Committee
- August 17 – Windham Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)
- August 22 – Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals (televised meeting)
- August 23 – Town Council (televised meeting)
- September 12 – Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
- October 5 – RSU 14 School Board (televised meeting – [archived video here](#))
- October 6 – Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce Board

### *Community Presentation and Open House*

On October 20, 2016, the Review Team hosted an evening open house style meeting at the Windham High School cafeteria. After food and refreshments, planning staff provided a presentation on the highlights of the plan update. Following some questions and answers, the group adjourned to the open house poster session for more food and conversation with about 40 members of the Review Team, town staff and friends and neighbors.



## Values & Vision

Through the early outreach efforts about the future of Windham, staff and members of the Review Team heard many of the same types of statements come up again and again. Themes emerged from these statements about what residents of Windham feel strongly about, and these themes are translated into values statements below.

### Core Values

Open fields, forested land, and working farms are important to residents. These resources are valued for the recreational, scenic, and quality of place benefits they provide. These lands provide a connection to Windham's rural past as well as a bridge to the future. As Windham continues to grow and develop, it is imperative that the most important of these areas be preserved for the future.

Residents value the accessibility and convenience that Windham provides. At a regional level, this means the ease of access to Portland and the amenities of the Lakes Region and White Mountains. On a local level, it means the convenience of local shopping, dining, services, and entertainment as well as access to nature, trails and the water, such as the Mountain Division Trail and Dundee Park.

Residents appreciate that Windham is a growing regional jobs center and recognize the need for investments to enhance this regional economic role and to increase and diversify the job opportunities found here.

Residents value that Town services are provided in a fiscally responsible manner. At the same time they recognize that the Town must make targeted investments in roads and other infrastructure to enhance the quality of life for residents and to support economic and job growth, while being mindful of the property tax implications of these investments.

Windham is, and should continue to be, a community for people of all ages and economic means. More diversity in housing types will serve Windham well and maintain a diversity of ages and income levels in the community. Single family homes will continue to be the predominate style of residential development in Windham, but there is a recognition that building on smaller lots and building more apartments, townhouses, and senior housing in proximity to the existing built-up areas, where infrastructure allows, will add to the economic vitality and community life of areas like North Windham and South Windham Village.

Residents value Windham's heritage and its rural roots and want to assure that the connections to its past are both preserved and celebrated.

### Our Vision for Windham

Windham continues to evolve as a community. Windham is one community but it is a community of different neighborhoods and different areas, each with a distinct character. As the Town grows, this diversity is maintained and even reinforced. This provides the opportunity for a range of residents and businesses to call Windham home.

We are a proud, dynamic town. We are a town where young families and seniors can find community and live healthy, fun and engaging lives. We are a growing, exciting community that still retains the qualities of a small town. We take care of each other and we respect and celebrate our heritage. We support our schools, local arts and cultural events and the community that they create. We want to continue to improve as a community, and be a place where we are proud to say “I live in Windham” or “My business is located in Windham.”

Windham continues to grow and develop but our development is balanced by the preservation of important open space and agricultural land to maintain the rural character of our Town and to provide scenic, recreational, and economic benefits for our residents.

### **A Tour through Windham in 2030**

While no one can foresee the specific property by property changes that will take place over a decade of continued growth, Our Vision for Windham can be translated down into images of what specific parts of Windham will become. Continued growth will bring change to all corners of Windham, but the pace of change and how much development occurs in specific areas will not be equal. Some parts of Windham will remain relatively unchanged over this time period, while others will see much more intensive development.

In that spirit, imagine that you have to temporarily move or go on a trip that takes you away from Windham for the next ten years or so. The Windham you return to will be very recognizable but you will also notice some significant changes. There has been ten years of population growth with the commensurate demand for new housing. There has been ten years of new commercial development around the community. The community has made targeted investments that have resulted in community and neighborhood improvements. Let’s start the tour!

North Windham continues the transformation that has already begun from a regional retail and convenience center to true town center with a mix of uses and activities that is a destination within the Greater Portland region. As the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Master Plan is implemented, North Windham evolves into a place where people chose to live, work and play due to improved traffic flow, the creation of pedestrian and bicycle networks, quality architecture and streetscapes, and open space. Activity in North Windham is bolstered as more homes and mixed-uses develop within the core commercial area.

Residents find a more diversified jobs center in North Windham. The diversification in jobs is led by the traditionally strong retail sector and supported by gains in manufacturing, restaurants, and professional offices. This growth as a job center is enabled by smart investments in infrastructure needed to support these activities.

South Windham attracts new village-scale residential growth by capitalizing on the neighborhood’s assets including a rebuilt River Road, the existing sewer system, improvements to Town-owned spaces (including streets), state improvements to the Mountain Division Trail, and access to the Presumpscot River. New single family homes on small lots and town-house style multifamily unit buildings are built next to and among the existing, upgraded and refurbished housing stock. New



residents support small, local businesses on Main Street. Cooperation with the Town of Gorham and the Little Falls community on the other side of the Presumpscot ensures that a revitalized South Windham melds with Little Falls as a single community.

If North Windham is the commercial core of Windham, then Windham Center is the civic core. Windham Center takes advantage of the location of school and municipal facilities, along with the Windham Land Trust's Black Brook Preserve, the skate park, and the Community Garden, to become a different type of "village" in the geographic center of the Town. This "civic village" focuses on increasing the number of single-and two-family homes on smaller lots, resulting in a neighborhood that is attractive to families with school-age children who want to live within walking distance of schools, the library, recreation facilities, playing fields, and conserved open-space.

Other existing residential neighborhoods (such as those in the Varney Mill Road area, the Cornerbrook and Brookhaven neighborhoods just off Roosevelt Trail, and the Timberhill and Evergreen neighborhoods along Park Road) are valued for their sense of community. The character of these areas remains essentially unchanged. These neighborhoods accommodate limited additional single family homes that fit the existing character of these neighborhoods, either within the neighborhoods as "infill" development or on adjacent parcels that are incorporated into the existing neighborhoods.

Rural areas of Windham are valued by the community for the recreational, scenic, cultural, and quality of life benefits they provide. The Town continues to recognize that agriculture and forestry are important pieces of the local economy and works to encourage and support new agricultural uses on the rural landscape. The community identifies the most important and scenic open spaces and undeveloped properties including agricultural land, and works with land owners and partners in the non-profit community to permanently protect these areas to proactively ensure that there will be conserved open space and productive working farmland available for future generations, and that the most scenic and iconic views of rural Windham are preserved.

### **Future Land Use Map**

Mapping out where growth and changes are desired and where they are not desired in a central component comprehensive planning. The Future Land Use Map is a graphic that shows the general areas of Windham that should be targeted for growth and those that are important to the community to keep at low development levels.

As noted earlier, change and development pressure will not be felt equally across the entire town. Part of that is based on market demands and partly by circumstance. Through this Plan, the Town will make certain that community character and cost to provide services will also factor into where future growth occurs.

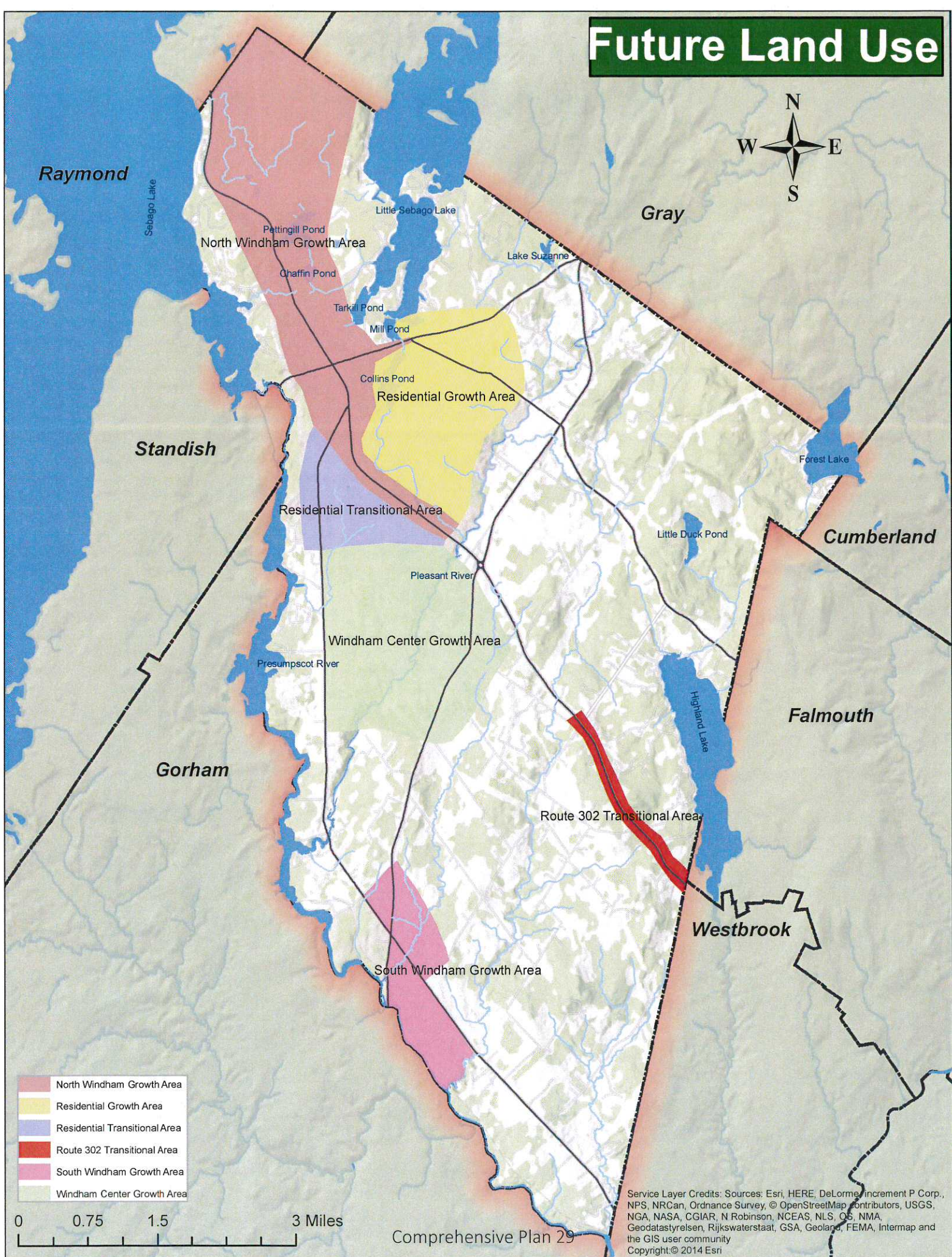
Growth Areas are the parts of the community where most of Windham's future growth is to be targeted and encouraged or incentivized. It is also where most of the investment in new community infrastructure and facilities should be located. Later in the Economy Chapter of the Plan, these are referred to as Activity Areas. On the other hand, Rural Areas are the places where future development

is to be directed away from. Transitional Areas are the places between the Growth and Rural Areas, where further development will not necessarily be encouraged or discouraged. Moderate growth is appropriate for these areas.

Another way to think about these areas might be that Growth Areas will have a relatively faster rate of change and that Rural Areas will have a relatively slower rate of change. Please see a description of the areas on the plan after the map on the following page.



# Future Land Use



- North Windham Growth Area
- Residential Growth Area
- Residential Transitional Area
- Route 302 Transitional Area
- South Windham Growth Area
- Windham Center Growth Area

0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles

Comprehensive Plan 29

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**North Windham Growth Area.** This area is envisioned to be the active mixed use district describe in the Tour through Windham section above. It includes the commercial center of Windham, which is what most people think of when they think of North Windham, but it also includes the area along Route 302 from north of the Pleasant River and the relatively undeveloped areas behind Enterprise Drive and the Sebago Heights Subdivision near the town line with Raymond.

**Residential Growth Area.** This area is generally bound by Route 115 (Tandberg Trail), Route 302 (Roosevelt Trail) and the Pleasant River. This area contains the established neighborhoods around Varney Mill Road. There are some wonderful open fields, forests and working lands, including North Star Sheep Farm within this area, and some of these areas are worthy of long term protection from development pressure. By and large, though, this area is an appropriate place to focus residential development within and around the existing built-up areas as well as some local-scale commercial development.

**Windham Center Growth Area.** The areas of town known as Windham Hill and Popeville are included in this area, which is generally located between River Road and Route 202 (Gray Road), north of Swett Road and south of the Rotary at Routes 302/202 and south of Otterbrook Drive off River Road. As noted above, this area serves as the civic core of the community and as such, more walkable, connected residential development should be encouraged in this area.

**South Windham Growth Area.** The South Windham Growth Area includes the area that most people think of as “the Village” between the Presumpscot River and the properties on both sides of the Mountain Division Trail, and down High Street to about Androscoggin Street. In addition, the Growth Area includes the additional areas between Route 202 (Gray Road) to Mallison Falls Road and the Correctional Center property on the west side of River Road and the areas between Newhall Road and Chute Road on the east side of River Road. Additional higher density residential development is appropriate in this area of Windham, especially in the areas in the vicinity of the existing sewer system. Local and village-scale commercial development should also be encouraged in this area.

**Residential Transition Area.** This area is sandwiched between the North Windham and Windham Center Growth Areas. It is currently characterized by low to moderate residential development, which is appropriate for this area for the planning horizon of this plan.

**Route 302 Transition Area.** This area is characterized by a mix of residential and commercial development lining Route 302 from the town line with Westbrook to about the Albion Road intersection. Maintaining traffic flow on Route 302 south of the Rotary is important, so this area is not an appropriate location to encourage or incentivize additional non-residential development or high-impact commercial businesses. Development at the current pace and intensity levels are appropriate for this planning period, but design standards should apply to all new development in this highly visible and highly traveled section of Route 302.



## **The 4 Big Things**

There are 39 goals laid out in the Inventory Chapters that follow, and 91 strategies to implement these goals. Many of these are required by Maine's Growth Management Act and associated departmental rules that lay out the State would like to see addressed in a municipal plan. The Goals and Strategies at the end of each of the Inventory Chapters are related to the specific topic of that chapter, so that Transportation goals are included in the Transportation Chapter, Public Facilities and Service goals are in the Public Facilities and Service Chapter, and so on.

Based on all the public comment we have received, we have tried to boil all of these goals and strategies to their most essential essence. The goal of this Plan is to present a manageable number high-priority, crosscutting challenges to meet over the next few years, rather than present a long and unprioritized laundry list of items to pick off over the next ten or more years. By moving the ball forward on these focused areas, the Town will be making progress on the most important issues Windham faces right now.

Each of the Big Things are high priority subject areas , meaning that they are not presented in prioritized list. They are all important, and the list is small enough that it should be possible to make progress on all of them at the same time. Each also is listed with Goals and Strategies from the various Inventory Chapters they touch on.

With these aims in mind, here are the Big 4 things that the Town Council and community at large need to work together on in the short term, along with graphics that represent the Core Values addressed by making progress on each one:

### **Big Thing #1 – Change the game for Windham's Growth Areas: North Windham, Windham Center, South Windham**

Windham needs to begin thoughtfully and proactively laying the groundwork for these three traditional activity centers to become true centers for Windham. As envisioned above, these three areas are very unique within Windham, and these differences are great strengths that allow for different types and scales of neighborhood development that will truly make Windham a community for all people, ages, and economic means. This Big Thing is all about expanding the range of options available for people to choose from when considering Windham for a home or a place to start or expand a business.

- Transportation Goal 1.d and Economy Goal 2.f – Create Windham Center and South Windham district plans that focus on transportation and land use. This would be similar in concept to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan for North Windham, but appropriately scaled to the context for each area.
- Future Land Use Plan Goals 5.a and 3.a and Public Facilities & Services Goal 2.d – Support a financial commitment to infrastructure in Growth Areas, with a goal of having 75% of all new Town infrastructure and facility investment occurring in Growth Areas.

- Public Facilities & Services Goal 2.c – Establish a water and sewer extension policy that will ultimately serve the Town’s designated growth areas with this infrastructure that will actually allow higher densities and more intense uses of property where it is desired.
- Economy Goal 3.2.d – Focus on implementing plans that support economic development and create a true sense of place in North Windham, Windham Center and South Windham.
- Public Facilities & Services Goal s

## **Big Thing #2 – Create a North Windham to be proud of**

North Windham is the economic and social center for the community. Here you will find two major supermarkets, almost all of the restaurants, clubs and social organizations in the community, multiple department stores and almost all of the smaller scale retail uses, the movie theatre, building supply and hardware stores, an amusement park and more. Most in the community feel that we should be building on North Windham’s success to ensure that it is successful economic and social center for future generations to come.

In order to inspire pride of place and transform North Windham from a major convenience retail center to a place where people choose to spend time, play and recreate, work and live, improvements and investments need to be made. These upgrades include changes to North Windham’s transportation network, installation of new infrastructure for wastewater treatment and high speed broadband internet services and doing our best to ensure that when new development or redevelopment is proposed, sites are designed to become high-quality assets to the community.

- Economy Goal 2.e, Transportation Goals 1.a, 1.b, 1.c, 2.b – Implement the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan in a manner that creates a true town center, improves the transportation system, promotes public health and enhances livability.
- Public Facilities & Services Goal 1.a.1 – Continue to work with Raymond and St. Joseph’s College on the provision of fiber optic broadband availability to the North Windham commercial area as a first step, with future expansion to other areas of the community as a possibility.
- Housing Goal 2.a – Enact growth area land use regulations to increase density to encourage the development of affordable/workforce housing.

## **Big Thing #3 – Invest in Rural Windham to keep it rural**

Preservation of rural character and protecting important open spaces and scenic views has been enshrined in all of Windham’s past Comprehensive Plans. These are the places that tie long-time residents to the land, places where traditional outdoor recreational activities and access have been available for many decades, working land that has been passed down through generations, and are the very places that have made Windham an attractive location for new families in the greater Portland area since at least the 1970s. There is also an understanding among many community members that rural land has a much lower demand for municipal services than house lots or commercial development and therefore keeping rural spaces in the town can be a way to avoid the costs of new or expanded municipal services.



We need to get serious about open space and preserving working land within the time horizon of this plan or there will be little left to preserve and protect going forward. Getting serious about Rural Windham means making investments to purchase outright, or at least the develop rights, to the most special and iconic rural land in the community, knowing that it is not practical to keep all of the undeveloped land in Windham in its current undeveloped state. Getting serious also means working with farmers, wood lot owners, and others who earn their living from the land to make it easier to establish other rural uses and accessory uses to provide additional income streams to their operations. When rural land is productive and profitable, it is much easier to perpetuate into the future.

- Recreation Goal 2.a, 2.b – Identify land for preservation and work with the land trust and other conservation organizations to pursue opportunities to protect important open space and recreational lands.
- Recreation Goal 5.b – Establish a program for the preservation of land important to the people of Windham, similar to the state Land for Maine's Future program, which receives funds from the Town every budget cycle.
- Water & Natural Resources Goal 7.n – Pursue public/private partnerships to protect critical and important natural resources such as through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.
- Agriculture & Forestry Goal 2.a – Permit land use activities that support productive agriculture and forestry operations, such as roadside stands, greenhouses, firewood operations, sawmills, log buying yards and pick-your-own operations.

#### **Big Thing #4 – Focus on Community Facilities and Programs**

There are really two components to this Big Thing. The first is prioritizing the basic maintenance of existing facilities, which include roads, municipal and school buildings, and park and recreation lands. Windham is currently building a new larger South Windham Fire Station from an existing steel building in South Windham Village. This is the first new municipal facility since 1989, almost 30 years ago. The Town faces a backlog of deferred maintenance on many of the Town's buildings and there are many efficiency related improvements that could pay for themselves in 5-10 years but need to be budgeted for. The Town's roads are in relatively good shape, and the Public Works Department is flat out every construction season milling and paving local roads and conducting ditching and mowing operations around the community. It is imperative that Windham keep up on local road maintenance which costs a fraction of complete road rebuilds when maintenance is deferred too long.

Secondly, the Town needs to address the needs of a growing community from the standpoints of athletic facilities and community center space. The Town recently sold the Gambo Road Soccer Fields to the Windham Youth Soccer Association. This leaves the community with the Falmouth Road Little League Field as the only municipally owned playing field. The rest of the playing fields in Windham are on school district properties. There are public playgrounds at the Primary School and Town Office properties in Windham Center and at the Manchester School and Donnabeth Lippman Park in North Windham. The community needs to invest more in recreational space for organized youth and adult sports. There is a similar shortage of indoor recreational facilities, along with a shortage of community meeting and flex space for senior, youth, and general community activities and events. It has been

suggested several times in recent years that a Community Center could serve many purposes in Windham, and data from the Community Survey indicates support for the concept. All of these needs are the result of sustained residential growth, and all indications are that Windham will remain on a growth path for at least the remainder of this planning period.

## **Plan Implementation**

The success of a plan is measured in how well it is implemented. Many comments were heard during the Visioning process that had to do with follow through on planning efforts. Comments similar to “Why are we doing a whole new plan when we still have so many items from the last plan that haven’t been done yet?” or “Why bother planning for improvements/facilities/infrastructure when we know we can’t afford to pay for them?” or “Why go through effort of planning only to produce another document that will sit on the shelf for 10 years?”

This Plan is not meant to be a document on a shelf. This Plan is a tool for community decision makers to use for making progress in the areas Action Plan that will have the biggest positive impacts for Windham’s current and future residents.

The Comprehensive Plan Review Team recommends that the Town Council adopt a charge for and appoint members to a Long Range Planning Committee. A charge for this group should include coordinating the implementation of the Big Ideas, implementing other Town plans and policies, such as the Complete Streets Policy adopted in 2015 and recommendations from the Energy Plan adopted in 2011. This group should be tasked with preparation of any of the district or topical plans or studies called for in this Comprehensive Plan. Finally, the Long Range Planning Committee should be responsible for updating and reporting on the performance measures below.

## **Performance Measures**

Of course, this document includes many policy goals and suggested strategies that will allow the town to make progress toward each of those goals. What we should care about, though, and what we want to measure, are the things that the community told us they care about. We want to be able to show progress in areas that are most relevant to the people of Windham. Each of the numbered sections below corresponds to one of the Core Values identified through the visioning process and detailed in the Vision and Core Values section above.

These performance measures are suggested starting points, and should be updated and reported out to the Town Council and community on an annual basis.

1. Preserve important open spaces, forested lands and working farms
  - a. Number of acres of land protected through the acquisition of development rights, conservation easements or Town gift/purchase.
  - b. % new dwelling units permitted in growth areas relative to rural areas
2. Increase Windham’s role in the regional economy and increase and diversify the jobs available in Windham.
  - a. Total number of jobs in Windham.



- b. Ratio of the number of retail jobs relative to the total number of jobs in Windham
- 3. Preserve and improve accessibility and connections to local and regional destinations
  - a. Feet of new sidewalk constructed in Growth Areas
  - b. Ridership on Lakes Region Explorer
- 4. Make smart, targeted investments in infrastructure to shape future growth and improve municipal services
  - a. % of infrastructure funds spent in growth areas
  - b. Number of residential and non-residential connections to a public sewer system.
- 5. Windham should continue to be a community for people of all ages and economic means
  - a. Number of age-restricted dwelling units permitted as a percent of total dwelling units
  - b. Number of multiunit dwellings built relative to single family homes
  - c. Number of accessory dwelling units permitted
- 6. Celebrate community and connections to Windham's past
  - a. Estimated number of attendees at community events like Summerfest and the Tree Lighting.
  - b. Number of attendees at Windham Historical Society events.
  - c. Number of Windham youth sports participants
  - d. Estimated number of library patrons or number of items checked out.

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### **Future Comprehensive Plan Updates**

The Long Range Planning Committee should be charged with annual reporting on the performance measures suggested above, as well as adding to or changing the performance measures to improve how progress implementing the plan is moving forward.

The Plan should also be updated on a regular basis, perhaps every three years to five years or so, to keep the information in the inventory chapters current and to add or change to the Big Ideas as they are implemented or priorities change or new opportunities present themselves.

Going back out to the community for structured input in the form of surveys and visioning sessions is also recommended, though the Community Values and Vision should be considered to be more constant than the underlying technical information in the Inventory Chapters. As such, the community might not need to update that portion of the plan for a longer time period.

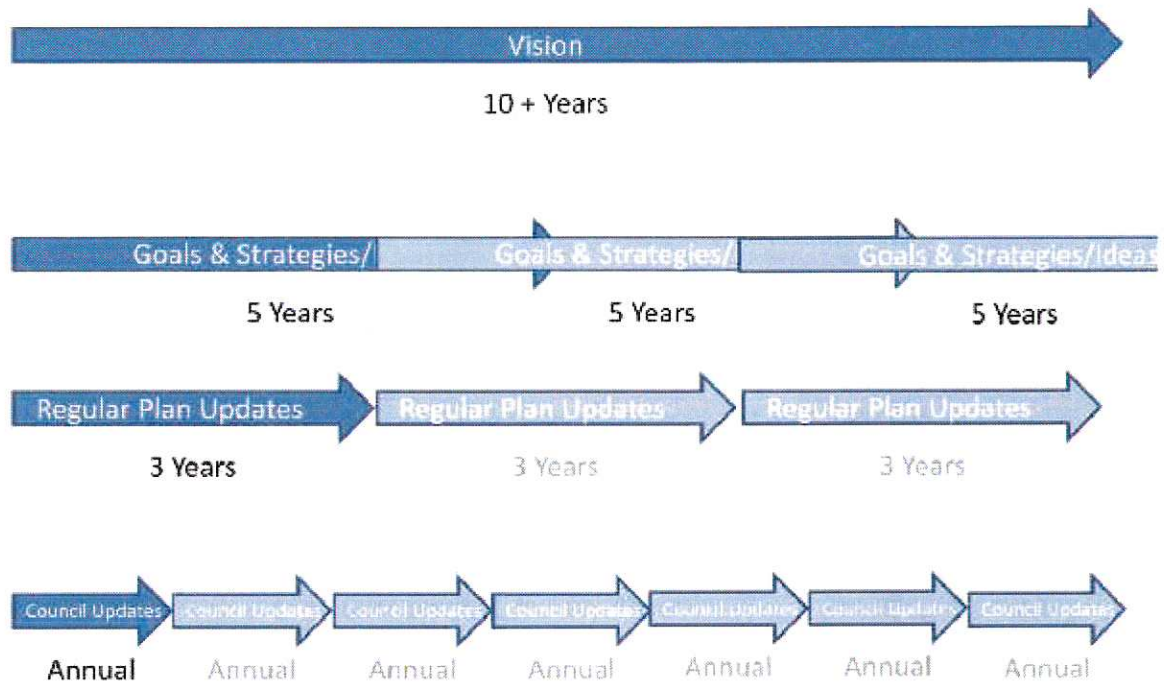


Figure 1 - Recommended Update Schedule



**Goals and Policies  
by Inventory Chapter**

High Priority = undertake project in 1-2 years  
Lower Priority = undertake project in 3+ years  
Ongoing = Change in practice or process

					Priority	Responsibility of Implementation
<b>Future Land Use Plan</b>						
				1 To coordinate the community's land use strategies with other local and regional land use planning efforts.		
		1.a		Meet with neighboring communities to coordinate land use designations and regulatory and non-regulatory strategies.	High	Staff
				2 To support the locations, types, scales, and intensities of land uses the community desires as stated in its vision.		
		2.a		Assign responsibility for implementing the Future Land Use Plan to the appropriate committee, board or municipal official.	High	Town Council, Long Range Planning Committee
		2.b		Using the descriptions provided in the Future Land Use Plan narrative, maintain, enact or amend local ordinances as appropriate to: a. Clearly define the desired scale, intensity, and location of future development; b. Establish or maintain fair and efficient permitting procedures, and explore streamlining permitting procedures in growth areas; and c. Clearly define protective measures for critical natural resources and, where applicable, important natural resources. d. Clearly define protective measures for any proposed critical rural areas and/or critical waterfront areas, if proposed.	High	Long Range Planning Committee
		2.c		Track new development in the community by type and location.	High	Long Range Planning Committee, Staff
		2d		Periodically (at least every five years) evaluate implementation of the plan in accordance with Section 2.7.	High	Long Range Planning Committee, Staff
				3 To support the level of financial commitment necessary to provide needed infrastructure in growth areas.		
		3.a		Include in the Capital Investment Plan anticipated municipal capital investments needed to support proposed land uses.	High	Town Council, Long Range Planning Committee
				4 To establish efficient permitting procedures, especially in growth areas.		
		4.a		Provide the code enforcement officer with the tools, training, and support necessary to enforce land use regulations, and ensure that the Code Enforcement Officer is certified in accordance with 30-A M.R.S.A. §4451.	Ongoing	Town Council
				5 To protect critical rural and critical waterfront areas from the impacts of development.		
		5.a		Direct a minimum of 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments into designated growth areas identified in the Future Land Use Plan.	Ongoing	Town Council



Historical & Archaeological Resources						
				1 Protect to the greatest extent practicable the significant historic and archaeological resources in the community.		
			1.a	For known historic archeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archeology, through local land use ordinances require subdivision or non-residential developers to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.	Ongoing	Staff
			1.b	Adopt or amend land use ordinances to require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process.	Ongoing	Staff
			1.c	Work with the local or county historical society and/or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for, and if necessary plan for, a comprehensive community survey of the community's historic and archaeological resources.	Ongoing	Staff
				2 Identify and build public awareness of Windham's most significant historical resources and structures.		
			2.a	Work with the Windham Historical Society to complete the historic building and site inventory started by the Society.	Lower	Town Council, Staff
			2.b	Use the mapping provided by the MHPC showing potential prehistoric archeological resources as the basis for a professional survey of the highlighted areas.	Lower	Staff
			2.c	Identify historic resources with signage at the street. According to members of the Historical Society, there were signs installed by the Town to identify between 30-40 historic sites and buildings many decades ago. Over the years, this signage has not been maintained or gone missing for all but a few locations.	High	Town Council, Staff
				3 Protect Windham's most significant historic resources and structures.		
			3.a	Work with the Windham Historical Society, land trusts and private property owners to permanently protect significant historic buildings and sites through acquisition or listing in the National Register of Historic Places.	Lower	Town Council, Staff
			3.b	Re-establish the Historic Preservation Commission in order to update and implement the Historic Preservation Ordinance.	Lower	Town Council, Staff
Water & Natural Resources						
				1 To protect current and potential drinking water sources		
				2 To protect significant surface water resources from pollution and improve water quality where needed.		
				3 To protect water resources in growth areas while promoting more intensive development in those areas.		



				4 To minimize pollution discharges through the upgrade of existing public sewer systems and wastewater treatment facilities.		
				5 To cooperate with neighboring communities and regional/local advocacy groups to protect water resources.		
				6 To conserve critical natural resources in the community.		
				7 To coordinate with neighboring communities and regional and state resource agencies to protect shared critical natural resources.		
			7.a	Adopt or amend local land use ordinances as applicable to incorporate stormwater runoff performance standards consistent with:		
				i. Maine Stormwater Management Law and Maine Stormwater Regulations (Title 38 MSRA 420-D and 06-096 CMR 500 and 502).	Ongoing	Staff
				ii. MaineDEP allocations for allowable levels of phosphorous in Lake/Pond watersheds.	Ongoing	Staff
				iii. Maine Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program	Ongoing	Staff
			7.b	Consider amending local land use ordinances, as applicable, to incorporate low impact development standards.	High	Staff
			7.c	Where applicable, develop an urban impaired stream watershed management or mitigation plan that will promote continued development or redevelopment without further stream degradation.	N/A	N/A
			7.d	Maintain, enact or amend public wellhead and aquifer recharge area protection mechanisms, as necessary.	High	Town Council, Staff
			7.e	Encourage landowners to protect water quality. Provide local contact information at the municipal office for water quality best management practices from resources such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service, University of Maine Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation District, Maine Forest Service, and/or Small Woodlot Association of Maine.	Ongoing	Staff
			7.f	Adopt water quality protection practices and standards for construction and maintenance of public and private roads and public properties and require their implementation by contractors, owners, and community officials and employees.	Ongoing	Staff
			7.g	Participate in local and regional efforts to monitor, protect and, where warranted, improve water quality.	Ongoing	Staff
			7.h	Provide educational materials at appropriate locations regarding aquatic invasive species.	Lower	Staff
			7.i	Ensure that land use ordinances are consistent with applicable state law regarding critical natural resources.	High	Staff
			7.j	Designate critical natural resources as Critical Resource Areas in the Future Land Use Plan.	Lower	Staff

			7.k	Through local land use ordinances, require subdivision or non-residential property developers to look for and identify critical natural resources that may be on site and to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.	Ongoing	Staff
			7.l	Through local land use ordinances, require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to include as part of the review process, consideration of pertinent BwH maps and information regarding critical natural resources.	Ongoing	Staff
			7.m	Initiate and/or participate in interlocal and/or regional planning, management, and/or regulatory efforts around shared critical and important natural resources.	Ongoing	Staff
			7.n	Pursue public/private partnerships to protect critical and important natural resources such as through purchase of land or easements from willing sellers.	High	Town Council, Long Range Planning Committee, Staff
			7.o	Distribute or make available information to those living in or near critical or important natural resources about current use tax programs and applicable local, state, or federal regulations.	Ongoing	Staff
<b>Agriculture &amp; Forestry</b>						
1 To safeguard lands identified as prime farmland or capable of supporting commercial forestry.						
			1.a	Consult with the Maine Forest Service district forester when developing any land use regulations pertaining to forest management practices as required by 12 M.R.S.A. §8869.	Ongoing	Staff
			1.b	Consult with Soil and Water Conservation District staff when developing any land use regulations pertaining to agricultural management practices.	Ongoing	Staff
			1.c	Amend land use ordinances to require commercial or subdivision developments in critical rural areas, if applicable, maintain areas with prime farmland soils as open space to the greatest extent practicable.	N/A	N/A
			1.d	Limit non-residential development in critical rural areas (if the town designates critical rural areas) to natural resource-based businesses and services, nature tourism/outdoor recreation businesses, farmers' markets, and home occupations.	N/A	N/A
			1.e	Create an Open Space Plan for the Town that identifies the most important working farms forest lands in Windham. Properties identified should be targeted for preservation of productive capacity.	High	Long Range Planning Committee



				2 To support farming and forestry and encourage their economic viability.		
			2.a	Permit land use activities that support productive agriculture and forestry operations, such as roadside stands, greenhouses, firewood operations, sawmills, log buying yards, and pick-your-own operations.	Ongoing	Staff
			2.b	Include agriculture, commercial forestry operations, and land conservation that supports them in local or regional economic development plans.	Ongoing	Staff
				3 To establish programs that incentivize keeping farms and forest lands in production.		
			3.a	Create a program that is funded annually to create and build-up a source of funding for the purchase of development rights or of land as opportunities present themselves to the community. This fund could be used as matching funds when working grant money or funding sources from other organizations.	High	Town Council
			3.b	Encourage owners of productive farm and forest land to enroll in the current use taxation program	Ongoing	Staff
				<b>Economy</b>		
				1 To support the type of economic development activity the community desires, reflecting the community's role in the region.		
			1.a	Enact or amend local ordinances to reflect the desired scale, design, intensity and location of future economic development.	High	Long Range Planning Committee
			1.b	Continue to implement the Town's Economic Development Strategic Plan, and update this plan every 5 years.	Ongoing	Town Council, Windham Economic Development Corporation
				2 To make a financial commitment to support desired economic development, including needed public improvements		
			2.a	Assign responsibility and provide financial support for economic development activities to the Windham Economic Development Corporation.	Ongoing	Town Council
			2.b	Identify the mechanisms to be considered to finance public investments that support economic development (local tax dollars, creating a tax increment financing district, a Community Development Block Grant or other grants, bonding, impact fees, development districts, etc.)	Ongoing	Town Council, Staff
			2.c	Develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that includes infrastructure projects in order to prioritize needed investments, allows the Town to incorporate local improvements with outside agency projects, (including MaineDOT, Portland Water District) and plan for required funding needs over time.	High	Town Council, Staff
			2.d	Focus on implementing existing and future plans that support economic development and create a true sense of place in North Windham, Windham Center and South Windham.	High	Town Council, Long Range Planning Committee, Staff

		2.e	Implement the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Plan in a manner that creates a true town center.	High	Town Council, Staff
		2.f	Develop neighborhood or district plans for Windham Center and South Windham.	Lower	Long Range Planning Committee
		3 To coordinate with regional development corporations and surrounding towns as necessary to support desired economic development.			
		3.a	Participate in any regional economic development planning efforts.	Ongoing	Windham Economic Development Corporation, Staff
		<b>Housing</b>			
		1 To encourage and promote adequate workforce housing to support the community's and region's economic development.			
		1.a	Seek to achieve a level of at least 10% of new residential development built or placed during the next decade be affordable.	Lower	Town Council, Staff
		2 To ensure that land use controls encourage the development of quality affordable housing, including rental housing			
		2.a	Maintain, enact or amend growth area land use regulations to increase density, decrease lot size, setbacks and road width or provide incentives such as density bonuses to encourage the development of affordable/workforce housing.	High	Town Council, Long Range Planning Committee, Staff
		2.b	Maintain, enact or amend ordinances to allow the addition of at least one accessory apartment per dwelling unit in growth areas, subject to site suitability.	Ongoing	Town Council, Staff
		2.c	Designate a location(s) in growth areas where mobile home parks are allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358(3)(M) and where manufactured housing is allowed pursuant to 30-A M.R.S.A. §4358(2).	Ongoing	Town Council, Staff
		3 To encourage and support the efforts of the regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs			
		3.a	Create or continue to support a community affordable/workforce housing committee or regional affordable housing coalition.	Lower	Staff
		3.b	Support the efforts of local and regional housing coalitions in addressing affordable and workforce housing needs.	Ongoing	Staff
		<b>Recreation, Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			
		1 To maintain/upgrade existing recreational facilities as necessary to meet current and future needs.			
		1.a	Develop a Recreation and Open Space plan to meet current and future needs. Assign a committee or community official to explore ways of addressing the identified needs and/or implementing the policies and strategies outlined in the plan.	High	Long Range Planning Committee



			1.b	Work with public and private partners to extend and maintain a network of trails for motorized and non-motorized uses. Connect with regional trail systems where possible.	Ongoing	Staff, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
			1.c	Prioritize the build-out of Donnabeth Lippman Park per the Master Plan.	High	Staff, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
			2 To preserve Open Space for Recreational use as appropriate.			
			2.a	Identifying land for preservation should be included as part of the recreation and open space plan suggested in Strategy 1.1.	High	Long Range Planning Committee
			2.b	Work with an existing local land trust or other conservation organizations to pursue opportunities to protect important open space or recreational land.	High	Staff, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
			2.c	Provide educational materials regarding the benefits and protections for landowners allowing public recreational access on their property. At a minimum this will include information on Maine's landowner liability law regarding recreational or harvesting use, Title 14, M.R.S.A. §159-A.	High	Staff, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
			3 To seek to achieve or continue to maintain at least one major point of public access to major water bodies for boating, fishing and swimming and work with nearby property owners to address concerns.			
			3.a	Use the list of water bodies identified in the "Water Access Needs" section of this chapter as a starting point to prioritize proactive Town efforts related to additional public access .	Lower	Long Range Planning Committee
			3.b	Work with land trusts, lake associations, and landowners to establish new access points to Windham's lakes and ponds.	Ongoing	Staff, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
			4 Build new facilities to serve an expanding demand and a growing population.			
			4.a	Build a Community/Recreation Center. Note that the effort required to determine the size, services, and facilities of such a Center may or may not be part of a Recreation and Open Space Plan.	High	Town Council
			4.b	Identify and obtain land in order to build an Outdoor Field complex as part of a Recreation and Open Space Plan.	High	Town Council
			4.c	Build more playgrounds within walking distance of existing neighborhoods. This can be implemented through the subdivision process, or through the Recreation Capital Plan for properties identified in a Recreation and Open Space Plan.	Ongoing	Staff, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
			5 Preserve open spaces, forests, and agricultural lands important to the residents of Windham			

			5.a	Develop a Recreation and Open Space Plan to further detail and prioritize recreation needs and to create a framework for evaluating land to be preserved for environmental, scenic, cultural/historic, or agricultural and forestry purposes..	High	Long Range Planning Committee
			5.b	Establish a program for the preservation of land important to the people of Windham, similar to the state's Land for Maine's Future program, in order to contribute to the conservation of high priority conservation lands, establish points for public access to water and preserve agricultural land. This program should receive funds from the Town every budget cycle.	High	Town Council
			5.c	Maximize property tax reduction programs to the full extent allowed by state law to encourage and incentivize the private provision of open space, forested lands, and agricultural operations.	Ongoing	Town Council
<b>Transportation</b>						
			1 To safely and efficiently preserve or improve the transportation system.			
			1.a	Implement recommendations from 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Plan including raised medians with either landscaping or a stamped pattern where feasible to improve traffic and vehicle movement and provide refuge space for pedestrians. These medians also assist with traffic calming and improve the aesthetic quality of the area.	High	Town Council, Staff
			1.b	Implement recommendations from the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Plan to encourage the buildout of a local street network in North Windham in order to encourage more walking between homes and businesses in the area and to allow more vehicular trips to take place without having to use the existing Routes 302, 115 or 35.	High	Town Council, Staff
			1.c	Work with local businesses and property owners to modify driveway locations that are unsafe or unnecessarily contribute vehicle turning movements in the corridor.	High	Town Council, Staff
			1.d	Additional planning for the Windham Center and South Windham Village areas should be undertaken using an approach that considers future land use goals, similar to the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Plan for North Windham.	Lower	Long Range Planning Committee



		1.e	Maintain, enact, or amend local ordinances as appropriate to address or avoid conflicts with the policy objective of the Sensible Transportation Act (23 M.R.S.A Sec. 73), state access management regulation pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A Sec. 704, and state traffic permitting regulations for large developments pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. Sec. 704-A.	Ongoing	Town Council, Staff
		1.f	Maintain, enact or amend ordinance standards for subdivisions and for public and private roads as appropriate to foster transportation-efficient growth patterns and provide for future street and transit connections.	Ongoing	Town Council, Staff
		2 To promote public health, protect natural and cultural resources, and enhance livability by managing land use in ways that maximize the efficiency of the transportation system and minimize increases in vehicle miles traveled.			
		2.a	Develop a Town-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to address issues presented in the built-up and more rural parts of Windham. This plan should view the transportation system benefits and recreational benefits of walking and bicycling.	Lower	Long Range Planning Committee
		2.b	Sidewalks should be constructed on both sides of Roosevelt Trail/Route 302 and along Tandberg Trail/Route 35.	High	Town Council, Staff
		2.c	Amend ordinances to require the construction of sidewalks or the equivalent impact fee for all new roads constructed or reconstructed in Growth Areas. Sidewalks should be provided on both sides and crosswalks should be installed at all intersection locations.	High	Town Council, Staff
		2.d	Continue support of Bicycle Pedestrian ACE group working with GPCOG and Bicycle Coalition of Maine.	Lower	Staff
		2.e	Upgrade existing signalized intersections with crosswalks, ADA ramps, and pedestrian signals so that pedestrians can cross all approaches.	High	Town Council, Staff
		3 To prioritize community and regional needs associated with safe, efficient, and optimal use of transportation systems.			
		3.a			
		3.b	Continue to participate on regional planning projects and coordination with PACTS and the Greater Portland Council of Governments.	Ongoing	Staff
		3.c	Identify high-crash locations outside of the planning areas associated with the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Plan and the Route 302 North Plan, and proactively coordinate with MaineDOT or PACTS on addressing the most serious safety issues.	High	Staff
		4 To meet the diverse transportation needs of residents (including children, the elderly and disabled) and through travelers by promoting a safe, efficient, and adequate transportation network for all types of users (motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists).			
		4.a	Develop procedures to implement the Complete Streets Policy adopted by the Town Council in 2014.	High	Staff

				5 Address the challenge that continued development along private roads presents to the provision of Town services for residents who live on these roads.		
				<b>Public Facilities &amp; Services</b>		
				1 To efficiently meet identified public facility and service needs.		
			1.a	Explore options for regional delivery of local services.	Ongoing	Town Council, Staff
			1.b	Continue to work with Raymond and St. Joseph's College on the provision of fiber optic broadband availability to the North Windham commercial area as a first step, with future expansion to other areas of the community as a possibility.	Ongoing	Windham Economic Development Corporation, Town Council
				2 To provide public facilities and services in a manner that promotes and supports growth and development in identified growth areas.		
			2.a	Identify any capital improvements needed to maintain or upgrade public services to accommodate the community's anticipated growth and changing demographics.	Ongoing	Town Council, Staff
			2.b	Continue work to develop a wastewater system for North Windham that will allow the Town to meet its environmental, economic, and community development goals that will be financially acceptable to residents of the whole community.	High	Town Council, Staff
			2.c	Establish a water and sewer extension policy will ultimately serve the Town's designated growth areas with this infrastructure that will actually allow higher densities and more intense uses of property where it is desired.	High	Town Council, Staff
			2.d	Locate new public facilities comprising at least 75% of new municipal growth-related capital investments in designated growth areas.	Ongoing	Town Council, Staff
			2.e	Encourage local sewer and water districts to coordinate planned service extensions with the Future Land Use Plan.	Ongoing	Staff
				<b>Capital Improvement &amp; Fiscal Capacity</b>		
				1 To finance existing and future facilities and services in a cost effective manner.		
			1.a	Explore opportunities to work with neighboring communities to plan for and finance shared or adjacent capital investments to increase cost savings and efficiencies.	Ongoing	Town Council, Staff
				2 To explore grants available to assist in the funding of capital investments within the community.		
				3 To reduce Maine's tax burden by staying within LD 1 spending limitations.		