



Phase I of the Comprehensive Community Plan for the Town of Acton is complete.

April 2009

And it couldn't have happened without you!

People in Acton Think -

Our Most Important Assets are:

- Schools
- Open Space (including conservation land, natural features)
- Historic Buildings/Landscapes
- Town Character (including rural and historic characteristics)

Also: sense of community, easy access/location, commuter rail, small town feel

Our Priority Challenges are:

- Need to control growth and development
- Need to plan for sustainable future
- High cost of living (including taxes)
- Traffic
- Lack of transportation options (including walking/biking)

Also: lack of adequate opportunities for casual social interaction, town government organizational issues, erosion of town character

The above summarizes key findings of Acton's citizen outreach, or Phase I, the first step in a process to create our new Comprehensive Community Plan. A great deal more information about this study, including statistical analyses, is available online and at our libraries, please see reverse side for addresses.

Over 2,000 Actonians participated in a six-month long process in 2008 to begin to develop a vision for the Town's future. Residents, business owners, and town staff attended visioning workshops, sent in surveys, and filled up comment boards with their ideas.

We thank all of you for the time, energy and enthusiasm you put into this project. It is the largest the Town has ever undertaken of this kind and a vital step in a strong master planning process. It's clear people care passionately about Acton and are eager to guide it to a successful future.

What else did we learn? Actonians expressed a sense of urgency about protecting what they felt was special and unique about the Town as well as about addressing its challenges. Some participants went so far as to say that Acton is at "a tipping point" and worry that it is overextended, the Town's future threatened. Many called for more deliberate control of growth and development and for sustainable planning in the future. Interestingly, while many citizens commented on issues of immediate and personal concern (schools, high

taxes, and open space), they also voiced an undercurrent of civic responsibility throughout, expressing concern for the welfare of others including seniors and newcomers.

There was consensus around the need to protect the town's most important assets. These include the schools, open space, historic buildings/landscapes and "town character." Further elaboration of how to do this and what, for example, "town character" might mean in the 21st century will happen in Phase II of the master plan; yes, there will be two more phases! **In Phase II**, this year and next, we will develop an action plan that takes into account fiscal realities and looks at different scenarios and ways to get there. **In Phase III**, we'll put everything together, may recommend specific zoning changes and/or broader town management changes and come back to Town Meeting for final approval.

And again, we look forward to your continued enthusiastic involvement and participation.

An emerging vision for Acton:

Stay Involved -

Look for the invitation to participate in the next phase.

- Maintain the excellent schools without compromising municipal service, in a manner that is fiscally responsible and accountable;
- Pro-actively manage growth and development so that our Town's characteristics that are broadly accepted as Acton's best are not lost. These characteristics include:
 - Historic town villages
 - Open space
 - A New England architecture with trees and historic stone walls
- Provide connections, such as sidewalks and paths, and places for connections to occur, such as community centers, cultural venues, and farmers' markets;
- Keep town government inclusive and transparent;
- Involve everyone no matter their age, ethnic background, social or economic status;
- Always encourage consensus building.

This summary is the result of a collaborative effort between:

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and the citizens of Acton

More Information:

All documentation for Phase I of the 2008 Comprehensive Community Plan is available at the **Acton Memorial Library** (486 Main St, 978.264.9641) and the **Citizens' Library** in West Acton (21 Windsor Ave, 978.264.9652). These documents include the Emerging Vision and Goals for Acton's Future and an Appendix containing the raw data.

Documentation is also available online at:
www.ActonOutreach.com

Questions, comments, and ideas about anything presented here are welcomed at:
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