

REVISED Goals and Objectives: DRAFT #2 FOR REVIEW

The following are the goals and objectives that will form the foundation for the action plan of the Acton 2020 Comprehensive Community Plan. The goals and objectives were initially developed in Phase I of the process.¹ These were subsequently revised as a result of resident input solicited at a public workshop held on October 20, 2010.

Goals and Objectives: Process

1. DRAFT 1: Document public input, compile ideas, add input from October 20th workshop to Phase I input. Refine, amplify, confirm, validate Phase I goals and objectives, document public ideas regarding strategies.
2. DRAFT 2: Committee/Consultant/Staff Refine Goals and Objectives (as a result of reviewing #1)
3. DRAFT 3: Add strategies back in
 - At appropriate locations / under most relevant objective(s)
 - Remove redundant and/or irrelevant strategies (e.g. strategy suggested to address specific issue not relevant OR policy is already in place, but consider why individual contributed the specific strategy – is it not implemented enough? Could it be improved? Is there a need to raise awareness regarding the policy and/or related issues?)
 - Add desirable strategies currently missing
 - Reword if necessary for clarity
4. DRAFT 4: Begin Evaluating Strategies
 - Identify strategies with a possible lack of consensus and/or political sensitivity
 - Review for feasibility
 - Begin prioritization
 - Check for public support/opposition/consensus
 - Public workshop
 - Survey

Additional Comments from Committee

Is there a way to identify overlapping/repeating strategies?
Explain reasoning /underlying need for strategies

¹ In early 2008, nearly two thousand Acton residents and business owners participated in a six-month long process, which culminated in developing an Emerging Vision and Goals for the Town's future. A concerted effort was made to reach out to a broad range of participants and to include diverse points of view in the community discussion.

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NOTE TO THE ACTON 2020 COMMITTEE: The changes that reflect the input from the October 20 public workshop are indicated in yellow highlight (to be removed as we move forward). Thoughts regarding strategies for meeting the goals and objectives are listed under the heading “Ideas for Strategies”². Ideas regarding strategies documented in Phase I are in regular (non-italic) font. These are followed by any additional thoughts contributed at the October 20 public workshop that are listed in *italics*.

STRATEGIES

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BLUE SHADING MEANS:

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Politically sensitive, , may lack town consensus, and/or may not be a feasible idea

GREEN SHADING MEANS

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This suggestion is already underway

PURPLE SHADING MEANS

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Idea not relevant and/or needs clarification

Need to reorganize strategies originally under:

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- Sustainability
- Recreation (Town Assets)
- Economic Development (Town Assets)

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² In some cases these are interpretations by the Consultant of statements made by participants. This list of “Ideas” will be the starting point for developing a complete action point. It will be reviewed and further refined by the Acton 2020 Committee, the Consultant Team, and Town Staff.

Preserve Town Character

GOAL: We feel strongly about preserving and enhancing what makes Acton special and unique, including its rural and historic characteristics and its village centers.

Objective: Preserve Rural and Historic Characteristics

Objective: Preserve and Enhance Village Centers

Plan for Sustainability

GOAL: Increase Awareness Regarding the Need to Plan for Sustainability, ~~continue current efforts at being mindful of sustainability issues, and develop a plan to proactively address our future sustainability.~~

We value taking responsibility for our actions and planning for the future. We are mindful of our actions today because we are considerate of future generations living tomorrow.

~~As Acton residents, we recognize that our health and well-being depend on protecting the web of life of which we are a part. Therefore, it is vital that we live and work here in a manner that supports that web and the well-being of people everywhere, including future Actonians.~~

~~Objective: Increase Awareness Regarding the Need to Plan for Sustainability~~

~~Ideas for Strategies~~

~~Objective: Continue current sustainability efforts and develop a plan and action steps to proactively address issues of sustainability~~

~~Objective: To protect the quality and quantity of the water in our watershed.~~

~~Objective: To move toward a sustainable material economy in which every part of every manufactured object becomes, at the end of its useful life, part of another sustainable product or process.~~

~~Objective: To make the transition to safer and renewable energy sources.~~

~~Objective: To reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal uses.~~

~~Objective: To protect our trees and forests, especially in support of their capacity for capturing carbon for a long time.~~

Objective: To move toward patterns of land use and land protection that support broad biodiversity, soil preservation, and healthy local agriculture.

~~Objective: Increase Awareness Regarding the Need to Plan for Sustainability~~

Improve Connections

GOAL: We recognize that a community that is connected is safer, stronger, and provides more opportunities for meaningful interaction. We envision supporting these connections through physical means including sidewalks, bike paths, trails and public transportation to connect people and places, and to support independent and safe travel for all. We also envision open communication as a means to further connect residents (e.g. through the web, cable TV, community bulletin boards, etc.).

Objective: Improve Walking and Biking Experience

Objective: Explore Ways to Improve Circulation In and Around Town

Objective: Improve Communication

Objective: Support and Strengthen Neighborhoods

Provide More Opportunities for Community Gathering

We value the small town feeling and appreciate the sense of community that results from frequent opportunities for interaction. We support providing places for casual social interaction and organized events that bring members of the community together. We believe in offering opportunities for intergenerational experiences, and for sharing of inter-cultural celebration (e.g. community/senior center, park, farmer's market, cultural venues, community garden).

Objective: Expand Senior / Community Center

Objective: Support Additional Cultural Activities

Objective: Provide Additional Opportunities to Gather

Support Inclusion and Diversity

GOAL: We value a diverse population and wish to foster respect, promote interaction and actively support a wide variety of individuals to live, work, and play in our community. This includes a range of ages and socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Objective: Support All Ages

Objective: Support Socio-economic Diversity

Objective: Embrace Cultural Diversity

Objective: Support the Disabled Community

Preserve and Enhance Town Assets and Resources

GOAL: We value our Town assets and wish to preserve and enhance them. These include our open spaces, schools, historic sites, municipal properties, commercial areas, recreational areas, and our neighborhoods, including the people who live in them. ~~Our natural resources are also considered among our most important assets.~~³

Objective: Protect Existing and Acquire Additional Open Space

Objective: Support Excellence in Schools

~~Objective: Preserve Historic Buildings and Landscapes~~

Ideas for Strategies

- ◆ ~~Preserve both historic buildings and landscapes, stone walls and roads (see Heritage Landscape Inventory)~~
- ◆ ~~Support historic celebrations~~
- ◆ ~~Increase awareness of historic past~~
- ◆ ~~Conduct outreach to private historical property owners from town or preservationists to help with funding~~

~~Pass archaeological by-law to preserve stone wall~~ Objective: Maintain Town Properties

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³ Natural Resources are discussed under the sustainability goal.

Preserve Town Character

GOAL: We feel strongly about preserving and enhancing what makes Acton special and unique, including its rural and historic characteristics and its village centers.

Objective: Preserve Rural and Historic Characteristics

Ideas for Strategies

- Define Rural and Historic Characteristics (buildings, views, landscapes, etc.) and actively preserve these
 - ~~Meandering S~~sidewalk design (choice of layout, materials, landscaping) should be in keeping with the nature of the area (see Guidelines for Acton Sidewalk Design⁴)
 - ~~Protect and P~~romote community gardens, stone walls, trees, country fairs and farmer's markets
 - *Create more formal structures for collaborating with neighboring towns to address common issues (including 40B developments, open space protection, etc.)*
 - *Explore ways of saving stone walls, barns, and other historic structures*
~~Improve non-car oriented connections~~
- Preserve and acquire open space
 - Define primary purpose of protecting open space
 - Purchase open space
 - Use zoning tools to protect existing open space and to add additional protected open space
 - Actively support agriculture (e.g. right to farm by-law)
 - **Promote and protect natural environments**
 - ~~Preserve and promote green spaces along roads and in front of buildings~~
 - In the villages and in Kelley's Corner focus on strategic locations and the quality of open spaces to enhance the centers rather than on the quantity of open space.
 - Clarify for better public understanding regarding which open space is not protected and to what degree protected space is indeed protected
- Zone for infill development where density is desirable so as not to gobble up our open space
 - *Create a proactive strategy to anticipate and react to open space, water resource protection issues and opportunities*
 - Create a short list of open space protection priorities and stay focused on that list in the proactive pursuit of open space protection efforts – avoid getting side-tracked by less relevant opportunities
 - **Propose a package of by-laws (e.g. prevention of demolition, clear cutting)**
 - *Provide better incentives to preserve community assets*
 - *Plant trees to enhance Acton streets, especially in villages and Kelley's Corner.*

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⁴ <http://www.acton-ma.gov/DocumentView.aspx?DID=856>

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- Develop Comprehensive Site and Design Review
 - Support the further refinement of Acton's design guidelines for commercial development⁵ and the extension of the guidelines to include residential and mixed-use development.
 - Emphasize the importance of Design Guidelines for business and residential development to be in keeping with the goal
 - Ensure that *new* sidewalks are in keeping conform with town character Acton's Sidewalk Design Guidelines whenever possible.
 -
- Preserve historically significant buildings, landscapes and other historic features (see Heritage Landscape Inventory)
 - Develop technical justifications and documentation to eExpand historic districts to include older historic homes and historically significant structures (see Cultural Resources List)
 - Invest in tourist support infrastructure for certain key sites and pPublicize and make accessible town features (historic site, nature trails, etc.) (historic site, nature trails, etc.)
 - Improve town entrances / gateways to be welcoming & reflect our historic heritage
 - Support historic celebrations
 - Increase awareness of historic past
 - Conduct outreach to private historical property owners from town or preservationists to help with funding and encourage preservation
 - Pass archaeological by-law to preserve stone walls. ALREADY HAVE SCENIC ROADS BY LAW TO PRESERVE STONE WALLS ALONG CERTAIN ROADS.
 - Develop preservation priorities and stick to them.
 - Ensure that historic preservation efforts, regulations, and administration help instead of hinder owners to maintain their historic properties, business to grow, and historic centers to thrive economically.
- Manage growth proactively
 - Understand if and how water supply limits growth
 - Create a visual build out plan that captures goals for the entire town
 - Consult the 1998 Master Plan and build on its recommendations
 - Encourage regional cooperation
 - Guide residential growth in such a way so that it is consistent with other goals and so that fiscal impacts are taken into account
 - Control residential development
 - Improve governing structures to encourage an integrated approach to problem-solving.
 - Address 40B through deed restrictions program.
 - Identify housing that complies except for deed restriction
 - Use CPC funds to incentivize deed restrictions

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⁵ See current at <http://www.acton-ma.gov/DocumentView.aspx?DID=343>

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Use tax incentives to incentivize deed restrictions

Objective: Preserve and Enhance Village Centers

Preserve West Acton

Preserve West Acton Village Center

Ideas for Strategies

- Develop West Acton into the Town's "center."

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Enhance Village Centers and Kelley's Corner

Enhance the Other Village Centers

Ideas for Strategies

- Implement the Village District Plans so that the centers' full potential as villages may be realized
- Encourage more activity through the provision of parks and outdoor areas to congregate, and by promoting a variety of uses at different times of day and night, including grocery store, family restaurant, benches, a variety of businesses, parking places for programmed events in the back of buildings, places to go at night, pleasant lighting.
- Support walkability in the centers by providing sidewalks along the street and well-landscaped pathways to buildings and within parking lots. Provide parking on street and in combined lots behind buildings
- Program events
 - Encourage unique and fun window-shopping
 - Support locally owned shops; develop "buy local" campaign
 - Identify, seek, and support anchor with "pulling power"
 - Define desired character (e.g. "quaint, but not cute"). Each village should have its own distinct character-
 - Slow traffic Employ traffic mitigation measures (i.e. on-street parking, street-trees, etc.)
 - Provide more on-street parking
 - Plant flowers and trees to enhance Acton streets, especially in villages and Kelley's Corner
 - Plant flowers and trees
 - Encourage mixed-use development
 - Invite ethnic communities to contribute vitality through celebration, food, etc.
 - Develop a non-profit semi-government organization to revitalize village centers
 - Use West Acton and West Concord as models
 - Preserve and create new green spaces along roads and in front of buildings
 - Improve Kelley's Corner- INCLUDE AS SEPARATE SUB-SECTION NOW OR NOT???
 - Encourage wide range of shops and restaurants
 - Redevelop area with pedestrian orientation (including sidewalks, benches, signage, etc.)
 - Develop design guidelines to control "look and character"

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- Ensure that new development uses historical references, e.g. building facades that are in keeping with Acton's historic character
- Provide wide sidewalks for pedestrians
- Encourage the provision of outdoor seating; separate seating areas from sidewalk with plants, low fence, etc.
- ◆ *Plant trees to enhance streetscape, especially in the villages and Kelley's Corner*

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Plan for Sustainability

GOAL: Increase Awareness Regarding the Need to Plan for Sustainability, continue current efforts at being mindful of sustainability issues, and develop a plan to proactively address our future sustainability.

We value taking responsibility for our actions and planning for the future. We are mindful of our actions today because we are considerate of future generations living tomorrow.

As Acton residents, we recognize that our health and well-being depend on protecting the web of life of which we are a part. Therefore, it is vital that we live and work here in a manner that supports that web and the well-being of people everywhere, including future Actonians.

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Objective: Continue current sustainability efforts and develop a plan and action steps to proactively address issues of sustainability

Ideas for Strategies

Objective: Increase Awareness Regarding the Need to Plan for Sustainability

Ideas for Strategies

Objective: To protect the quality and quantity of the water in our watershed.

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Ideas for Strategies

Objective: To move toward a sustainable material economy in which every part of every manufactured object becomes, at the end of its useful life, part of another sustainable product or process.

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Ideas for Strategies

Objective: To make the transition to safer and renewable energy sources.

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Ideas for Strategies

Objective: To reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal uses.

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Ideas for Strategies

Objective: To protect our trees and forests, especially in support of their capacity for capturing carbon for a long time.

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Ideas for Strategies

Objective: To move toward patterns of land use and land protection that support broad biodiversity, soil preservation, and healthy local agriculture.

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Ideas for Strategies

- o Research and develop the transfer station to progress toward 100% recycling
- o Create a proactive strategy to anticipate and react to open space, water resource protection issues and opportunities
 - Create a short list of open space protection priorities and stay focused on that list in the proactive pursuit of open space protection efforts – avoid getting side-tracked by less relevant opportunities

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Propose a package of by-laws (e.g. prevention of demolition, clear cutting)

Objective: Increase Awareness Regarding the Need to Plan for Sustainability

DECIDE IF ANY OF THESE SHOULD BE INCLUDED ABOVE AND THEN DELETE.....

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Ideas for Strategies

- Define and discuss sustainability (include issues of water, air, land use, quality of life, green house gases; define where we are and where we are going)
- Adopt a proclamation supporting greenhouse gas reduction
- Increase awareness and educate people on the need to be more sustainable
 - o Provide education in schools
 - o Promote greater public awareness town-wide
 - o Develop massive energy conservation drives

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Objective: Continue and expand current sustainability efforts

Ideas for Strategies

- Continue and expand Acton's current sustainability efforts including recycling, low-level street lighting fixtures, low fuel vehicles, protecting water resources, etc.

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Objective: Develop a plan and action steps to proactively address issues of sustainability

Ideas for Strategies

- *Identify specific steps needed to develop plan that would help in meeting the goal of sustainability; consider the following:*
 - *Explore the use of renewable energy sources*
 - *Involve the ethnic communities; many come from cultures that have a history of sustainability*
 - *Re-think how Town staff works and commutes.*
 - *Review the town's high tax rate; it discourages people from staying long term*
 - *Explore ways to make the Town more financially sustainable*
 - *Relate to transportation goals*
 - *Relate to development, type, amount and location and reflect in zoning*
 - *Change rules and regulations (water, air quality, land use, green building, smart growth, mixed use development, etc.)*
 - *Water Resource Protection*
 - *Change zoning to restrict residential growth*

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Objective: Support Land Use and Life Style Changes that promote long-term sustainability

Ideas for Strategies

- *Provide public transportation/walking/biking facilities*
- *Provide incentives to home owners and businesses to build green and save energy*
- *Retrofit public buildings to be energy efficient*
- *Eliminate idling vehicles*
- *Organize web based car pooling*
- *Start a "Transitional Town Project" toward self sufficiency and energy autonomy*
- *Turn the transfer station into a renewable energy power plant (also use yard waste)*
- *Use the transfer station as a model for sustainable development, including exhibiting trash as art*
- *Create a central, multi-use, multi-generational community center for social sustainability (important features include location and determining feasibility of existing facilities)*
- *Encourage denser zoning close to South Acton train station*
- *Maintain the schools*
- *Winterize homes*

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Objective: Preserve and Protect Natural Resources

Ideas for Strategies

- *Preserve and protect natural resources, including surface and ground water (e.g. streams, ponds, drinking water, and wetlands etc.)*
 - *Identify and define Town's water capacity*

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- *Pay attention to pollution threats and environmental threats*
- *Develop a long range planning for water, power, and agricultural resources (include food and energy sheds in plans).*

Improve Connections

GOAL: We recognize that a community that is connected is safer, stronger, and provides more opportunities for meaningful interaction. We envision supporting these connections through physical means including sidewalks, bike paths, trails and public transportation to connect people and places, and to support independent and safe travel for all. We also envision open communication as a means to further connect residents (e.g. through the web, cable TV, community bulletin boards, etc.).

Objective: Improve Walking and Biking Experience

Ideas for Strategies

- Improve pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Complete the development and construction of the Bruce Freeman Trail
- Create and extend connections, system of sidewalks, trails, bike paths, bike racks where feasible and where they will be utilized
- Explore North American and European models and incorporate relevant elements and become a model for a walkable and bikeable community
- Extend sidewalks
- Provide additional bike paths/lanes (and increase awareness regarding sharing the road issues)
- *Improve communication regarding paths*
 - *Keep maps current showing sidewalks and bike paths*
- *Walking and biking should be considered separately (they can potentially be in conflict)*
- Wherever possible ensure that provision of sidewalks does not conflict with protecting town character
- Identify and pave woods, shortcuts where appropriate so bikes, wheelchairs and strollers can use them

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Objective: Explore Ways to Improve Circulation In and Around Town

Ideas for Strategies

- Provide free town-wide shuttle
- Improve the train station
 - Provide more parking
 - Town shuttle to and from parking
 - Build train station building
 - More overhang on canopy for weather protection
 - Provide safe bike lane to station
 - Develop train station as mixed-use center with shops, more parking, etc.
- Address traffic congestion (e.g. enforce lower speed limits, plow wider shoulders in winter, speed bumps, etc.) - ADD MORE EXAMPLES

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⁶ DEFINE

- Add train station in West Acton

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Objective: Improve Communication

Ideas for Strategies

- Keep town web site up-to-date
- Create community bulletin board
- Use multiple languages (both staff and written materials should reflect the town's population)
- Create a centralized reference guide of existing Town resources
- Improve communication between the Schools and the Town
- Improve communication with businesses
 - Provide information regarding town processes (e.g. permitting, etc.) for business owners
 - A more friendly approach from Town Hall Town Hall should work more closely with businesses
 - Acknowledge business owners for their participation in Town (donations, etc.)
- Attract more volunteers in order to engage more citizens to strengthen the community
 - Publicize and promote more
 - Use website
 - Provide information
 - Outreach, recruit
 - Provide incentives
 - Scheduling/timing
 - Provide and advertise opportunities for one time volunteering (as a trial)
- Improve communication regarding and centralized information regarding existing resources and events (signs, website, community bulletin board in multiple languages)
 - Use Acton TV or Radio Station for better town-wide communication
 - Better town wide opt-in email communication system
 - Provide signs, website and written information in multiple languages
 - Create a community bulletin board
- Create neighborhood email lists
- Provide better social connections for newcomers Support and expand the Acton Newcomer's Club
- Provide options for voting at Town Meeting (on-line, offsite, etc.)

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Objective: Support and Strengthen Neighborhoods

Ideas for Strategies

- Improve walkability with the provision of sidewalks
- Provide facilities such as playground, neighborhood swimming pool, etc. and ensure resources to maintain them

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- Ensure that physical environment is pleasing and compatible with Acton's character (e.g. aesthetically pleasing features including public art, open space, parking behind stores, architecture in keeping with town character, meandering sidewalks)⁷
- Provide benches and opportunities for outdoor eating
- Support both formal and informal communication and interaction among neighbors
 - Block parties
 - Neighborhood newsletter
 - Create neighborhood email lists, create and maintain database of residents by neighborhood
 - Promote neighborhood book groups, walking groups, etc.
 - Organize competitions between neighborhoods
 - Establish community projects

Promote walkability

⁷ except in the villages

Provide More Opportunities for Community Gathering

We value the small town feeling and appreciate the sense of community that results from frequent opportunities for interaction. We support providing places for casual social interaction and organized events that bring members of the community together. We believe in offering opportunities for intergenerational experiences, and for sharing of inter-cultural celebration (e.g. community/senior center, park, farmer's market, cultural venues, community garden).

Objective: Expand Senior / Community Center

Ideas for Strategies

Community Center

- Make a commitment to a community center; accessibility is key
 - Community Center must be centrally located (Kelley's Corner?)
 - ~~Consider reuse of the Kmart into a Community Center~~
 - Ensure that center is located within walking distance for kids access after school
- Other Considerations
 - Offer place for connections with various ages and interests
 - ~~Expense may compete with other goals~~
 - Create a virtual community center (but defeats the purpose of seeing friends and neighbors so would still need a place to meet).
- ~~Create a~~ Consider bringing Danny's Place ~~for adults~~ together with the senior center

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Senior Center

- A senior center could be utilized by senior center by different groups after hours (like schools)
- Given demographic trends indicating an increase in the number of seniors, examining whether it is best to biter utilize existing facility and/or build new facility. current senior center inadequate, location not ideal, should be a bigger resource for intergenerational connections.
- Make it a community center with an emphasis on seniors
- Consider bring Danny's Place together with senior center
- Center should be central and versatile
- Should be multi-generational
- Increase use of current Senior Center
- Identify responsible party to lead effort (e.g. form a committee that plans programs)
- Need community's consensus
- Ensure necessary infrastructure is and interests are in place
- Provide non-auto ways to access
- Ensure careful design of senior center
- Foresee traffic impacts of senior center,
- Provide transportation alternatives to the center

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[Overlap of ideas for strategies with Support all ages under Support Inclusion and Diversity]

Objective: Support Additional Cultural Activities

Ideas for Strategies

- Encourage development of a Movie Theater (including independent art films, armchairs and food)
- Support Community Theater (including capacity to show film)
- Support creation of more music venues (including classical music)
- Theater (drama, concerts, dance)
- Increase number and variety and location of community events
- *Make the library more youth friendly*
- Look for ways to make existing community gatherings more multi-cultural and inclusive, e.g. Oktoberfest could be more diverse
- Would be nice to have a town-wide group like the current Neighborhood Forums

Objective: Provide Additional Opportunities to Gather

Ideas for Strategies

- *Maintain-Enhance* Memorial Library's value as ; it is an important community gathering place; *in particular make the library more youth-friendly*
 - *Evolve Memorial Library into a senior center and community gathering place while reducing library space since libraries are going digital*
- *Need to develop a real town center (maybe West Acton?) to reduce driving/energy use*
- *Emphasize-Develop additional* small outdoor gathering spaces (other than NARA Park)
- Promote and support Acton Yard Sale or Flea Market (in Kmart parking lot)
- *Encourage the development of a diversity-variety of places - EXPLAIN*
- Increase collaboration – e.g. *between* Community Education, Recreation Department, and Town Boards *should get together* to offer *additional* programs *as opportunities for gathering*
- *Protect open space; it provides opportunities for a different kind of community gathering than can be provided by a new Community Center (both are important)*
- *Protect open space; it provides opportunities for community gathering (enhanced by Community Center)*
- *Ensure that zoning and budget are consistent with community gathering goal*
- Identify development opportunities (partner with private sector)
- *Utilize existing resources (identify potential)*
- *Identify accessible location(s) for gathering places*
- Ensure security, safety, and accessibility (walking, parking, shuttle)
- *Zone for infill development where density is desirable so as not to gobble up our open space*
- *Ensure infrastructure and interests are in place*
- *Foresee/Anticipate and mitigate* traffic impacts *of planned uses*
- *Provide transportation alternatives to gathering places*
- *Provide mini-parks and plazas with outdoor seating to encourage passersby to sit and linger*
- *Add sidewalks and benches in village areas*
- Increase Amount and Variety of Restaurants

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- Provide indoor/outdoor seating
- Increase number of mid-level, family, casual, but not pizza places to eat
- Increase availability of ethnic foods
- Increase number of fine dining establishments
- *Address lack of sewers in key locations such as West Acton*

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Support Inclusion and Diversity

GOAL: We value a diverse population and wish to foster respect, promote interaction and actively support a wide variety of individuals to live, work, and play in our community. This includes a range of ages and socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Objective: Support All Ages

Ideas for Strategies

Seniors

- Provide housing ~~affordable~~that is affordable to those on a fixed income (e.g. ~~elderly~~retired)
- Provide transportation options for seniors to travel
- Improve/expand senior center
- ~~Provide~~Provide resources to promote health, fitness/wellness (including basic infrastructure like sidewalks to educational resources like classes, ~~sidewalks, promote walking~~)
- Provide inter-generational opportunities for interaction and learning (e.g. invite seniors to contribute to school activities)
- Include all seniors in outreach (e.g. including new immigrant groups)
- Offer more senior paid part time positions to replace more expensive school and town staff.
- Utilize seniors in the schools.

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Teens

- Provide more accessible activities for teenagers
- Consider creating a club (e.g. like Danny's Place) for older kids, another park, or other gathering place for teens
- Extend sidewalks and increase access to public transportation to help teens get around
- Increase number of community events to include biking – kids learning together helps to bring a community together
- Listen to what they have to say and take them seriously
- Offer teen part time work to take over tasks done by more expensive town staff.

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Objective: Support Socio-economic Diversity

Ideas for Strategies

- Provide housing affordable⁸ to empty nesters, Town staff, and young families (ensuring that the design of the “affordable housing” is in keeping with Town character)
- Coordinate with the school system and Town Community Services Coordinator to identify those in need and match them with volunteers and agencies willing and able to help them.
- *Consider allowing people to subdivide their homes (and property ???) to allow parents and family members to live more economically*
- *Support home-based businesses*
- *Improve communication between the Selectmen and the Housing Authority*
- *Increase supply of affordable housing⁹*
- *Identify and serve the needs of the Town’s low income residents*

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Objective: Embrace Cultural Diversity

Ideas for Strategies

- Provide space for celebration and cultural activities
- Support and encourage all people to participate in Town government such as the ~~recent~~ policy that any Acton resident can participate on Town board or committee (regardless of whether or not they are a U.S. citizen)
- Provide more English as a Second Language classes
- Provide organized welcome (contact people, welcome committee, reference guide to existing resources)
- Increase access to public transportation ~~(often)~~ *(especially useful for households with only have one car and for those who, older generation cannot drive and/or do not have driver’s license)*
- Provide easily accessible contact information for various ethnic and cultural communities (including Brazilian, Chinese, Latino, Russian, and Indian communities)
- Provide recognition of holidays in the schools (and maybe allowance for time off)
- Hire multi-lingual staff and materials at Town Hall and Memorial Library
- Include Chinese and Indian languages and Portuguese and Russian as foreign language options at the schools
- *Promote Native American history as well as European history of the town.*
- *Break out information regarding the Town’s Latino populations (obtain information from the schools)*
- *Increase the dialogue between multi-cultural groups*

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Objective: Support the Disabled Community

⁸ While Massachusetts has a statutory definition of affordable housing, participants may have defined this term in other ways.

⁹ While Massachusetts has a statutory definition of affordable housing, participants may have defined this term in other ways.

Ideas for Strategies

- Apply Universal Design principles to provide physical access benefits to all
- Provide more transportation options
- ~~Increase~~ Encourage job opportunities and training
- Provide accessible public spaces
- Provide housing for the disabled
- ~~Make~~ Consider ways to provide access to all town-owned buildings and town-wide activities (e.g. clearly marked accessible parking, car pool options, etc.) ~~town buildings, activities and trails accessible to decrease isolation~~
- Explore possibility of paving trails (e.g. Morrison Farm)
- Pave key woody¹⁰ shortcuts so that bikes, wheelchairs and strollers can use them

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Additional Ideas for Strategies for supporting inclusion and diversity

- Increase number and variety and location of community events

Preserve and Enhance Town Assets and Resources

GOAL: We value our Town assets and wish to preserve and enhance them. These include our open spaces, schools, historic sites, municipal properties, commercial areas, recreational areas, and our neighborhoods, including the people who live in them. ~~Our natural resources are also considered among our most important assets.~~¹¹

Objective: Protect Existing and Acquire Additional Open Space

Ideas for Strategies

- Create a short list of open space protection priorities and stay focused on that list in the proactive pursuit of open space protection efforts – avoid getting side-tracked by less relevant opportunities
- Purchase open space (use Community Preservation funds)
- Preserve open space by meeting 40B through deed restrictions, then control development by rezoning.
 - Use zoning to protect existing open space
 - Apply perpetual conservation easements
 - Require playgrounds for kids in developments as part of approval process
 - Convert open municipal property to conservation status
 - Promote National Wildlife programs
 - Support bio-diversity education

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¹⁰ DEFINE

¹¹ Natural Resources are discussed under the sustainability goal.

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- Encourage cluster development
- Limit Guide development
- Prevent clear cutting, preserve wooded areas
- Raise awareness in the public at large regarding the value of preserving open space
- Provide tax incentives to protect open space
- *Consider the value and quality of water resources when evaluating open space*
- *Protect agricultural land*
- Establish a build out limit based on schools at capacity, water and waste water at capacity, and roads at capacity.
- Conduct research on alternative methods of purchasing and protecting open space
- Reduce growth

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Objective: Support Excellence in Schools

Ideas for Strategies

- ~~Keep the facilities well maintained~~ and updated (~~they are the Town's biggest asset~~ facilities)
- Address divisiveness in community caused by financial burden schools place on Town resources.
 - ~~Have students provide community service to the Town (e.g. years ago Acton teens helped to conduct the Town census)~~

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Objective: Improve Commercial Areas and Promote Economic Development

Ideas for Strategies

- ~~Improve the aesthetics of shopping areas~~
- ~~Provide more parking~~
- ~~Increase safety, especially at entries of commercial areas~~
- ~~Connect strip malls, especially along Great Road~~
- ~~Encourage an increase in development of shopping and eating options~~
- ~~Promote economic development to enhance the commercial tax base (in order to pay for needed services)~~
- ~~Expand Acton Day~~
- ~~Reduce traffic congestion~~
 - ~~Make improvements to transportation — walking, shuttle, interconnect paths~~
- ~~Be more business friendly~~
 - ~~Improve the permitting process~~
 - ~~Include business owners in events and notices~~
 - ~~Be more welcoming to new businesses~~
 - ~~Increase flexibility on sign allowances~~
- ~~Redevelop economic development areas~~

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Objective: Maintain and Increase Recreational Opportunities

Ideas for Strategies

- ~~Provide more indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities~~
- ~~Provide recreational opportunities for all ages~~
- ~~Create small parks in neighborhoods~~
- ~~Protect NARA~~
- ~~Make maintenance repairs including to the tennis courts, providing bathrooms, parking, and lighting where needed~~
- ~~Expand focus beyond school sports~~
- ~~Provide more recreational opportunities for teens (possibilities include swimming pool, teen center, bike trails, etc.)~~
- ~~Provide an indoor community facility~~

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Objective: Support and Strengthen Neighborhoods

Ideas for Strategies

- ◆ Improve walkability with the provision of sidewalks
- ◆ Provide activities such as playground, neighborhood swimming pool, etc.
- ◆ Ensure safety
- ◆ Provide aesthetically pleasing features including public art, open space, parking behind stores, architecture in keeping with town character, meandering sidewalks
- ◆ Provide benches and opportunities for outdoor eating
- ◆ Support both formal and informal communication and interaction among neighbors
 - Block parties
 - Neighborhood newsletter
 - Create neighborhood email lists, create and maintain database of residents by neighborhood
 - Promote neighborhood book groups, walking groups, etc.
 - Organize competitions between neighborhoods
 - Establish community projects
 - Promote walkability

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Objective: Preserve Historic Buildings and Landscapes

Ideas for Strategies

- ◆ Preserve both historic buildings and landscapes, *stone walls and roads (see Heritage Landscape Inventory)*
- ◆ Support historic celebrations
- ◆ Increase awareness of historic past
- ◆ *Conduct outreach to private historical property owners from town or preservationists to help with funding*
- ◆ *Pass archaeological by-law to preserve stone walls*

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Objective: Maintain Town Properties

Ideas for Strategies

- Conduct an energy audit of Town buildings and identify ways to increase energy efficiency
- Use the transfer station as a model for sustainability *le-development*
- Keep school facilities well maintained and updated
- Maintain Memorial Library; *it is an important community gathering place*
- Explore ways in which Town Hall can use more recent technology to provide services

Additional Ideas for Strategies for preserving and enhancing town assets and resources

- Revisit the 1998 Master Plan goals and objectives
- Identify and prioritize land uses and needs for all land in town (public and private)
- Support and encourage the development of non-public/private assets, *such as???*

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- *Define future obligations (measure impact of development, determine maximum capacity of town services)*

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