

Choose Your Own Acton: Evaluation of Alternatives

DRAFT

Key Numbers (Percentage differences are relative to Alternative 1)	Alternative 1: Disperse Growth	Alternative 2: Limit Growth	Alternative 3: Concentrate Growth
Population in 2030	24,100 -	23,100 -4%	24,900 +3%
School Age Population	4,670 -	4,480 -4%	4,580 -2%
Population 65 and over	4,030 -	3,860 -4%	4,360 +8%
Additional Housing Units Built over Next 20 Years	1,000 -	600 -40%	1,300 +30%
Residential Land Developed over 20 years (Includes 15% for circulation, etc.)	575 acres - (1000 units @ .5 acre per unit + -	345 acres -40% (600 units @ .5 acre per unit)	450 acres -22% (700 units @ .15 acre per unit and 600 units @ .5 acre per unit)
<u>Additional</u> Residential Water Consumption (gallons per day)	190,000 gpd - (190 gal /unit)	114,000 gpd -40% (190 gal/unit)	234,000 gpd +23% (180 gal/unit)
Annual Fiscal Benefit, compared to today	Residential: \$4.5 million Commercial: \$1 million	Residential: \$5.1 million Commercial: \$1.5 million	Residential: \$5.3 million Commercial: \$1 million
Added Acres of Protected Open Space	500 acres plus purchases	300 acres plus purchases	300 acres plus purchases

Evaluation of Alternatives

Note: The evaluation results assume successfully limiting growth in Alternative 2 and concentrating growth in Alternative 3.

Goals/Objectives:	Alternative 1: Disperse Growth	Alternative 2: Limit Growth	Alternative 3: Concentrate Growth
1. Town Character			
Village	Similar to existing	Similar to existing	Historic character enhanced by compatible redevelopment directed to non-residential village areas
Rural	Loss of some rural landscapes to development	Relies on acquisition of open land, but housing development of some large open parcels remains likely	Uses incentives to encourage shift of housing development to centers but some development of large open parcels possible
2. Environmental Sustainability			
Carbon Footprint	Follow current trend to encourage sustainable practices	More driving-related impact than 3	Improves carbon footprint due to walkable mixed use with smaller housing units**
Water Resources	Follow current trend to protect resources	Less water use than 1 and 3, but larger on-site septic systems for larger homes	More water use, but concentrated in areas with sewers/package treatment
Habitat and Agricultural Land	Follow current trend in land protection and stewardship	Opportunity to acquire more open land	Opportunity to protect land by shifting development to villages
3. Improve Connections			
Walking and Biking	Follow current trend	Less emphasis on sidewalk construction	More walking and biking improvements
Traffic Circulation	Follow current trends	Emphasizes traffic improvements for increased traffic	Emphasizes public transportation

*Note: Objectives abbreviated. Some are combined; others excluded if not relevant to differences among alternatives.

** Compact mixed use villages have smaller housing units and require less driving.

Evaluation of Alternatives, continued

Goals/Objectives:	Alternative 1: Disperse Growth	Alternative 2: Limit Growth	Alternative 3: Concentrate Growth
4. Opportunities for Community Gathering and Recreation	Depends on opportunities offered by development	Similar to 1; could direct some revenues to community/senior center	More opportunities created by mixed use development in centers
5. Inclusion and Diversity	Continue current efforts	Much of new housing may be high cost, large in size, and located in separated developments	More housing of smaller size and in villages suitable for seniors, people with disabilities
6. Preserve Town Assets			
Open Space	Continue current trends in stewardship, protection/acquisition	More acquisition of open space than 1, but also more large parcels developed	Similar to 2 in open space developed (more units are in village redevelopment)
Schools	Continue current trend of slow enrollment decline	Lower school-age population than 1 and 3 due to <u>fewer</u> new housing units	Lower school-age population than 1 due to <u>smaller</u> new housing units
7. Fiscal Well-Being			
Commercial & Economic Development	Continue current trend	Strong emphasis on large employment-related (office/R&D) development; however, market is uncertain	Emphasis on multiple small-scale commercial uses, including some offices, in centers; thus more dependable than Alt 2; could increase recruitment of desired commercial development
Balance Taxes and Services	Continue current trend to older population; this reduces school costs and results in a fiscal benefit on residential development	Generates largest budget surplus on residential and commercial development; some to be used for open space acquisition and potentially for capital improvements, e.g., senior/community ctr.	Slightly less than Alt 2 in budget surplus on residential and commercial development
Ability to Stay in Acton for Life	As currently, too costly for many	May increase cost of available housing	Makes more housing available in small units for empty nesters, seniors, and young families starting out