CHAPTER I: VISION

INTRODUCTION

Wilton's current Master Plan was most recently updated in 1999. The Town of Wilton has changed markedly since 1999, as have the regional and national landscapes. In recognition that the Wilton Master Plan should be responsive to current conditions, the Planning Board began the task of updating the Master Plan Vision Chapter in 2012.

A Master Plan Vision survey was distributed in the latter part of 2012 to find out why residents moved to and live in Wilton, what makes Wilton attractive now and what would make it better, and what the Community's overall vision for Wilton is in the next 10 years. The Planning Board also held a Community Vision Workshop in 2013 to understand the trends and forces that are affecting the community, and to understand concerns and recommendations for Wilton's housing, land use, transportation, community facilities, natural resources and recreation, and cultural and historic resources.

WHAT MAKES WILTON ATTRACTIVE NOW?

When residents were asked why the live in Wilton, a majority of respondents to the 2012-2013 community outreach stated that they value the small town feel and rural and historic character that Wilton provides while being within a reasonable distance to more populated destinations and services. Other common responses included the art and cultural community, private education, and Wilton's charming downtown. Additionally, factors that were reported as contributions to Wilton's quality of life included natural landscapes, safety, and knowing neighbors. A majority of respondents said that they plan to stay in Wilton beyond retirement.

WHAT ARE AREAS OF CONCERN NOW AND IN THE FUTURE?

In order to present recommendations, it is important to understand the Community's concerns with respect to Wilton's past, present, and future. A primary concern that was noted among residents are the high town and school taxes, preserving educational quality and future school facility needs, and the high cost of education. There are also concerns about the lack of commercial development, need for a thriving downtown, and a strong overall business base to support local employment opportunities. Residents expressed that opportunities for young people are minimal, keeping the workforce in Wilton is difficult, and mobility and opportunities for seniors is limited. Wilton residents are also concerned about the loss of rural character, which contributes to the quality of life that is valued so highly.

VISION STATEMENTS

The vision for Wilton builds upon the past work of the Wilton Master Plan Committee, which first met in 1987, and the goals and objectives of the 1999 Master Plan. The vision statements below refine the goals from the 1999 Master Plan and incorporate new visions that resulted from public outreach in 2012-2013. The overall vision for Wilton is:

- To remain a small-town that protects its rural environment, historic charm, and natural resources, while promoting opportunity for a variety of residential development and local business opportunities that are compatible and respond to the current needs of the community and support the local economy.
- To be a Town that supports a climate in which the downtown is thriving, to be a place where visitors seek as a destination, and to enhance the Town as a Gateway to the Monadnock Region, while preserving the character that is strictly unique to Wilton.
- To be a vibrant and collaborative Community that provides support and opportunities for its young, old, and ages in between to affordably live, work, visit, play, and stay for a lifetime.
- To be a Town that is a gold standard for the region by celebrating its image as a creative community where residents enjoy art, culture, and high quality education.
- To be a Town that is environmentally progressive with its policies involving energy, natural resources, building standards, and land use patterns that are critical to Wilton's long term sustainability.
- To be a Town that benefits from safe and adequate public services and facilities, and ensures that the Town's growth will occur at a rate not to out-pace the ability to provide these services and facilities at reasonable costs.
- To be a Town that has a transportation system that provides a variety of transportation options to allow all people to get to where they need, without impacting the Town's scenic and rural character and natural resources.

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

The following Master Plan Chapters contain the guiding principles and recommendations to achieve the overall vision for the Town of Wilton.