

# Natick 360

Honoring Our Past. Planning Our Future.



## Joint Board and Committee Meetings<sup>1</sup> February 12 and 13, 2007 \* Agenda

*Objective:* To understand and identify the issues, gaps and barriers to achieving the Natick Vision.

*7:00 p.m.* Introductions of participants, facilitators.  
  
Overview of *Natick 360* Strategic Planning Process.  
  
Review of Natick Value and Vision Statements.

*Instructions:* What are the gaps between Natick today and this Vision for Natick? What are the barriers to achieving the Natick Vision Statements? What are things that will help Natick achieve its Vision Statements? Keep your perspective broad.

*Small Groups:* Brainstorm a list of issues, gaps or barriers that prevent Natick from achieving its vision, as expressed in the Vision Statements. Write down each issue, gap or barrier and be ready to share them with the larger group.

*Large Group:* Report results to the larger group; consultants will facilitate a discussion and work to derive a list of unique items.  
  
Cluster items into focus area groupings.  
  
Next steps.  
  
Process check.

*9:00 p.m.* Adjourn.

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<sup>1</sup> Sponsoring boards and committees include: Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Finance Committee, Planning Board and School Committee.

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## Natick Value and Vision Statements<sup>2</sup>

### *As citizens of Natick, we value:*

- Natick's "small-town" sense as a safe, interconnected community fed by its heritage, pride and spirit of volunteerism, and by its diversity, derived from its tradition of affordability and welcoming nature;
- Natick's stewardship of its diverse open spaces, and natural resources;
- A high-value education for students at all levels and abilities, and continuing educational opportunities for all Natick citizens;
- A variety of businesses that create a wide range of jobs and provide support to the community in many ways;
- Natick Center, a vibrant focal point of our community;
- Natick's abundance of cultural, recreational and educational facilities, wide array of municipal services, and proximity to major transit and transportation resources that contribute to our high quality of life.

### *As citizens of Natick, we aspire to create a future in which:*

- Natick is a healthy community of diverse and interconnected citizens, businesses, organizations and neighborhoods, where citizens of all ages, backgrounds and income levels can live, work and thrive;
- Natick's natural resources are preserved and accessible to the community;
- Natick Center is the vibrant core of the community, a unique and accessible destination for commerce, community and culture, day and night;
- Natick's public schools and programs are recognized as among the best;
- Natick's self-government, supported by informed and engaged citizens, is fiscally sound, delivers services efficiently and communicates effectively with the public;
- Natick's public infrastructure and buildings fulfill their function efficiently and effectively to the satisfaction of the community, and are maintained in good working order;
- Natick is a desirable and accessible destination that marshals local and regional partners and resources to solve problems and enhance the quality of life for all its citizens.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: Value and Vision Statements are in random order. No prioritization is implied.

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## **Natick 360 Phases 3-4 Process** **Our Strategic Choices – Our Strategic Plan**

In January 2007, the *Natick 360* process is transitioning from Phase 2, Our Values and Vision, to Phase 3, Our Strategic Choices.

### **January 2007**

Members of the Strategic Planning Oversight Committee (SPOC) will continue working with the five sponsoring boards and committees to encourage them to vote to accept the phase 2 value and vision statements, while beginning to solicit input for phase 3. The initial focus of phase 3 will be to identify gaps between current conditions and the phase 2 vision and value statements: “What are the differences between Natick today and the envisioned Natick of tomorrow?” “What are the gaps between what Natick is and what Natick could be?” These questions will be posed to members of the sponsoring Boards and Committees, the public and the Town staff.

### **February 2007**

The strategic planning consultants will facilitate a series of meetings, February 12-15, to gather more input about strategic focus areas:

- Two meetings will be for members of the five sponsoring boards and committees. Many issues facing the town cross their responsibility areas, so each meeting is open to all five sponsoring boards and committees. The result of these meetings will be general agreement on key issues or focus areas for further analysis. These work sessions will include discussion, but no votes (Monday and Tuesday, February 12 and 13, 2007, 7:00-9:00 p.m.).
- One meeting will be open for participation by the public to describe their perceptions of the gaps between current reality and the vision for the future (Thursday, February 15, 2007, 7:00-9:00 p.m.).
- One meeting of senior staff members will organize their perceptions of the gaps (to be scheduled).
- One meeting will engage officials from other regional municipalities, state agencies, not-for-profit service agencies, and others, to begin to identify resources that will lead to filling the gaps (Tuesday, February 13, 2007, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon, Morse Institute Library).

The strategic planning consultants will compile all the information from these meetings, and organize the input into strategic focus areas. The result will include a description of current conditions, the value or vision statements relevant to the focus area, and a description of the gap between the current conditions and the value or vision.

### **Natick 360**

*Natick 360* is the Town of Natick’s strategic planning process. It has four phases:

1. Our Community Yesterday and Today.
2. Our Vision and Values
3. Our Strategic Choices
4. Our Strategic Plan

The result of this process, a five-year strategic plan for the Town of Natick, will be considered for acceptance at the October 2007 Town Meeting.

The *Natick 360* process is sponsored by five Natick boards and committees:

- Board of Selectmen,
- Conservation Commission,
- Finance Committee,
- Planning Board, and
- School Committee.

The *Natick 360* process is overseen by a Strategic Planning Oversight Committee (SPOC). Five members are designated by the sponsoring boards and committees, and four members are at-large. Strategic planning consultants, Blackerby Associates, manage and facilitate the process.

## March 2007

The strategic planning consultants will consolidate input from sponsoring boards and committees, Town staff and the public into scenarios under each focus area, describing alternative solutions to the biggest gaps. Depending on the subject matter:

- A scenario may propose an action that citizens can choose or not.
- Different scenarios may describe different solutions to fill a gap.
- Different scenarios may represent different degrees of investment (small, medium or large) of resources to address a gap.

Within the scenarios, the SPOC will solicit input from the sponsoring boards and committees regarding implementation policies, programs and projects. The strategic planning consultants will provide SPOC members with forms and guidance on how to gather this input from the sponsoring boards and committees. This data-gathering process will not require votes from the boards and committees; rather, they will provide input. The consultants will then compile this input, and feed the information back through SPOC members to the sponsoring boards and committees for their reactions.

In late March, the consultants will facilitate meetings with members of the sponsoring boards and committees to review and gain general agreement on these proposed policies, programs and projects. These work sessions will include discussion, but no votes.

## April 2007

The strategic planning consultants and the Town staff will work together to assign costs to each of the policies, programs and projects identified during March. This work will be secondary to staff support to Spring Town Meeting, which begins April 10. In late April, SPOC members will review the draft *Strategic Choices*—scenarios, policies, programs, projects and associated costs—with members of the sponsoring boards and committees.

As the *Strategic Choices* document is published, the *Natick 360* strategic planning process begins to transition from Phase 3 “Our Strategic Choices” to Phase 4 “Our Strategic Plan,” where the sponsoring boards and committees work with citizens to select choices and develop the strategic plan.

## May 2007

The draft *Strategic Choices* menu will be distributed to members of the public to generate informal discussion and questions. As necessary, changes may be made.

## June 2007

Members of the public will be invited to participate in facilitated workshops to review the *Strategic Choices*, and to indicate their priority weighting for the key elements in the *Strategic Choices* menu. These workshops are tentatively set for June 8-10, 2007.

## July 2007

A public opinion survey firm will conduct a scientific random-sample survey of Natick residents, focusing on the key elements from the *Strategic Choices* menu. The survey results are expected to be received in mid-August 2007.

## **August 2007**

The strategic planning consultants will review the results of the June workshops and the July sample survey, and produce a draft *Strategic Plan*. This draft *Strategic Plan* will be distributed to members of the sponsoring Boards and Committees.

## **September 2007**

The sponsoring boards and committees will participate in facilitated work sessions to review the draft *Strategic Plan*. This input may require changes to the draft *Strategic Plan*, which the strategic planning consultants will produce. Sponsoring boards and committees will be asked to vote to accept the resulting *Strategic Plan* in time for Fall Town Meeting.

## **October 2007**

Fall Town Meeting will consider adopting the *Strategic Plan*.