

- In 10 years, people want Milford to look the same as it does now, presuming this means protecting the existing rural and historic character, and have less traffic and less signage.
- Residents feel Milford is now a "large town".
- Milford residents overwhelmingly have community pride.
- Milford citizens believe the Town needs stronger regulations to control and enhance development, presumably to protect and enhance rural character, and protect the environment.
- Milford citizens believe that there should be stronger regulations, even if private property rights are affected.
- Milford citizens are evenly divided on their support of stronger regulations if it means housing becomes unaffordable.

A growth management ordinance was adopted by Milford voters in March 2006 which included findings on the current residential development trends in Town that necessitated the need for tools to manage the rate of residential growth. The ordinance cites that "*new residential development is having a rapid and adverse effect on traffic and open space, and there is a perception that the community is losing its character*".²

IV: MILFORD'S VISION STATEMENT

According to NH RSA 674:2, the purpose of a Town master plan is to set down as clearly and practically as possible the best and most appropriate future development of the Town. The master plan must incorporate a *vision section* that serves to direct the other sections of the plan, with statements and guiding principles that articulate the desires of the citizens.

Based upon community input, and building on the *1999 Update*, the *2007 Master Plan Update* states as its vision:

Through responsible management and promotion of individual and community stewardship, Milford will be a sustainable community rich in physical, cultural, economic and social diversity, and will be characterized by a small-town atmosphere; a vibrant downtown; an active business community; human scale, interconnected neighborhoods; local agriculture; and the preservation of natural resources, rural landscapes and historic features.

V: ACHIEVING THE VISION: GOALS AND ACTIONS

The *2007 Master Plan Update* has identified the following goals and actions that shall form the blueprint for attaining the Vision:

Goal No. 1: Ensure that downtown Milford (Union Square, the Oval, and adjacent neighborhoods) remains the commercial, social, and community hub of Town by protecting its historic character, promoting and enhancing its economic vitality, and integrating the Souhegan River and its tributaries into the public realm.

² Milford Zoning Ordinance (2006), Article XII, Sec. 12.002.F.1.

Actions:

1. Design and construct the South Street Improvement Project – Phase I from Union Square to the South Street railroad crossing, (2006 – 2008)

This project is a continuation of downtown revitalization efforts begun by the Town in the early 1990s. In 1995 and 1996 the Union Square Revitalization project was accomplished, which included vehicular and pedestrian traffic safety enhancements, period lighting, landscaping, and infrastructure upgrades. The South Street Improvement Project – Phase I is a continuation of a portion of the Union Square Project which was not carried out due to a lack of funding. The South Street Improvement Project will continue safety and aesthetic upgrades with sidewalks and pedestrian components, undergrounding of utilities, and street widening. Funding will include federal, state, and local sources.

2. Promote continued economic revitalization of downtown Milford by:

- developing and implementing site design standards that reinforce and protect the historic character and human scale of downtown and which allow flexible mixed-use creative redevelopment, (2007 –2008);
- continuing support and commitment to the Milford Main Street Program / Downtown Ongoing Improvement Team (DO-IT),(ongoing);
- developing and implementing strategies to increase public awareness and access to the Souhegan River and downtown parks and green spaces, (2008-2009)

Goal No. 2: Foster the traditional character of Milford's neighborhoods by encouraging a human scale of development that is similar in setbacks, size, and height, and that is comfortable and safe for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles while allowing for an efficient and safe roadway network.

Actions:

1. Review and rewrite the existing zoning ordinance to reflect the intended character of Milford's residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhoods relative to height, lot coverage, setbacks, and allowable uses, (2007-2009);
2. Review and rewrite the existing subdivision and site plan regulations to reflect the intended character of Milford's residential, commercial and industrial neighborhoods (including all entryway corridors and gateways) relative to architectural and historic heritage, landscaping, stormwater management, traffic management, scenic roads, parking, and allowable uses, (2006-2008);

Goal No. 3: Preserve the rural landscape in Town, including views, stone walls, historic structures and sites, forests, farmlands, wildlife habitats and corridors, water features and resources, and scenic roadways.

Actions:

1. Identify and prioritize those components of the rural landscape that are critical to preserve and review, and revise the land use codes to incorporate innovative land use techniques to preserve these components while respecting private property rights.
2. Complete the Osgood Pond reclamation and management efforts by implementing the dredging and wetland reclamation plans developed by the US Army Corps of Engineers.