



### **VISIONING WORKSHOPS DAY 3**

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**6:00 p.m.** – Dinner, Summary of Results & Alternative Scenarios Presentation

**6:30 p.m.** – Alternative Scenarios & Future Land Use Map Roundtable: Small Group Discussions

**7:10 p.m.** – Report Back to the Larger Group: Summary of Group Discussions

**7:30 p.m.** – Key Areas Design Activity

**8:40 p.m.** – Report Back to the Larger Group: Summary of Design Activity

**9:00 p.m.** – Wrap-Up

### ***SUMMARY OF RESULTS: Southamptton 2030 Vision Statements from Small Group Discussions***

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#### **In 2030, Southamptton is a community that...**

...is open and rural with a village center, promotes volunteerism, and is receptive to technologies but with guarded, diverse growth that maintains the town's character.

...cares for its citizens, promotes proactive business development, maintains its rural character, makes use of available federal and state resources, and is environmentally friendly. It is a place where one would love to spend his or her life.

...is a welcoming, caring, thriving community for all ages with a planned village center that provides community, cultural, and commercial amenities. Southamptton honors and preserves its past through historic preservation and open space and agricultural protection.

...retains the personality of a small New England town through smarter zoning and planning, preservation of open space, and lower population growth. The town provides expanded services to the entire community, including passive recreation, meeting spaces, and programs for all ages.

...uses its passion for land stewardship to foster a close-knit and vibrant community, while hewing to its New England character and a commitment to sustainability.

...is a community that will retain a rural character while promoting small, local businesses, and will have a vibrant village center, welcoming people of all ages. Southamptton will have a well planned pedestrian and trail system and will remain fiscally responsible using smart growth principles to achieve a strong community spirit.



## ***SUMMARY OF RESULTS: Opportunities & Constraints Summary of Small Group Discussions***

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### **Likes**

- Friendly, open people, community feel & involvement, volunteerism
- Rural, safe, open, quiet, scenic views, farmsteads, few commercial centers
- Good place to raise children, good schools, activities
- Village center with church
- Historic homes
- Nature, open space, wildlife, nature, protected lands, clean air and water
- Conant Park, walking trails
- Proximity to malls, larger communities, local college, major roads

### **Dislikes / Concerns**

- Not enough sidewalks, places to bicycle
- Unchecked growth, especially housing development, no sewers
- Housing affordability
- Development not conforming with local character of town
- Town politics, lack of citizen participation, lack of transparency
- Lack of a walkable town center
- Trucks, growing traffic and speeding, lack of traffic calming
- Loss of farms, historic preservation, land management
- Lack of community gathering spaces
- Need for more active and passive recreation opportunities
- Taxes & Services
- Route 10 could look like Route 9 in Hadley
- Incompatible signs
- Protection of wildlife and water quality

### **Future Opportunities**

- Rural character, agricultural past, rich history
- Historic and open space preservation
- Affordable, diverse housing
- Good /expanded services: schools, public safety, sewer, library
- Vibrant, thriving village center
- Better communication with local government
- Bike path / rail trail
- Riverwalk along the Manhan River
- Passive recreation access at Tighe Carmody Reservoir
- Redesign and expand Conant Park
- Local employment growth
- Planned, balanced growth with design guidelines
- THIS MASTER PLANNING PROCESS!!!



# Southampton 2030

Planning for the Future

## ***SUMMARY OF RESULTS: Land Use, Housing & Transportation***

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### **Key Considerations**

- Southampton has lost significant acreage that was once occupied by agricultural and forest lands. Meanwhile, the town has seen large increases in land occupied by large lot residential housing, as well as some commercial growth. Most houses sit on lots greater than ½ acre.
- A variety of household types, income levels, and abilities live in Southampton.
- Southampton's rate of housing growth is higher than in other parts of the region. Nearly all of this growth has been single family residential, and there are limited housing options other than single-family homes in town.
- Southampton is quickly becoming an unaffordable community to new prospective homeowners or existing homeowners looking to downsize or upsize.
- Zoning influences land use and housing development patterns.
- A 2004 study found that the town's residential growth and other land uses that generate a high volume of vehicle trips could dramatically impact future traffic volumes and strain existing infrastructure.
- There are no bike lanes or paths in town, but there is an existing rail corridor that could accommodate a future bike path. Despite significant support, a proposal to create a bike path along the railroad was defeated at Town Meeting in the early 1990s.
- The town has sidewalks in the village center, but lacks a continuous sidewalk network that connects different parts of town.
- Many residents have similar commuting patterns, creating an opportunity for carpooling.

### **Summary of Small Group Discussions**

- Guide growth to ensure conservation: Preserve agricultural land & wildlife habitat
- Involve public in decision-making: Authorities and boards should hold Q&A sessions, communicate information through various means, build consensus, involve the community in planning and land use
- Support diverse farming and agriculture land uses, farm stands
- Promote focused / concentrated commercial development
- Challenges: Developing the village center, obtaining development rights for conservation
- Increase transportation options: Train, van and bus service, bike and sidewalk networks
- Expand PVTA service: Westfield to Easthampton, Southampton to Holyoke
- Develop bike trail and create safer roadways with bicycle lanes
- Build more sidewalks and walking paths
- Site commuter parking areas
- Housing concerns: Cost / affordability, density & lot sizes, zoning, pace of growth
- Housing developments should provide a sense of community
- Allow cluster / open space developments with alternative lot sizes and # of units
- Broaden housing types: Tasteful apartments, multiple uses of existing buildings, intermingle business, arts and cultural uses with residences
- Improve safety of roadways, but weigh against scenic resources, Route 10 visibility and traffic concerns



## ***SUMMARY OF RESULTS: Open Space, Agriculture, Cultural Development & Historic Preservation***

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### **Key Considerations**

- Southampton's open space attributes make the town desirable for new development that is slowly altering the rural character.
- The town lost over 1,200 acres of agricultural, forest and wetlands between 1971 to 1999.
- A significant portion of Southampton's natural lands are not permanently protected.
- Surveys have found that residents support forest, water, farmland and other natural resources protection.
- Southampton has relatively few recreational resources for a town of its size.
- An early 1990's proposal to develop a bike path along the railroad did not pass at Town Meeting.
- Residents have expressed the need to improve access to the town's recreational and open space resources.
- Many residents are not aware of cultural and historic resources like the Old Canal.
- Residents need to consider whether the town wants to pursue.
- Other Considerations: Need for public access at the Tighe Carmody Reservoir? Need for more recreational resources or better maintenance of existing resources? Protection of water resources, including those shared with neighboring towns? Prioritization of unprotected agricultural lands, Cultural landscape – how Southampton defines itself, protection of historic resources

### **Summary of Small Group Discussions**

- Southampton LIKES open space, natural resources & agriculture!
- Analyze long-term fiscal effects of residential growth vs. preservation
- Consider effects of more public utilities, i.e. sewers on open space preservation
- Increase park land: Go beyond active recreation
- Protect Conant Memorial Park, obtain access to use Tighe-Carmody
- Keep close eye on landscaping and land management practices – fertilizer, etc.
- Stimulate consciousness about agriculture, awareness of how to protect agriculture
- Develop farmer's markets, farm stands and community gardens
- Promote agricultural tourism
- Offer economic relief for farming, tax incentives
- Develop a priority list for agricultural land acquisition
- Be mindful of rich agricultural soils, zoning should take land quality into account
- Allow flexibility in designating historical status for buildings
- Create greater awareness about town's history, village center church
- Pursue "demolition delay" to ensure consideration of historic value
- Develop more venues for cultural & performance space
- Create village center as destination: appropriate commercial development / area for artisans to display work
- Develop walkways throughout historic district
- Expand and physically connect library with community



## ***SUMMARY OF RESULTS: Public Services, Infrastructure & Economic Development***

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### **Key Considerations**

- Southamptton's rapid population growth and low tax rate is straining the town's ability to provide the services needed to support this growth.
- Many residents have suggested the need for a paid fire department.
- Southamptton's lack of sewer services restricts growth in the village center (including growth of municipal services), as well as commercial and industrial growth elsewhere in town.
- Southamptton has experienced less growth in new employers than the larger region. The Economic Development chapter of the town's 2004 Community Development Plan is concerned with balanced development that diversifies the tax base.
- Key economic development constraints include lack of usable land zoned for business and lack of public sewer services.
- Key economic development strengths include low taxes and proximity to Routes 90, 91, Springfield, Chicopee and Holyoke.
- Many of the town's existing businesses do not have room for expansion, and many are located in areas zoned for residential use and do not conform to the laws of their zoning district.
- A number of businesses located in the town's Water Supply Protection District are prohibited uses in that district.
- Other Considerations: Development within Barnes Aquifer, Priorities for existing infrastructure investment, Public sewer – is there a need? If so, where? Balance between town services and (residential) tax base, best areas for economic development?

### **Summary of Small Group Discussions**

- Expand Town Hall and Library hours
- Expand and physically connect Library with community, need additional computers
- Strengthen police, fire and EMT services
- Provide broader financial support for public services, including cultural, recreational and historic resources
- Fiber optics internet service (FiOS) would be good, consider options for Broadband
- Would increased services inherently change the rural character of the town?
- Sewer: There are pros and cons, center of town (not an option?), favorable for commercial opportunities (if linked N/S), tap in to neighboring communities to provide sewer service, utilities, and industrial opportunities
- Commercial development: Focus on south end, consider Easthampton to OPA curve
- Consider west side of southern rt. 10 to Westfield for light industrial
- Find other areas, but in reality, there is very limited suitable land
- Define an industrial park area
- Encourage businesses in existing homes: Cottage industries, web-access
- Promote agricultural tourism, economic development should be mindful of existing agriculture
- Create village center as a destination with appropriate commercial development and area where artisans could display work
- Plan public services ahead to meet needs based on population growth / type of growth



## **ALTERNATIVE GROWTH SCENARIOS**

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Scenario 1 - Commercial Corridor with Industrial Zone: This scenario is the closest of the three to the current development pattern. It continues strip commercial growth along northern Route 10, allows minimal commercial development in the village center, and continues low-density residential growth in outlying areas. It also includes an industrial area at the southern end of Route 10.

Scenario 2 - Mixed-Use Centers and Agricultural Tourism: This scenario presents one possible “smart growth” alternative to the current development pattern. It concentrates growth in a number of small mixed-use centers with commercial and residential development. The mixed-use center in Russellville includes an eco-industrial park with different industries sharing resources and using each other’s waste products. A center where multiple modes of transportation come together is also proposed where Route 10, the proposed bike path, the proposed Manhan River Greenway, and the train tracks converge. This could be a potential area for a Park & Ride lot as well. The scenario also proposes economic development through an Agricultural Tourism Corridor. In outlying areas, minimum lot sizes are increased, and in addition, development rights are transferred from the Agricultural Tourism Corridor to the small mixed-use centers.

Scenario 3 - Three Centers, With Gateways: This scenario, another “smart growth” alternative, concentrates growth in three adjacent centers. The village center is expanded, accommodating more commercial and residential development than the other scenarios, a mixed-use services center is developed to the north along Route 10, and a third smaller center contains a neighborhood store and offices near Norris Elementary School. This scenario envisions larger minimum lot sizes or allowing transfer of development rights from outlying areas. The scenario also shows visual gateways at the Rt. 10 entrances to the town.

## **GROWTH SCENARIOS DISCUSSION & FUTURE LAND USE MAP ACTIVITY**

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- **Discuss the merits and drawbacks of the different growth scenarios.**
- **Identify (on the map provided) where to concentrate development and where to focus on preservation.**

### **Example Discussion Questions**

- Where would you like different uses to be? (i.e. neighborhood business, general commercial, industrial, large lot residential, higher density residential, recreation, parks, schools, municipal uses)
- Do you live within walking distance of neighborhood services such as a grocery store and a park? Where would you like to see new commercial neighborhood services in your neighborhood? New parks?
- Are you concerned about the pace, types, location or design of new development (residential, commercial, etc.) in town? How would you like development to be different in the future?

## **KEY AREAS DESIGN ACTIVITY**

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This design activity uses **collage** to express what you would like the Village Center & Route 10 to look like in the future.

### **10 – 20 Minutes: Discuss what you would like the Village Center & Route 10 to look like in the future**

- What is your vision for these two areas? Describe desired characteristics for these areas.
- Split into smaller groups of ~3 people each who share a vision for either the Village Center or Route 10. You will work on your collage in these smaller groups. Note that you must choose just ONE of the two areas are to work on!

### **50 – 60 Minutes: Collage**

- Browse through the magazines and cut out and paste onto your collage the images and words that describe what you would like the Village Center or Route 10 to look like in the future.
- Feel free to also write words that describe what you like about an image, if you think explanation is needed.
- Feel free to discuss your image choices with the rest of your group if you would like, to help decide whether to include them. If a particular image generates disagreement, simply indicate that with a note beneath – e.g. “Just Right or Too Big?”

**20 Minutes: Report Back to the Larger Group:** Select a single table member to describe the ideas behind the collages.