

Development Policies

The Master Plan is primarily a policy document. In regards to specific land development proposals which may be presented in coming years, the 13 development policies summarized on this page represent the official position of the Town of Newington. These policies are presented in greater detail on the pages which follow.

Policy One

Newington's rural residential character should be preserved

The protection of the quality of the town's residential areas is central to the Master Plan. This statement is made realizing the critical importance of Newington's industrial operations. The purpose is simply to ensure that the quality of life in Newington's residential areas is protected from incompatible uses. For the most part, such a policy should not affect the town's commercial and industrial districts, or the relatively positive attitude taken towards commercial and industrial growth. In some cases, however, adjustments to local controls may be warranted.

Policy Two

Industrial development is encouraged, providing that conflicts between incompatible land uses are minimized, the environment is not adversely affected and public safety is ensured.

Industry has long been important to Newington. Industrial wages are relatively high. The demands of industry on town services are minimal, as is the traffic generated by industrial operations. Tax revenues generated by local industry are substantial, resulting in one of the lowest municipal tax rates in New Hampshire.

Newington's low tax rate has helped to shield the Town's lower income residents from the displacement and gentrification that is widespread in much of southern New Hampshire. Newington is thus able to maintain a diverse population.

In recent years, local industry has struggled to compete for increasingly scarce industrially zoned real estate with other, less desirable, land uses. It is in the best interest of both Newington and the region that industrial land be reserved for the exclusive use of industry.

Policy Three

The Town encourages responsible commercial development which does not generate a large traffic volume, and whose demand on community services does not result in a burden on other taxpayers.

As host for two of the largest shopping malls in New Hampshire, Newington has accommodated more than its fair share of retail development. The Planning Board should carefully scrutinize future commercial proposals in order to prevent an undue burden on local services.

Policy Four

The Town seeks to improve the safety appearance, operation, and character of the mall area.

Traffic studies have indicated that traffic safety in the vicinity of the malls requires much improvement.

Policy Five

The Town continues to encourage land use along the Piscataqua River that is dependent upon the sea /or transport and resources.

There is a very limited amount of deepwater frontage in the State of New Hampshire. This prime land is recognized as an invaluable natural resource of the Town of Newington and of the State of New Hampshire, and should be reserved for optimum utilization so that the economic benefits may be realized to their fullest extent.

Policy Six

A number of hazardous materials are presently transported through town on local rails, highways, and along the Piscataqua River. The Town seeks to improve the safety of such transport.

Flammable, toxic, and explosive materials pose a potential threat to the environment and nearby residents. The local rail is in poor condition

and should be upgraded. Highway and river traffic warrant further study to better assess potential problems.

Policy Seven

The Town of Newington seeks to provide an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of all its residents, and to provide for Newington's fair share of regional housing. The Town especially seeks to allow for the housing needs of Newington's young and elderly.

Community housing policies often have far reaching implications. The housing issue and growth typically provide the greatest degree of controversy in small communities. The Planning Board recognizes the difficulties many currently face in finding adequate housing, and the role local regulations often play in such problems. The Town, therefore, seeks to promote strategies for providing fair and equitable housing opportunities. By maintaining an exceptionally low tax rate, Newington, unlike other southern New Hampshire communities, has thus far achieved remarkable success in enabling lower income residents to remain in town.

Policy Eight

The Town seeks to develop improved community services and facilities in a manner that encourages orderly growth, but does not place an excessive financial burden on the community.

This policy represents a recognition that Newington's public services will be in need of improvement to keep pace with growth. Town officials do, however, recognize definite fiscal constraints in providing these services in a relatively short time.

Policy Nine

The Town encourages the establishment of conservation areas to protect wetlands, forests, agricultural land, and open space, and to prevent premature subdivision of Newington's undeveloped area.

This policy is based on the results of the community survey which indicated a strong interest in protecting natural resources, and in providing local residents with open space and conservation lands for recreational purposes.

Policy Ten

The Town seeks to reduce adverse impacts of future housing on environmentally sensitive areas by encouraging flexibility in the design and siting of such housing.

The principal implication of this policy would be amendments to current regulations relative to multifamily housing, as well as allowing for flexibility in design and siting.

Policy Eleven

The shorelines of Great Bay and Little Bay should be protected.

The bays' scenic and natural resources are unparalleled in New Hampshire. The bay and its immediate environs provide habitat to a wide range of wildlife. Several bald eagles, for example, are known to winter along the Newington shore. As one of the richest estuaries in North America, the bay has been designated by the federal government as a National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Policy Twelve

Newington seeks to ensure the preservation of the town's historic resources.

Much of Newington's historic, architectural and scenic resources have suffered in the past due to the arrival of Pease Air Force Base and the rapid growth east of the Spaulding Turnpike. The Town seeks to protect remaining resources.

Policy Thirteen

Development is to be discouraged in areas that are subject to excessive aircraft noise or which have high potential for aircraft accidents.

For obvious reasons, it is not in the public interest, nor is it responsible planning, to permit dense residential development in areas that are subject to excessive aircraft noise or in areas that are identified as having a high potential for aircraft accidents.