

Summaries of each Workshop Topic:

Transportation/Mobility

Residents perceive traffic congestion as one of the key problems affecting the quality of life in North Salem. The Town's roads are taxed by the traffic generated by major commercial and incremental housing development, in and outside of the Town, as well as the increasing number of cars owned and used per family.

The Transportation/Mobility section of the Comprehensive Plan is generally geared to recommending both short-term (with emphasis on problem solving) and long-term measures. It would include policy recommendations, site-specific transportation improvements, recommendations such as increasing the interconnectivity between land uses and roadways to reduce unnecessary traffic circulation, identifying roadway improvements compatible with land uses and development densities, and expanding access to and encouraging use of public transportation services, where feasible.

Land Use

Many factors affect neighborhood quality of life such as environmental conditions, traffic congestion and safety, school quality, open space protection, sprawl, etc. From both technical and political perspectives, careful balancing is needed with regard to promoting housing variety and affordability and maintaining neighborhood values and stability. This section of the Comprehensive Plan will look to integrate all of the topics on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis. It will address existing and future housing needs, including affordable housing. Its main objective is to preserve the low density character of the Town.

Environment/Natural Resources/Sustainability

Balancing the needs of natural resource protection and open space preservation, with the needs of economic development and the rights of private property owners, is one of the most challenging issues facing the Town.

This component of the Comprehensive Plan will look to upgrade infrastructure to improve storm water management and to actively plan and manage ecological habitats, and to provide input and direction for the ecologically sustainable components of the Comprehensive Plan. It is important to deal with the potential for in-fill development and redevelopment, and to address storm water management, black-topping, clear-cutting, pesticide/herbicide management and other environmental protections on developed and developable land.

This section of the Plan will develop a strategy to support sustainable and managed growth and to provide ecologically sound strategies for improving infrastructure, particularly focusing upon storm water management and water quality.

Visual/Community Character

North Salem has a wealth of historic, cultural and scenic resources that deserves recognition and protection. A number of these resources are worthy of listing on the National Register of Historic Places, in addition to local protection. One challenge is how to properly *identify and interpret* these resources.

Design review and design guidelines are increasingly used by municipalities of all sizes to assure quality development that supports property values, protects landmarks and historic buildings, and preserves if not enhances scenic corridors and views. Another challenge therefore is how to provide meaningful design input without creating undue burdens for property owners, businesses and residents.

The objective of this section of the Plan is to identify historic sites and views worthy of protection, develop regulatory strategies to protect these sites and vistas, including standards for site plans, building design and landscaping, as appropriate, and to identify and articulate historic design features to be protected (e.g., with design guidelines), enhanced (e.g., through promotion of adaptive reuse).

Town Shared Facilities and Services

Schools are, in a semi-rural community like North Salem, the foremost community facility. However, there are questions about how property tax burdens are distributed, what services can be shared, and how the policies of neighboring municipalities affect North Salem's residents.

This section of the Plan will anticipate demographic trends that bear on the future needs of residents for community facilities, parks and recreation. We will identify future location of educational, cultural, health and emergency services; identify potential recreational facilities and parks, including inter-municipal opportunities pertaining to regional trails; and provide guidance with regard to governmental, school, park and other community facilities that will allow the appropriate agencies to cost-effectively address future needs and expectations.