

Master Planning in New Hampshire

Information Guide #2 – Implementation

The implementation section of a master plan is one of the most important sections but yet it is most likely to be overlooked or not included. The purpose of the implementation section is to identify realistic and achievable actions that may be taken to further the community's plan as outlined in the vision chapter.

Although it is an optional section in New Hampshire, outcomes occur only when plans are implemented. Without implementation, the master plan has no value; therefore, the success of a master plan in shaping future growth patterns and influencing public policy decisions is dependent upon the degree to which the plan is actually carried out by those responsible for its implementation.



What is an Implementation Section?

The implementation section of the plan is a long-range action program of specific actions, time frames, allocation of responsibility for actions, description of land development regulations to be adopted, and procedures that the municipality may use to monitor and measure the effectiveness of each section of the plan (*RSA 674:2*).

It should consist of recommendations for the codes, ordinances, regulations, or amendments to existing codes and ordinances that are considered necessary to assure that the plan is carried out or implemented. Such proposals or recommendations may include a zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, site plan review, capital improvements program, and capital budget. If the regulations do not assist with the implementation of the vision in the Master Plan, that vision is not likely to be achieved.

However, codes and ordinances are not the only means available to implement a plan. Land acquisition, construction of roads, schools, and other public buildings, controlling highway access, and construction of public water and sewer service, to name a few, all play a part in bringing about the community envisioned in the master plan. Public education related to these topics and the vision of the community as a whole is a key component of implementation.



The implementation or action items for all elements (functional areas) of the plan can be contained in a matrix at the end of the master plan. The implementation matrix can be used as an administrative document for planning boards and other decision makers in the community. Additionally, the development of an implementation table provides an opportunity to coordinate regional plan elements with other regional and state projects and processes.

The implementation matrix should serve the following three functions:

- ✓ A framework for working on priorities and identifying partners.
- ✓ A tracking mechanism to record progress or revise priorities.
- ✓ A planning tool to help the community and other partners choose specific strategies or action items to pursue in reasonable timeframes to help focus efforts and achieve results.

And lastly, when implementation items are completed, community officials should take the opportunity to recognize the accomplishment and those involved and publicize it.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME (COMPLETION DATE)	BUDGET ALLOWANCE	LEAD PARTY	OTHER PARTNERS	FUNDING SOURCE
TOWN-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS					
Include new rules and standards that prohibit development in the 500-yr floodplain.	Near Term (2016)	See Budget Allowance	Planning Board	Community Development Department	N/A
Include tree preservation and buffer standards for protecting mature tree stands throughout the study area.	Near Term (2016)	See Budget Allowance	Planning Board	Open Space Task Force, Community Development Department	N/A
Include new rules and standards that incorporate open space as a meaningful component of new development. Open space could be used for tree preservation, stormwater retention, recreation, animal habitat protection, or preserving scenic views.	Near Term (2016)	See Budget Allowance	Planning Board	Conservation Commission, Open Space Task Force, Community Development Department	N/A
Include new rules and standards that reduces the amount of impervious surface for a development. This is a very cost-effective and environmentally-sensitive method for reducing stormwater runoff.	Near Term (2016)	See Budget Allowance	Planning Board	Community Development Department, Public Works Department	N/A
Fund a purchase of development rights program that allows landowners the opportunity to voluntarily sell their development rights on a parcel for permanent conservation.	Near Term (2016)	\$100,000 - \$200,000 (Annual, Demand-Driven)	Town Council	Conservation Commission, Open Space Task Force, Community Development Department	General Fund
Adopt a form-based code for the study area that consolidates, simplifies, and updates zoning and subdivision language to implement the vision and supporting recommendations from the comprehensive master plan.	Near Term (2016)	\$200,000 - \$250,000	Planning Board	Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Community Development Department	General Fund
Provide incentives for preserving historic buildings in the study area, which take advantage of the uniqueness of these sites and buildings for creating cool spaces.	Near Term (2016)	In-House Resources (Policy) / \$10,000 - \$20,000 (Matching Grant)	Town Council	Heritage/Historic District Commission, Community Development Department	General Fund, Grant Opportunities
Permit accessory dwelling units in growth sectors (G1 - G4) depicted on the Conservation & Growth Map. These units encourage greater housing choice for young adults, new families, and elderly residents in the study area.	Concurrent Action (2013)	In-House Resources	Planning Board	Housing Task Force, Community Development Department	N/A
Include new standards in a form-based code that promotes neighborhood diversity and greater housing choice to meet the needs of young adults, new families, and elderly residents.	Near Term (2016)	See Budget Allowance for Form-Based Code	Planning Board	Housing Task Force, Community Development Department	N/A

Implementation Table Matrix Example from Town of Londonderry's 2013 Comprehensive Master Plan

More Master Planning in New Hampshire Information Guides and Resources can be found at:
www.nh.gov/oep/planning/resources/master-planning.htm