



What is a Visioning Process?

A **Visioning Process** is a collaborative effort to imagine and define a community's long-term aspirations for a specific area—in this case, Groton's Town Center. While we are funded by two state grants to explore Town Center, the Destination Groton Committee will include input on potential growth areas around Town including Four Corners, the CVS Plaza, the Mill Run Plaza/Groton Farms, and West Groton.

A Visioning Process is **not** a detailed construction plan, zoning change, or engineering blueprint. Instead, it is a shared statement of *possibility*—a roadmap of ideas and priorities that reflect the community's values, identity, and hopes for the future.

The goal is through a town "conversation" create a picture of a theoretical "what could be," so that should opportunities arise—whether through private investment, public funding, or grassroots initiatives—the community has a clear sense of direction. A compelling vision can inspire developers, attract entrepreneurs, guide municipal decision-making, and energize residents to take part in shaping their town's future.

What a Visioning Process Involves

1. **Research & Analysis** – Study current conditions, explore market potential, examine transportation mitigation strategies, and successful models in similar towns.
2. **Community Engagement** – Gathering input from residents, business owners, developers, and visitors through meetings, surveys, and forums.
3. **Idea Development** – Translating feedback into concepts for how the town could evolve over 10+ years.
4. **Shared Vision Statement** – Producing a clear, inspiring document that can guide future decisions and policy makers without prescribing exact designs or mandates.

The Long-Term Potential Impact

A visioning process provides clarity and inspiration. Developers understand the kind of projects the community will welcome. Entrepreneurs see opportunities. Residents know their voices shaped the direction. Over time, the vision helps align public and private efforts toward a shared goal - creating a welcoming, thriving, and connected, town center that supports local business, encourages healthy activity, builds on a sense of community, and promotes civic pride.



What could help drive the Vision?

Groton is uniquely positioned to transform its town center into a more walkable, bikeable, welcoming, and neighborly experience while preserving its quintessential New England character.

The foundation is already in place:

- **The Town Center Overlay District** – Allows more density and a mix of residential, retail, and commercial uses without the need for a zoning change.
- **Potential New Retail** – Two recent Retail Studies (FXM/MRPC) suggest an opportunity.
- **Destination Drivers** – Groton Hill Music Center, a growing restaurant scene, the wedding industry, and two boarding schools that bring steady streams of visiting parents, families, and alumni.
- **Seasonal Tourism** – Popular apple orchards, rivers and lakes, an extensive trails network, farm stands, and scenic byways that attract visitors year-round.
- **Recreational Access** – Groton sits at the midpoint of the Nashua River Rail Trail, offering a chance to draw thousands of weekend cyclists into the town center.
- **Traffic Challenge & Opportunity** – Main Street (Route 119) is a two-lane state highway carrying heavy traffic, including freight and commercial vehicles. This can make the area feel loud, busy, and less pedestrian friendly. The visioning process also explores **traffic calming measures** to reclaim the one-mile stretch of Route 119 under town jurisdiction, improving safety and creating a more enjoyable Main Street experience.

A Visioning Process: What It Is – and What It Isn't

It Is:

- A *framework* to explore possibilities
- A tool for attracting investment and guiding growth
- A reflection of community values and priorities

It Isn't:

- A finalized development plan
- A zoning or Bylaw change
- An immediate construction project