



Imagine Nashua Citywide Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting Kickoff

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome & Introduction
- Project Overview & Framing
- Role and Expectations of the Master Plan Committee
- Project Scope and Schedule
- Community Engagement Plan and Process
- Public Workshop #1
- Next Steps

Meeting Date, Time, and Location

- September 23rd, 2020
- Convened: 12:00 pm
- Adjourned: 1:30 pm
- Zoom web conference

Actions

- No voting occurred at this meeting

Welcome & Introductions

Mayor Donchess welcomed the Master Plan Committee members, and introduced the Imagine Nashua Master Plan, noting that the City's previous master plan was completed in 2000. The Master Plan Steering Committee consists of over 20 members of the Nashua community, representing each ward and various stakeholder groups. The committee will be led and guided by Amber Logue, a resident of French Hill.

Project Team and Attendance

The City team is led by Sarah Marchant (Community Development Director) who will be supported by the Mayor, Julie Chizmas (Long Range/Transportation Planner), Matt Sullivan (Planning Manager), Tim Cummings (Economic Development Director), Justin Kates (Emergency Management Director), Doria Brown (Energy Manager) and Jay Minkarah (Executive Director, NRPC). The

consultant team that was selected through competitive bids include Utile (project lead), Ninigret Partners (economic & housing policy), Viva Consulting (economic & housing policy), Brown Richardson & Rowe (site engineering & infrastructure), Horsley Witten (site engineering & infrastructure) and Toole Design (transportation & mobility).

Master Plan Steering Committee Members:

- Mayor James Donchess, Mayor
 - Cheryl Lindner, Mayor's Designee
 - Scott LeClair, Planning Board Chair
 - Adam Varley, Planning Board Member
 - David Tencza, Chair of PEDC
 - Raymond Guarino, Nashua School Board Member
 - Heather Raymond, Back-up for School Board Member
 - Kate Luczko, Nashua COC President
 - Paul Shea, GAD Executive Director
 - Dan O' Donnell, Back-up for GAD (Board President)
 - John Jurczyk, President of St. Joseph Hospital
 - Beth Haidaichuk, Assistant to J. Jurczyk
 - Scott Cote, Designee from SHNMC
 - *Open, Board of Realtors - waiting for appointee*
 - Raymond Brousseau, BAE Representative
 - Debra Cotnoir, Assistant to Raymond Brousseau
 - Amber Logue, Chair of Masterplan Committee
 - Rabbi Jon Spira-Savett, Ward 1 Resident
 - Marjorie Bollinger Hogan, Ward 2 Resident
 - Gene Porter, Ward 3 Resident
 - *Open, Ward 4 Resident - waiting for appointee*
 - Gloria McCarthy, Ward 5 Resident
 - *Open, Ward 6 Resident - waiting for appointee*
 - Peter Schaefer, Ward 7 Resident
 - Mary Ann Melizzi Golja, Ward 8 Resident
 - Homa Jaferey, Ward 9 Resident
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Project Overview & Framing

The consultant team provided an overview of the Imagine Nashua Master Plan. The process will combine comprehensive community engagement with other planning efforts created in the past 20 years, with a focus on equity, resilience and climate protection as overarching guiding principles. The master plan is a document, focused on land use policies, outlining a vision for the future of Nashua, with clear strategies and tactics to guide future decision-making and programs across the community. The plan will engage in an inclusive citywide discussion, relying on key existing conditions, trends and spatial analysis and input from the public and steering committee, to achieve a well rounded perspective on key policy decisions.

In New Hampshire, Master Plans are required to include the following elements: Vision and Guiding Principles, and a Land Use Section involving existing conditions and the proposed location, extent, and intensity of future land use. In addition to these required elements, the consultant team presented four other topic areas that the Master Plan will tentatively cover including: Housing, Mobility & Transit, Economic Growth & Development, and Resilience, Open Space and Natural Resources. The addition of a sixth topic area was left for discussion.

Role and Expectations of the Master Plan Committee

Committee members' roles were described in two parts:

Leadership and Promotion: Serve as an ambassador for the planning process by promoting engagement opportunities and engaging with the public through a variety of public outreach tools. Field questions from public and either answer the question or direct the person to the right staff member/consultant

Collaboration: Attend 3-4 Master Plan Committee meetings between September 2020 and July 2020. Work as a team, think critically, engage in complex conversations, and provide a specific area of expertise. Review and vet written materials provided by the consultant team, including the Draft Master Plan

Project Scope and Schedule

The Imagine Nashua Master Plan will be a year-process running from fall 2020 to fall 2021, and will generally follow six parts: project initiation, existing conditions analysis, future trends analysis, plan development, plan implementation, and plan approval. The project is currently in the initiation phase; establishing overall project framing and conducting preliminary analysis of existing conditions in preparation for the first citywide public meeting scheduled to take place on November, 5th.

Community Engagement Plan and Process

There will be numerous opportunities for community engagement throughout the planning process. Public outreach and engagement tools include three citywide workshops following major milestones in the project, two citywide surveys gathering public feedback on visioning and goals, and scenario development and recommendations, an interactive mapping activity, and several focus groups and targeted outreach to ensure that the plan's efforts represent a broad community outreach. The Steering Committee will play a larger role in promoting community outreach as we all as facilitate conversations and content of the plan. Due to COVID-19, many of these engagement activities will take place virtually until in-person meetings can be scheduled

Public Survey #1

Under normal circumstances, the Master Plan process would also ideally involve on-the-ground, in-person engagement activity gathering feedback from across the city. However due to the pandemic environment, larger in-person outreach will be on hold until further notice.

Utile introduced the first Public Survey to the Steering Committee, that will be used to gather preliminary feedback from the Nashua community on initial goals, aspirations and issues surrounding the city. The survey is presented as a digital tool, seeking to understand where Nashua residents currently stand on general issues facing the city as well as issues more focused on certain topic areas by voting on a series of statements. The survey not only asks users to vote on various items but also gives the opportunity to submit new or more nuanced statements that other residents can vote on. The survey results will be used to inform initial draft

vision and goals for the City of Nashua across the various topic areas.

Next Steps

The website will be the primary means for soliciting community feedback as the project progresses. Please visit <https://imagine.nashuanh.gov> to learn about: upcoming and past events, previous planning efforts, email signup list and comment submission

The consultant team will launch and complete fundamental aspects of the Master Plan website, prepare promo materials and content for the Public kick-off meeting (date TBD). Additionally the team will work on preliminary existing conditions and trends analysis as well as complete and launch the public survey #1 in time for the Public-kick Off.

Comment/Questions & Answers

- Is the website accessible to a non-native English speaker?
 - *Currently, the Imagine Nashua website framework is in English but we recognize that it is very important to internationalize this. We are thinking of two options: either website content will appear in multiple languages side by side or the browser should automatically detect your device's language and translate accordingly.*
 - *Plan outreach will be communicated in three languages: Spanish, Portuguese and Swahili.*
 - Equity, Resilience and Climate Protection is nice, but what about livability and the pursuit of happiness? (Peter Schaefer)
 - *We fully agree that livability and the pursuit of happiness should be a fundamental part of this plan, however do not think it should be its own topic area but rather part of the vision statement, or overarching principles guiding all other plan topic areas.*
 - We need to allow for space to allow community integration and connections. (Marjorie Hogan)
 - Arts and Culture should be considered a sixth topic area of part of the larger vision statement (Mary Ann Melizzi Golja)
 - I don't think Resilience should be a topic area assigned with natural resources and open space.
- It's a higher principle with sustainability and equity. It applies across all of those areas, transportation, housing, economy, etc. (Justin Kates)
 - Have we considered an electronic newsletter to communicate about the plan to the public? (Raymond Guarino)
 - Echoing an early point from Marjorie — connecting the community and creating more interweaving between groups who live separately by more than “parallel play” at downtown events or shopping, for instance. Connectedness - how can we increase connection?. Also happy to help with connecting those who don't have access to smartphones and computers. (Rabbi Jon Spira-Savett)
 - *We are trying to find a good balance between digital and in-person engagement.*
 - What about Health and human services, education, service availability? How to improve access to services? (Laura Saluja)
 - A little nervous about the comments around the “I'm worried for my community to change” (Adam Varle)
 - I share Adam's concerns about open ended surveys that are unconstrained by science and legal boundaries. (Gene Porter)
 - To what extent is this exercise focused on the built environment, vs services/experiential focus areas? (Peter Schaefer)
 - There needs to be a question about reducing carbon emissions? (Jim Donchess)
 - The question of not only how do we attract people to the area but also how do we keep the younger population in the area after they graduate needs to be looked at. (Ray Brousseau)
 - See page 11-12 in this document around the Community Capitals Framework: <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/SpecialPublications/NIST.SP.1190v1.pdf> (Justin Kates)
 - We need some clarification of equity. is it under the law? is it for services. Gentrification if we average rich and poor areas are we equitable? (Peter Schaefer)
 - Agree, connections are important, to add to this, I would like to see our land use initiatives as they are supported or not supported by transportation. Maybe look at more transit oriented development, more walking and biking opportunities. (Raymond Guarino)
 - Those looking at the Natural Resources bullet should be aware that the Conservation Commission is charged with maintaining an Inventory of Nashua's key Natural Resources - a list that was

last updated in 2006 and warrants work (Gene Porter)

- Would like to talk briefly about development vs. re-development as an important part of Nashua and ultimately our land use planning (Scott LeClair)
- The question about carbon neutrality is too extreme- "the most important." We will not find people who think carbon reduction is important but not the most important thing. (Jim Donchess)
- Development in Nashua will be redevelopment - something is already there and we are going to take it down, what has to come out of this is things are going to change from where they are today (Scott LeClair)
- Should we have a comment related to rail. (Paul Shea)
- Related to rail, I think we need to look at this from a lens of post-COVID19. We may be looking at less commuting, and the need for more opportunities within the City. (Justin Kates)
- Will the boundaries of the city ever change? (Peter Schaefer)
- Adequate resources to preserve our natural resources. (Gene Porter)
- When I visit small towns I go to a community center, that has information/guidance on where to go - could we have one? (Homa Jaferey)
- Need more focused on investment (Paul Shea)
- Is it economic development geared to happiness like portland. (Tim Cummings)
- Public facing: how do we spur happiness
- How can we better support businesses
- Economic impact of arts and culture
- Sarah: retention in existing and youth
- Doria Brown: would community power programs and energy grid improvements fall into a question?

This memorandum represents our understanding of the events which transpired and the actions which were taken. If they do not conform to a recipient's understanding, prompt written notice must be communicated to the writer. If no corrections or objections are made, this memorandum will be relied upon as a factual interpretation of this meeting.