

Preserving Regional Character

Smart growth can save this traditional New England scene from becoming Anyplace, USA.

If current trends continue, many of our region's special places will be lost to unplanned growth. The photos show one semi-rural town as it appears today, and as it might develop. Under current policies, large-lot subdivisions ① would consume acres of farms and fields, while providing few housing choices for working families and fixed-income seniors. New development near the shoreline ② would destroy wildlife habitat and cut off public access to the lake. Sprawling commercial development ③ ④ would create traffic problems and send more polluted stormwater runoff into nearby streams and aquifers.

Under MetroFuture, MAPC's comprehensive regional plan, this area would grow very differently. Small clusters of homes ⑤ would be tucked away at the edge of the forest, and the remainder of that forested area would be preserved as public open space. New zoning would allow modest homes on small lots ⑥, creating more starter housing for young families. A small number of townhouses ⑦ would cluster around an expanded village district and farm stand. "Buy local" programs would help farms ⑧ remain viable. A new nature preserve and boat rental shop ⑨ would increase tourism.

If current trends continue

Present Day



MetroFuture

