



Climate Change

This section of the plan will identify and analyze existing and forecasted implications of climate change for Bolton as it applies to a wide range of topics in the Master Plan.

Did You Know?

Although not specifically required to be included in a Master Plan by Massachusetts regulations, climate change is one of the most significant and pervasive consideration that must be addressed in virtually every element of our planning. There are direct relationships between climate change and our civil infrastructure, housing, municipal facilities, economic development (including agriculture), water & sewer, and land use. Consequently, the Bolton Master Plan will take into account climate change, both reducing the causes and mitigating the effects throughout the plan.

- ◆ In 2010 Bolton Completed the [Green Communities Action Plan](#)
- ◆ In 2016 Bolton Town Meeting approved adopting the proposals and target of the Paris Climate Accord as town public policy.
- ◆ In 2016 Bolton was designated as a Solarized Community through the Mass. Clean Energy Center.
- ◆ In 2017 Bolton was approved as a Green Community and received several grant awards for energy conservation upgrades
- ◆ In 2020 the Town complete a [Community Resilience Building Process](#) resulting in Municipal Vulnerability preparedness designation
Bolton contribute to the [Apple Country Natural Climate Solutions Report](#) with Devens and Harvard

Goals and Objectives - Current Draft for Inclusion in Master Plan

Goal 1: Increase local climate planning capacity.

- Expand community capacity and planning for future climate resilience. This includes addressing minimizing contributions to climate change and mitigating its effects through a dedicated committee and planning for data gathering/publication, reduction of energy use and identification/mitigation of climate hazards.

Goal 2: Work toward achieving the State's clean energy and sustainability goals.

- Reduce Bolton's carbon footprint through increased energy and water conservation, renewable energy for all types of construction, retrofitting existing facilities and publicizing free home energy saving evaluations.

Goal 3: Implement nature-based solutions and climate conscious landscape planning.

- Objective: Engage in floodplain management planning and the protection of wetlands through prioritized wetlands and buffer restoration and upgrade stormwater management regulations for new development and associated infrastructure.

Goal 4: Create resilient landscapes.

- Reduce areas of impervious surface and encourage on-site filtration and stormwater management practices including encouraging green infrastructure, both in terms of landscape materials, protection of existing and planting new native trees and shrubs that will survive in warmer climates. Utilize zoning overlay districts and landscape design to protect landscapes with high ecological and climate resilience values.

Goal 5: Update general regulatory context and language to support climate resilience.

- Utilize zoning bylaws and subdivision regulations to protect and enhance climate resilience including design review criteria and open space requirements in the Town's Subdivision Rules and Regulations based on climate resilience.

Other Key Points

When it comes to specific actions that could be taken to improve municipal services and facilities, the elephant in the room is always "How much will it cost?" The Master Plan Steering Committee believes that cost should always be a factor when considering how and when to implement a recommendation from the Master Plan. We understand that [taxes](#) are a perennial concern for Bolton's residents, and there are often trade-offs to be made when deciding whether to pursue improvement in facilities or services. That's why the implementation matrix for all recommended actions in the new Master Plan will include a column for "Magnitude of Cost" and a column for "Resources".