

BACKGROUND - WHY WAS VISION 2020 NEEDED?

Southeastern Massachusetts is the fastest growing region in the state, adding population at three times the state's rate. The nature of the growth is sprawl, consuming open space and farms, demanding new infrastructure investment, and diverting needed resources away from our urbanized areas.

It is change that the region is unprepared for, with many communities facing growth rates that overwhelm their outdated master plans, inadequate zoning bylaws and limited professional capability. And this growth is exacerbated by a basic need in each community for revenue-producing land uses, resulting in local development policies that are neither good planning nor correlated to the market.

Vision 2020 was the region's response to this problem.

HISTORY - WHAT HAS VISION 2020 DONE?

The Vision 2020 Task Force first convened on February 4, 1998. It grew out of a mandate from participants at a regional growth conference held at Bridgewater State College in the fall of 1997. At that time, a new commuter rail line had begun service to the region and there was a high level of concern over the impact new development would have on southeastern Massachusetts. In response, the region's three planning agencies organized the Vision 2020 Task Force.

Over nearly four years, the Task Force has achieved some significant milestones. These include:

- Completion of the Agenda for the Future in June, 1999;
- Ratification of the New Mayflower Compact by 40 of the 51 participating communities in October, 2000;
- Developed proposals for Targeted Investment and Targeted Protection Areas as a means to implement development concepts;
- Sponsored regional growth management conferences;
- Proposed creation of Growth Task Forces related to two projects: the proposed widening of Route 3, and the re-establishment of commuter rail service to Fall River and New Bedford (both subsequently created);
- Served as the inspiration for subsequent work - the Natural Resource Atlas by the Manomet Center, and "Creating a Rural Resource Reserve (Green Heart)" by the Harvard Graduate School of Design; and
- Conducted an extensive outreach and education program throughout the region with meetings, TV and radio appearances, newsletters, a website and a video.

While these accomplishments were important, possibly the most significant achievement of Vision 2020 has been to focus discussion and debate in the region on the problems and solutions related to the rapid growth being experienced in southeastern Massachusetts.

FUTURE OF VISION 2020 - WHERE IS IT HEADED?

With the achievement of those milestones and the articulation of a broad vision for the region, it is time for the Vision 2020 Initiative to move on to the next stage - implementation.

Vision 2020 will now have a new name, a new structure and a new mission and objectives.

NEW NAME

Vision 2020: A Partnership for Southeastern Massachusetts

NEW STRUCTURE

Vision 2020 will be governed by a Board of Directors whose composition will reflect its enhanced mission - to work on implementation of the recommendations of the Agenda for the Future and the New Mayflower Compact. This will involve greater participation by municipal officials working within a regional framework provided by the regional planning agencies:

- Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) in Taunton;
- Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC) in Brockton; and
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) in Boston (serving South Shore towns).

The southeastern Massachusetts region has also been expanded to a total of 52 cities and towns by adding the Town of Weymouth.

NEW MISSION (Revised: December 18, 2001)

Vision 2020: A Partnership for Southeastern Massachusetts shall make recommendations to improve the management of land use, protect the natural environment, and foster sustainable economic growth and development in Southeastern Massachusetts so that such management results in growth consistent with the region's unique character, natural and historic resources and quality of life for the benefit of future generations. Vision 2020 will be an educational voice and an advocate for the region's 52 cities and towns on these issues.

NEW OBJECTIVES (Revised: March 6, 2002)

1. Establish the Center for Southeastern Massachusetts
 - Provide outreach, education, and research to support growth management
 - Provide technical assistance and training to cities and towns to implement recommendations of the Agenda for the Future and the New Mayflower Compact

2. Work to broaden the economic viability of the region's land based industries
 - Assist the region's cranberry industry to explore alternative development options; debt restructuring and conservation and/or agricultural restrictions
 - (Others to be added re: agriculture, etc.)

3. Use the legislative process to further Vision 2020 goals
 - Work to pass statewide planning legislation
 - Include incentives for Targeted Investment Areas/Targeted Protection Areas implementation
 - Reform the current zoning act
 - Reform municipal revenue generating strategies

4. Develop detailed regional strategies for southeastern Massachusetts as outlined in the Agenda for the Future
 - Strategy for Open Space and Natural Resources
 - Strategy for Economic Development and Urban Reinvestment
 - Strategy for Land Use and Housing
 - Strategy for Infrastructure

5. Assist cities and towns of southeastern Massachusetts to implement the New Mayflower Compact

For more information about Vision 2020, contact:

- **Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), Boston: (617) 451-2770**
 - **Old Colony Planning Council (OCPC), Brockton:
(508) 583-1833**
- **Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD), Taunton:
(508) 824-1367**