



## Destination Groton: *Exploring the Possibilities*

The report attempts to capture the many reasons to celebrate Groton's past and present, as well as envision its future as a Destination Community. The report, begun in the fall of 2020, is designed to be a resource for the Town as it faces the opportunities and challenges the future holds. That future is now.

In recent years, the advent of new restaurants for fine dining and the restoration of the Groton Inn has contributed to creating Groton's strongly positive "destination" reputation. In the fall of 2022, the anticipated opening of the Indian Hill Music Center, a world class music education and performance location now under construction, will accelerate the pace, and increase the geographic range of people coming to Groton.



Increased visitors to Groton will benefit businesses and many non-profits and will generate increased revenues for the town and the region.

The Town of Groton has an extraordinary landscape with access to open space, a fascinating and important 365-year history with numerous historic buildings and sites, farms, orchards and a quintessential New England town center.



A Working Group of eight individuals led by the Groton Business Association (GBA), is responsible for the report's contents and its findings and conclusion.

### **In its analysis, the GBA Working Group has:**

- Researched how other Massachusetts communities manage issues related to being a Destination Community such as Lenox (Tanglewood), Sturbridge (Old Sturbridge Village), and North Adams (Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art). Although these destinations are much larger in scale than Groton, the lessons are pertinent.
- Conducted focus groups and surveyed Stakeholders from the greater business, nonprofit and town communities about opportunities and concerns.
- Identified potential for commercial and retail development and the effect this economic growth would have on local job creation and the local tax base.

## The GBA Working Group presents 23 Findings as summarized below:

1. **Learn from other Destination communities:** Successful Destination Communities have the support and collaboration of all Stakeholders (Town Residents, Business and Non-profit Communities and Town leaders) and can contribute to a greater sense of community, quality of life and civic pride.
2. **Pay attention to local constituencies:** Stakeholders interviewed for this study are very enthusiastic about Groton becoming a Destination Community but wish to do so without losing the historic, rural small-town character of our Town.
3. **Access outside sources of funding:** Groton should pursue program and infrastructure funding opportunities that can assist Destination Groton.
4. **Market strategically:** Destination Communities focus on developing strategic plans which include guiding change and assisting visitors through a Visitors Center and social media.
5. **Retain the character of the town:** Groton has many wonderful assets that already will appeal to visitors and they that must be preserved.
6. **The time to move forward is now:** Groton has the opportunity to celebrate the Town's rich history and build a sustainable economic base that embraces the future, if it acts now.

## Conclusion

Based on the Findings, the GBA Working Group concludes that an individual, and a new Town Destination Groton Committee be established, and responsible for coordinating and managing the Destination Groton concept and bring it to reality.

The GBA Working Group looks forward to working collaboratively with town and community leaders to address opportunities and infrastructure implications. In the end, we believe engaging the greater Groton community in this broader conversation now will better our collective readiness and thereby help determine Groton's future quality of life. To read the entire report go to: [www.grotonbusinessassociation.com](http://www.grotonbusinessassociation.com)



***Let the conversation begin.***