



WINCHESTER MASTER PLAN 2030

ACTION PLAN

ADOPTED 3/24/2020

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This Master Plan has a ten-year planning horizon. From year-to-year, many actions will be required to successfully achieve the community's vision including funding appropriations, regulatory amendments, board and commission votes, new municipal staff positions, and numerous studies. There will be many decisions to make along the way and a significant amount of coordination to ensure successful implementation.

To coordinate and oversee these varied actions, the town intends to create a Master Plan Implementation Committee that will report to the Planning Board and will be made up of a variety of community representatives including town officials, residents, and members of the former Master Plan Steering Committee.

This new committee will have an important role to ensure that the vision, goals, and strategies of this Master Plan are effectively integrated into the town's priorities, that outcomes are regularly measured and evaluated, and that the plan is updated and adjusted as needed.

It is the Town Manger's intent that the committee have access to a Master Plan revolving fund that is replenished annually. In addition, supplemental funding would be requested to support specific initiatives, projects, and staffing to implement this plan.

More information on each of the strategies—in addition to case studies, maps, and diagrams—can be found in this supplementary *Action Plan* for Winchester's Master Plan. Like the *Master Plan Report*, the *Action Plan* is divided into four core themes that emerged through the planning process based on the community's values and priority issues that the community is facing: 1) Balancing Development with Preservation, 2) Connecting People to Places, 3) Ensuring Sustainability, and 4) Building Community. The example on the next page shows how to read the pages in the *Action Plan*.



Primary Goal
This icon references the main goal the strategy helps achieve. Goals are conditions to aim for that help the community achieve its vision over time.

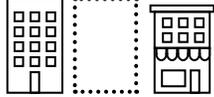
Strategy
Strategies are actionable ways that the town will work to achieve one or more of the goals.

Secondary Goals
If there are additional goal(s) that this strategy helps achieve, the icon for the goal is shown here.

Strategy Narrative
The narrative explains the strategy and what it could entail in greater detail.

Funding Cost
An estimated cost range for each strategy.

\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
less than \$50K	\$50K to \$250K	\$250K to \$1M	more than \$1M



A1. Strategic Redevelopment in Evolving Opportunity Areas

Strategy: A1.1 Increase community planning staff capacity to strengthen the Town's ability to promote desired development objectives and expand survey, planning, historic preservation, and regulatory support.

Secondary Goals
This strategy supports all goals identified in the 2030 Master Plan.

To effectively promote the desired development and redevelopment in town, it will benefit the town to hire additional planning staff with expertise in land use and zoning; development review; architecture, design, and historic preservation; and affordable housing to support the town boards and commissions responsible for development and preservation including the Planning Board, Historical Commission—and any Local Historic District Commissions created as a result of establishing Local Historic Districts, Design Review Committee; Disability Access Commission; Housing Partnership Board, and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Strategy Type
Strategies can fall into one or multiple types of projects: physical/design improvements; regulatory/policy changes; program/service provision; and/or capacity building.

physical/design regulatory/policy programmatic capacity building

Timing
Strategies are either near-term (0-3 years); mid-term (4-7 years); long-term (8-10+); or ongoing.

near-term (0-3 yrs) mid-term (4-7 yrs) long-term (8-10+ yrs) ongoing

Responsible Party (% responsible)
Identifies the primary and supporting departments, boards and committees, and other organizations that could complete the strategy.

Strategy Type
capacity building

Timing
near-term (0-3 yrs)

Responsible Party (% responsible):
Town Manager; Planning Department/Planning Board; and Town Meeting (75%)

Select Board; Engineering Department; Historical Commission; Design Review Committee; Disability Access Commission (DAC); Zoning Board of Appeals; and Housing Partnership Board (25%)

Funding Cost
\$\$

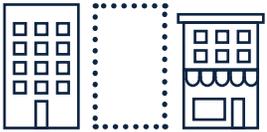
Funding Sources
Town Budget

Funding Sources
Identifies how a strategy could be funded, either from existing sources, such as the Town Budget, or outside sources, such as grants.

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK



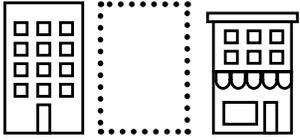
BALANCING DEVELOPMENT WITH PRESERVATION



ENCOURAGE MORE COMMERCIAL, MIXED-USE, AND COMPACT DEVELOPMENT IN AREAS THAT SUPPORT ECONOMIC VIBRANCY, INCLUDING STRATEGIC REDEVELOPMENT PARCELS IN TOWN CENTER AND THE IDENTIFIED *EVOLVING OPPORTUNITY AREAS*.

GOAL A1

BALANCING DEVELOPMENT WITH PRESERVATION • 5



A1. Strategic Redevelopment in *Evolving Opportunity Areas*

Strategy: A1.1 Increase community planning staff capacity to strengthen the Town’s ability to promote desired development objectives and expand survey, planning, historic preservation, and regulatory support.

Secondary Goals

This strategy supports all goals identified in the 2030 Master Plan.

To effectively promote the desired development and redevelopment in town, it will benefit the town to hire additional planning staff with expertise in land use and zoning; development review; architecture, design, and historic preservation; and affordable housing to support the town boards and commissions responsible for development and preservation including the Planning Board, Historical Commission—and any Local Historic District Commissions created as a result of establishing Local Historic Districts, Design Review Committee; Disability Access Commission; Housing Partnership Board, and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager, Planning Department/Planning Board, and Town Meeting (75%)

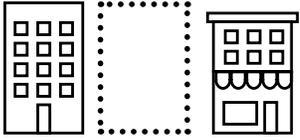
Select Board, Engineering Department, Historical Commission, Design Review Committee, Disability Access Commission (DAC), Zoning Board of Appeals, and Housing Partnership Board (25%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

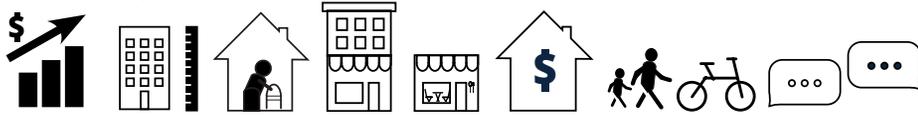
Town Budget



A1. Strategic Redevelopment in *Evolving Opportunity Areas*

Strategy A1.2.1: Create an area plan for the North Main Street Corridor to envision public realm improvements and to identify development opportunities, zoning amendments, and design guidelines to help shape future development.

Secondary Goals



A combination of physical improvements along the corridor and less restrictive zoning with development incentives, including more allowable development intensity, may be necessary to entice existing property owners to consider redevelopment options for the North Main Street corridor. The vision for these options should be grounded in a community-led process. The process would bring together residents and stakeholders to share their respective wants and needs. This information would then be synthesized with empirical data such as a residential/commercial market study to determine the viability of the overall vision.

Ideally, the changes along the southern North Main Street corridor would increase housing choice, establish a more robust commercial and jobs base, and increase visitation to the area. To garner investment in the corridor, the Town will likely have to make zoning changes to allow higher intensity development, parcel consolidation, increased building heights, and a wider range of uses. Mixed-use residential should be considered as an approach to meeting the current demand for housing. As the corridor starts to see more investment, it is possible that some all-commercial buildings may be proposed. Coupling zoning changes with design guidelines would help ensure new development adheres to consistent design standards. See Page 8 for a map that illustrates future land use perspectives of the North Main Street Corridor.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board (75%)

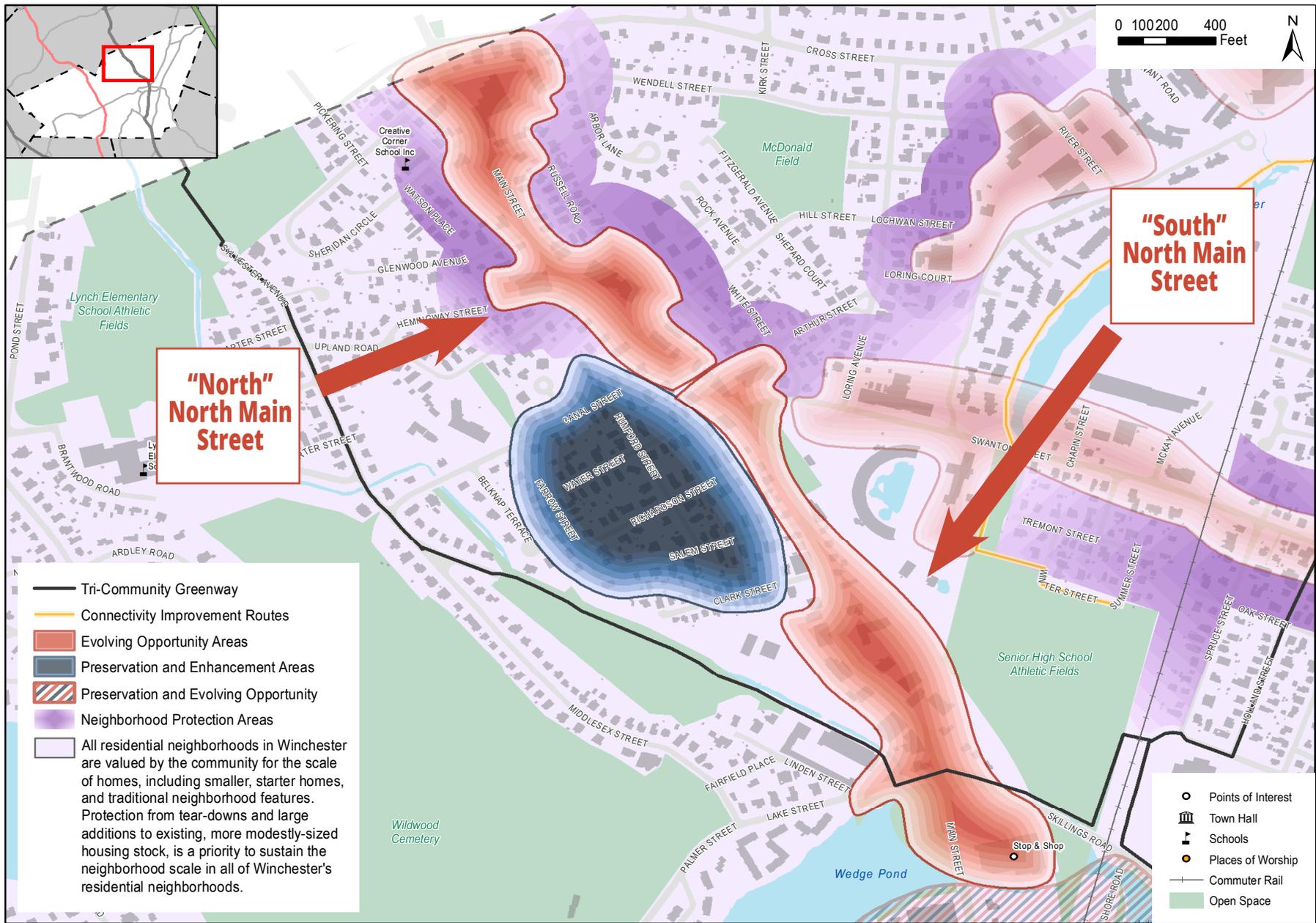
Design Review Committee, TTAC, Chamber of Commerce, and other Committees and Departments as needed (25%)

Funding Cost

\$ – \$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget; Grants, Staff Time



**"North"
North Main
Street**

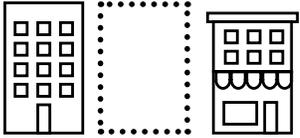
**"South"
North Main
Street**

— Tri-Community Greenway
 — Connectivity Improvement Routes
 Evolving Opportunity Areas
 Preservation and Enhancement Areas
 Preservation and Evolving Opportunity
 Neighborhood Protection Areas
 All residential neighborhoods in Winchester are valued by the community for the scale of homes, including smaller, starter homes, and traditional neighborhood features. Protection from tear-downs and large additions to existing, more modestly-sized housing stock, is a priority to sustain the neighborhood scale in all of Winchester's residential neighborhoods.

- Points of Interest
- 🏛️ Town Hall
- 🎓 Schools
- 🕌 Places of Worship
- Commuter Rail
- 🌳 Open Space

MAP

North Main Street Commercial Corridor



A1. Strategic Redevelopment in *Evolving Opportunity Areas*

Strategy A1.2.2: Consider establishing a district improvement financing (DIF) program in the southern portion of the North Main Street corridor to allow the Town to borrow funds to target public infrastructure improvements in the district based on future tax revenue increases.

Secondary Goals



The creation of a DIF district can help unlock financial resources to fund critical infrastructure projects within Winchester, such as sidewalk, streetscape, crosswalk, parking or landscaping improvements. A DIF works by allowing a community to issue general obligation bonds backed by future property taxes which would result from new development within the DIF district. From a financing standpoint, the debt service on the bonds is paid for via the tax increment realized in the DIF district; money not used for debt service reverts to the General Fund. By securing funding upfront, the community can direct investments in infrastructure projects which ultimately serve to unlock new development.

Example communities which have successfully implemented a DIF include the Town of Easton, and the cities of Amesbury and Somerville. These communities took neighborhood visions and then worked with developers to create the necessary conditions, from an infrastructure standpoint, to ensure the envisioned development could take place. See page 10 and 11 for case studies.

More information: <https://www.massdevelopment.com/what-we-offer/real-estate-services/technical-assistance/district-improvement-financing>

MassDevelopment's DIF Guide: https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/DIF/V8_5.29.19_-_DIF_Guide_-_MassDevelopment_DIF.pdf

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, new Economic Development Task Force, Select Board, and Town Manager (75%)

Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

\$ and/or Staff Time

Funding Sources

Town Budget and Staff Time



Five Corners DIF, Easton, MA

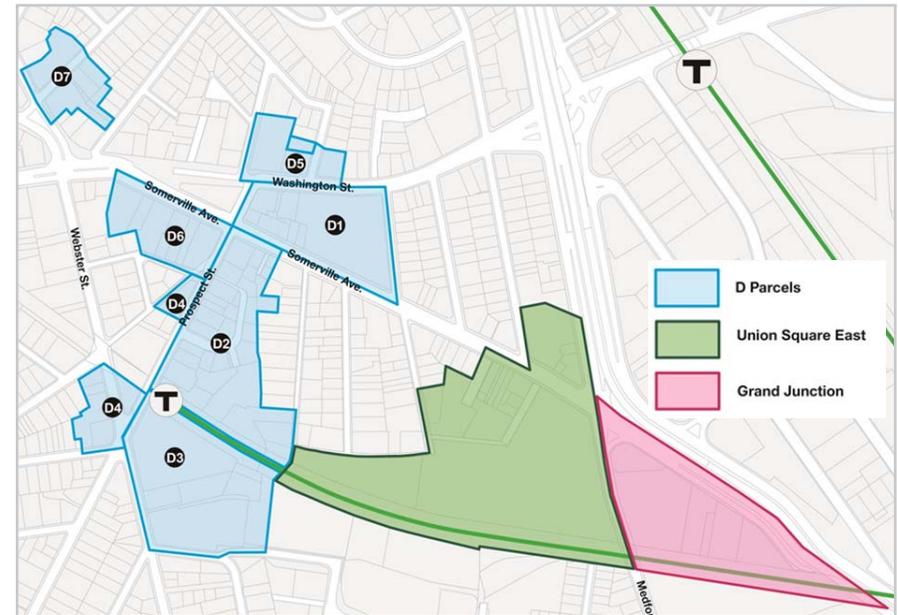
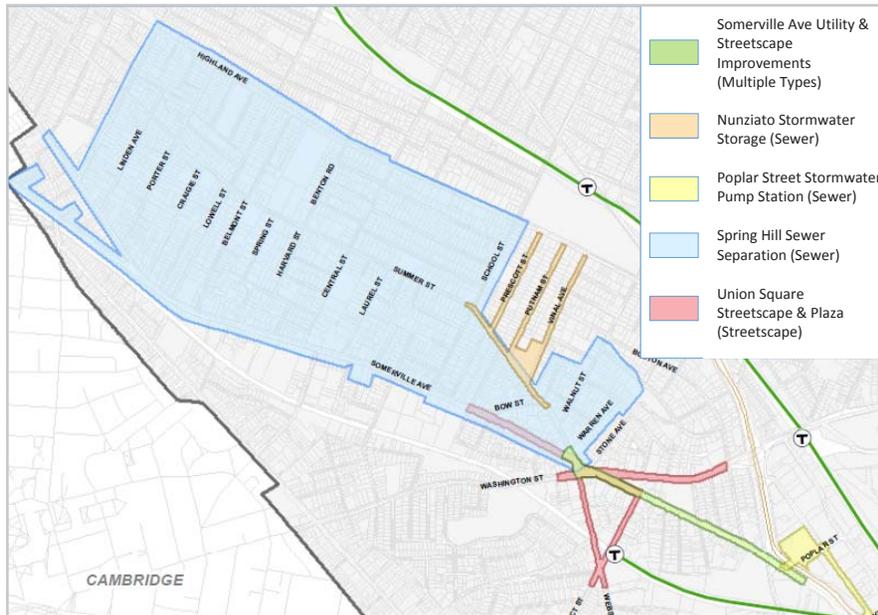
In the spring of 2019, Easton adopted the Five Corners District Improvement Financing District and Program Master Plan. The primary objectives driving the community to consider and adopt a DIF include:

- To support sewer improvements and development and reduce associated financial burdens from area residents and businesses.
- To support infrastructure improvements identified in Easton's Master Plan and Water Management Plan.

Learn more: <https://www.easton.ma.us/sewer/dif/index.php>

CASE STUDY

Planned & Approved Project	Estimated Cost
Sewer Collection System	\$13,500,000
Potential Future Projects ¹⁰	Estimated Cost ¹¹
Culvert Replacement	\$1,800,000
Foundry Street Roadway Re-Construction from Robert Drive to Depot Street to Complete Streets standards Widening of roadway Sidewalks, pedestrian pathways and trails Bicycle lanes and related support infrastructure Other transportation and streetscape improvements	\$5,000,000
Signal Installation	\$2,200,000
1.5% inflation rate compounded over 10 years	\$1,444,867
Total Estimated Cost	\$10,444,867
Estimated Total Cost	\$23,944,867



Union Square DIF, Somerville, MA

Somerville's Union Square DIF was adopted in December, 2017. Prompted by the Green Line extension, Somerville wanted to capitalize on and prepare for upcoming development potential in the Union Square area. Grounded in Somerville's community-wide Comprehensive Master Plan (2012) and Union Square Neighborhood Plan (2015), the Union Square DIF is supporting major public infrastructure investments, including streetscape improvements and stormwater and sewer infrastructure improvements. These improvements will work directly to accommodate new private commercial and residential development, including affordable units, as well as other development that may take place in the area in the years to come.

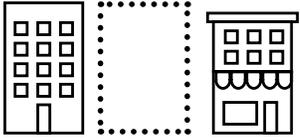
Table 3. Proposed Private Development Program

	Total Commercial SF	Office/Lab Building SF	Retail Building SF	Hotel Room Key	Total Residential SF	Market Rate Residential Units	Inclusionary Zoning Affordable Residential Units
D Parcels	1,344,850	1,097,400	164,450	175	923,175	631	158
Union Square East	1,159,998	987,726	172,273	0	636,742	453	113
Grand Junction*	229,772	201,039	28,733	0	163,091	124	31
Total	2,734,620	2,286,165	365,456	175	1,723,008	1,208	302

*The area of Grand Junction included in the Development District is only a portion of the Grand Junction neighborhood.

CASE STUDY

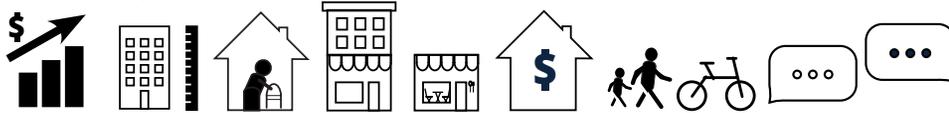
Learn more: <https://www.somervillema.gov/usqdif>
https://www.massdevelopment.com/assets/what-we-offer/DIF/V8_5.29.19_-_Case_Study_City_of_Somerville_DIF_-_MassDevelopment_DIF.pdf



A1. Strategic Redevelopment in *Evolving Opportunity Areas*

Strategy A1.3.1: Collaborate with neighborhood residents to create an area plan for the Holton/Cross Street Area to increase the value of the non-residential tax base, including updated zoning that strategically responds to the market and to create more cohesive neighborhood buffering.

Secondary Goals



Developing a cohesive plan with mirrored zoning across the municipal border can help create more predictability and reduce instances of competing forces. Most of the industrial land along the Holton Street corridor lies in Woburn, so it may be to Winchester's benefit to coordinate land use, zoning, and marketing efforts. Currently, the industrial area has a mix of uses that include children's play spaces, indoor swimming, and a facility for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The major route in and out of the industrial area is along Holton Street with a connection to Montvale Avenue and I-93 in Woburn. The area planning effort should focus on creating synergies with the Woburn industrial area, strengthening transportation connections, and looking at ways that Winchester could support and/or grow their own industrial and commercial base. Zoning changes to the Winchester zoning bylaw and zoning map should reflect a consensus as to what type of industrial, or other uses, are most appropriate and compatible in the Holton/Cross Street area of town for the long term. It could also allow or encourage multi-family residential development. See page 13 for a map of future land use perspectives of the Holton/Cross Street commercial area.

Along with efforts to increase cooperation with Woburn, Winchester should ensure that any new development located in the Holton/Cross Street area does not negatively impact the existing residential neighborhoods around the site. In addition to the type of uses allowed, zoning requirements and conditions should focus on precluding and/or ameliorating any potential impacts of industrial uses on the larger surrounding neighborhood.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board and Town Manager (75%)

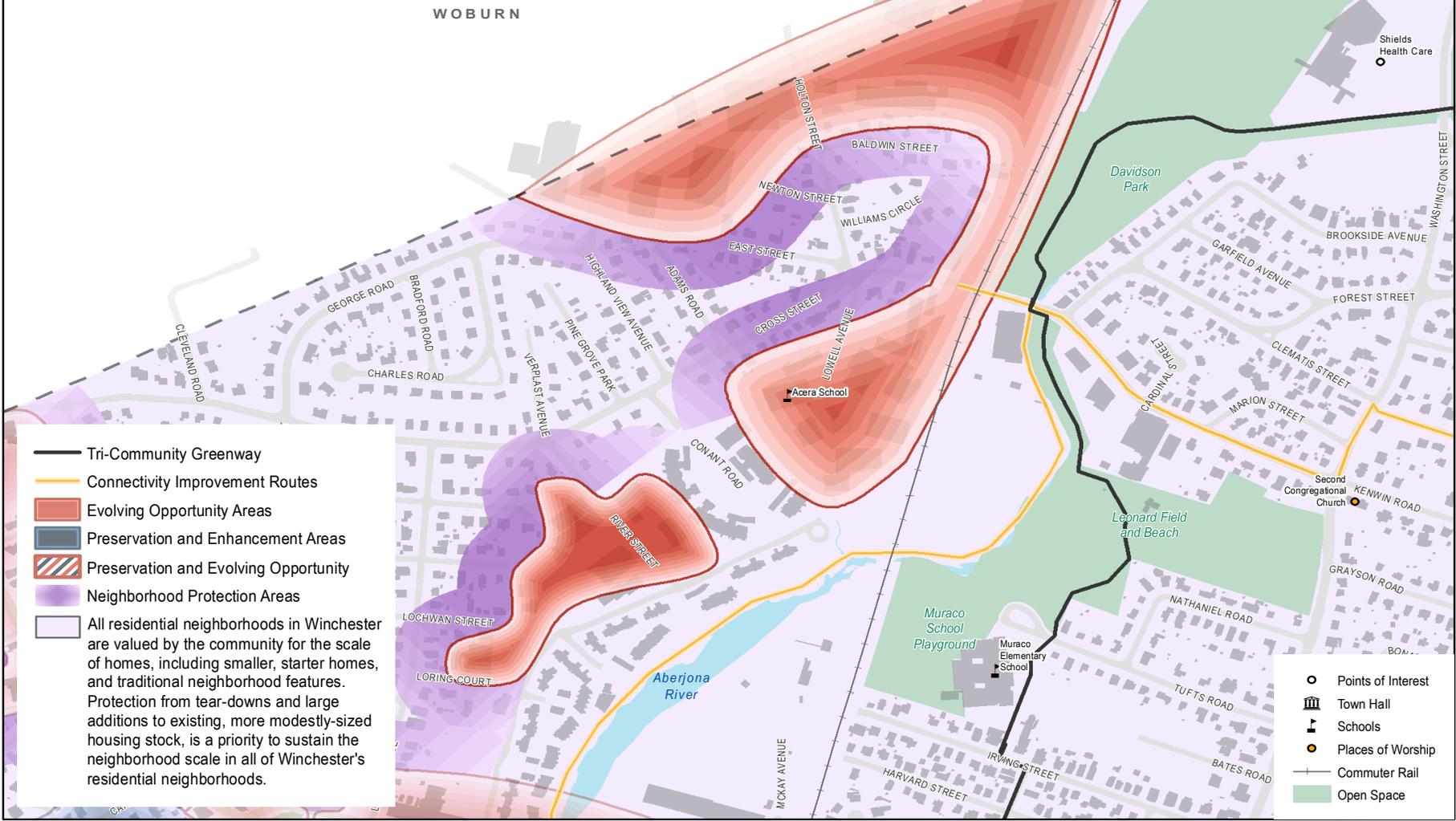
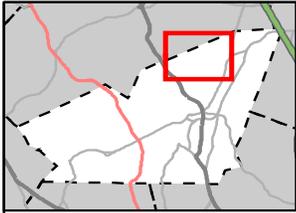
TTAC, Chamber of Commerce, Town Meeting, and other Committees and Department Heads as needed (25%)

Funding Cost

\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget + Staff Time; Woburn City Budget + Staff Time

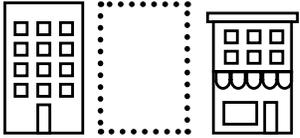


— Tri-Community Greenway
 — Connectivity Improvement Routes
 Evolving Opportunity Areas
 Preservation and Enhancement Areas
 Preservation and Evolving Opportunity
 Neighborhood Protection Areas
 All residential neighborhoods in Winchester are valued by the community for the scale of homes, including smaller, starter homes, and traditional neighborhood features. Protection from tear-downs and large additions to existing, more modestly-sized housing stock, is a priority to sustain the neighborhood scale in all of Winchester's residential neighborhoods.

- Points of Interest
- 🏛️ Town Hall
- 🎓 Schools
- ⛪ Places of Worship
- Commuter Rail
- 🌳 Open Space

MAP

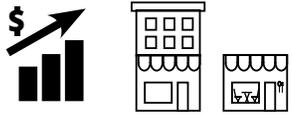
Holton/Cross Street Commercial Area



A1. Strategic Redevelopment in *Evolving Opportunity Areas*

Strategy A1.3.2: Work with property owners in the Holton/Cross Street Area to support marketing for commercial, industrial, and/or office uses (as determined by the Holton/Cross Area Plan).

Secondary Goals



Using its financial and political resources, the Town can help market the Holton/Cross area to new businesses. The current business mix in the Holton/Cross area does not maximize its potential. By working with property owners, the Town can help attract new businesses which complement existing businesses located in both Winchester and Woburn, such as the Winchester Hospital and Food and Drug Administration research facility. The marketable features of the area include access to Interstate 93, a highly educated workforce, and proximity to Boston and the Route 128 corridor. The Holton/Cross area has the potential to be reconfigured by new business tenants to take advantage of the large parcels which are currently underutilized.

By looking at the entirety of the Holton/Cross Street area, even up into Woburn, the two municipalities could create joint marketing efforts where benefits to one community can be shared by both. As new companies are brought into the industrial park, both communities stand to benefit from added spending power, new employees, and growth in the tax base. The two communities could also engage in joint marketing efforts by pooling resources, jointly listing properties, sharing in business recruitment strategies, and more.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

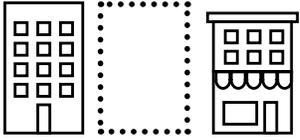
Planning Department/Planning Board, new Economic Development Task Force, Town Manager, and Chamber of Commerce (100%)

Funding Cost

\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget + Staff Time



A1. Strategic Redevelopment in *Evolving Opportunity Areas*

Strategy A1.4: Adopt the community's desired future land uses and real estate market potential for key commercial and potential redevelopment sites along the Cambridge Street Corridor; amend zoning and design guidelines to reflect these findings.

Secondary Goals



Conducting a corridor study for Cambridge Street would help solidify a vision for this corridor with particular focus on potential infill or redevelopment sites and the preservation of commercial uses through rezoning. The vision and future implementation steps would need to incorporate resident and stakeholder input. With a variety of parcel sizes along the corridor, key decisions may be required in the future as redevelopment of larger parcels arise and potential strategies for aggregation of smaller parcels are needed. The Town should have a plan in place should any of these larger parcels, such as Mahoney's Garden Center or Bonnell Motors Inc., be positioned for redevelopment, including commercial, industrial, and potentially, multi-family residential.

The study should identify ways to buffer future commercial or industrial development along this corridor from surrounding residential neighborhoods using landscaping, building massing and setbacks, design techniques, transition areas, and siting of new buildings away from the residential areas and closer to, or at, the commercial corridor sidewalks. The areas are bounded by residential development, mostly single-family homes and duplexes, and conducting these studies could help the Town determine what types of development is palatable and viable. The studies should include an analysis of and recommendations for land use and zoning changes, massing and design guidelines, a market analysis, and transportation, parking, and infrastructure improvements. The Town should amend zoning to orient redevelopment aligned with study findings, including considering adopting design guidelines. See page 16 for a map of the future land use perspectives of the Cambridge Street Corridor.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board (60%)

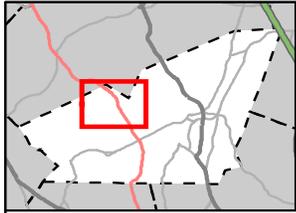
TTAC, Chamber of Commerce, Town Meeting, other Committees and Department Heads as needed, and MassDOT (40%)

Funding Cost

\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget + Staff Time

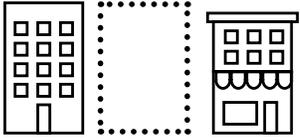


- Tri-Community Greenway
- Connectivity Improvement Routes
- Evolving Opportunity Areas
- Preservation and Enhancement Areas
- Preservation and Evolving Opportunity
- Neighborhood Protection Areas
- All residential neighborhoods in Winchester are valued by the community for the scale of homes, including smaller, starter homes, and traditional neighborhood features. Protection from tear-downs and large additions to existing, more modestly-sized housing stock, is a priority to sustain the neighborhood scale in all of Winchester's residential neighborhoods.

- Points of Interest
- Town Hall
- Schools
- Places of Worship
- Commuter Rail
- Open Space

MAP

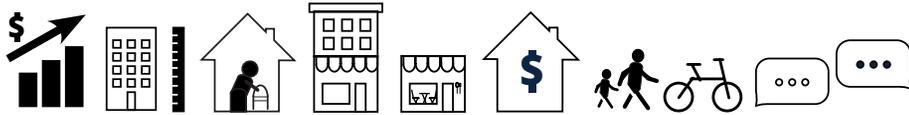
Cambridge Street Commercial Corridor



A1. Strategic Redevelopment in *Evolving Opportunity Areas*

Strategy A1.5: Strengthen Swanton Street as a primary connection between North Main and Washington Streets through zoning amendments to foster redevelopment opportunities and through public streetscape and wayfinding improvements.

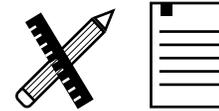
Secondary Goals



Consider rezoning industrially zoned land in front of the transfer station to commercial uses that reflect existing land uses and promote appropriate redevelopment. Review zoning provisions to ensure existing zoning along Swanton Street encourages appropriate and desirable redevelopment, such as commercial, residential, or mixed-use development, especially the site on the corner of Swanton and Washington Street. Include Swanton Street in the updated Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and incorporate new streetscape improvements and a well-designed wayfinding signage system that reinforces key connections to destinations such as the Fells, North Main Street, Town Center, and the Tri-Community Greenway.

See page 18 for a map of the future land use perspectives of Swanton Street.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Engineering Department, DPW, and Select Board (75%)

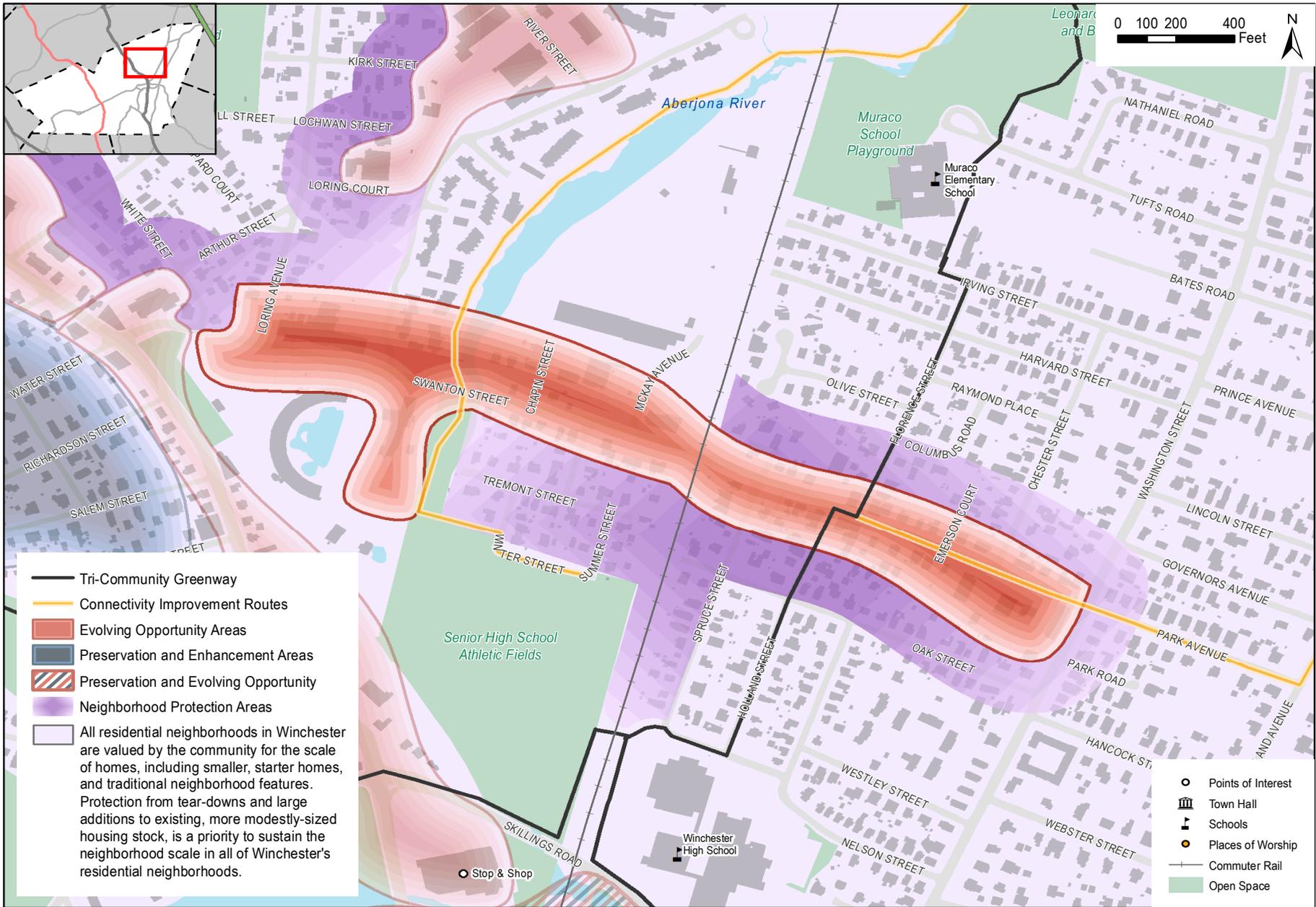
Design Review Committee, Town Meeting, TTAC, Building Department, and Housing Partnership Board (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Department Budgets and Capital Planning



Swanton Street Commercial Corridor

MAP



CULTIVATE ACTIVE SUPPORT BY TOWN LEADERSHIP FOR THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF EXISTING BUSINESSES AND FOR SEEKING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW BUSINESSES IN WINCHESTER.

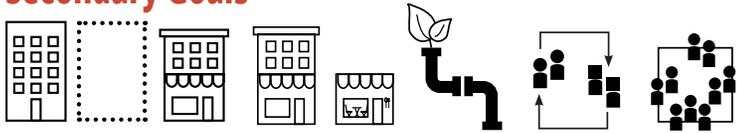
GOAL A2



A2. Economic Development Support and Leadership

Strategy A2.1: Create a Main Streets Organization to promote Town Center, the Cultural District, and local businesses, and to collaborate with businesses and other entities to organize events that draw people to Town Center and catalyze business activity.

Secondary Goals



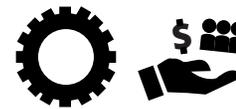
There are many different types of entities that could be established to serve as an advocate and organizer for the Town Center and to work in collaboration with the Cultural District and the Chamber of Commerce. A Main Streets Organization would be a private voluntary membership entity that needs to fundraise (privately) but does not impose any fees or taxes on property or business owners.

A staffed Main Streets Organization could provide added economic development capacity for the Town and concentrate efforts on boosting activity, and therefore potential customers, in the Town Center. Some Main Street organizations are structured with local town officials filling seats on a Board of Directors.

The organization would focus on the four-point Main Street approach: economic vitality, design, promotion, and organization. Main Streets Organizations can implement creative approaches to place-based improvements such as a) providing experiences, b) fostering social engagement, c) directly supporting local businesses, such as through a façade improvement grant program, and d) implementing catalyst strategies, such as elder-friendly/ aging-in-community, family friendly, and/or arts strategies.

See pages 21 and 22 for case studies.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager, Select Board, and Chamber of Commerce (75%)

Planning Department/Planning Board, Cultural District Commission, Cultural Council, and new Communications and Engagement Coordinator (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Main Street Programs, potentially State Economic and Community Development Funds, and/or Downtown Revitalization Funds



A2. Economic Development Support and Leadership

Main Street America provides a wealth of resources to support local Main Street organizations, such as its new publication “The Future of Retail: Creative Approaches to Place-Based Entrepreneurship.”

The Town should take advantage of grant programs such as the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative grants that provide funds for a wide variety of strategies related to downtown revitalization efforts. This is a yearly grant program that the Town should spend time preparing for to understand how it could best use the funds prior to submitting a proposal. Façade improvement programs often require local businesses to match a grant and will also often provide technical design assistance. These types of programs can be privately funded through the Main Streets Organization.

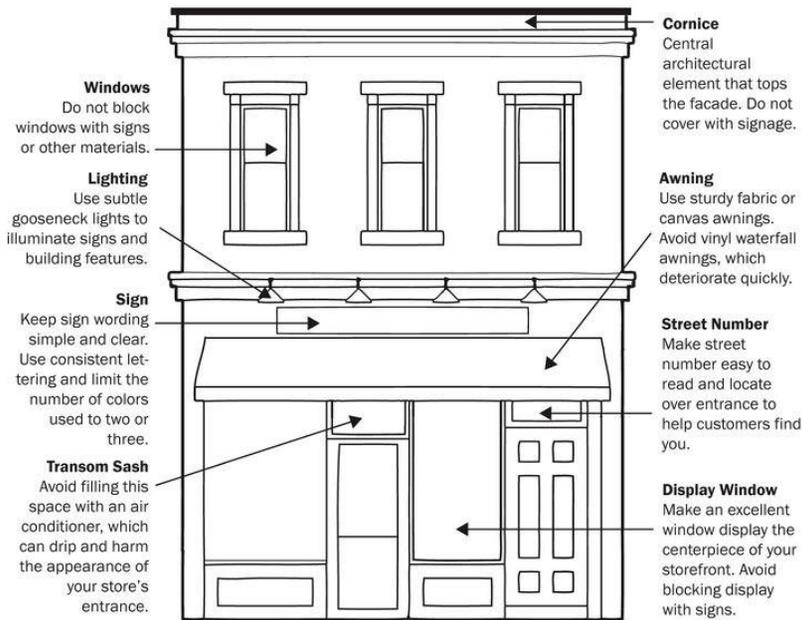


Roslindale Village Main Street, Roslindale, MA

Roslindale Village Main Street (RVMS) is one of 20 main street districts in the City of Boston—established in 1985 as one of the first urban Main Street Programs in the nation. In its first three years, RVMS was responsible for 33 façade changes, 43 commercial building rehabilitations, 29 net new businesses, and 132 net job gains—over \$5 million in new investments.

Learn more: <https://rosindale.net/>

CASE STUDY



Ice Cream Shop & Restaurant Façade

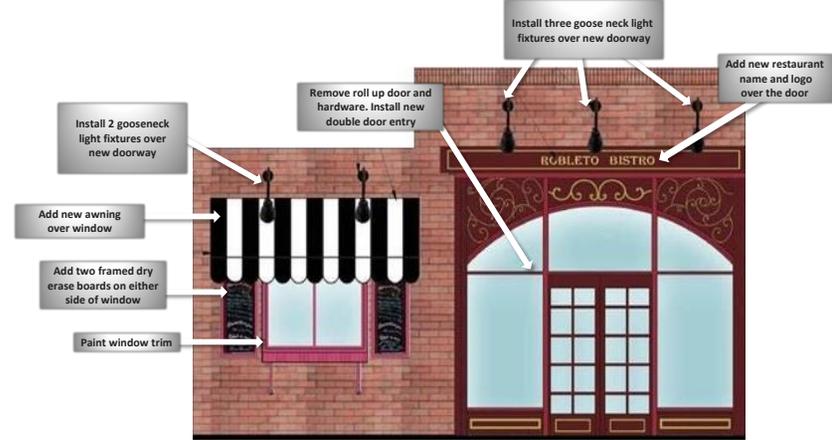


Image Label Guide

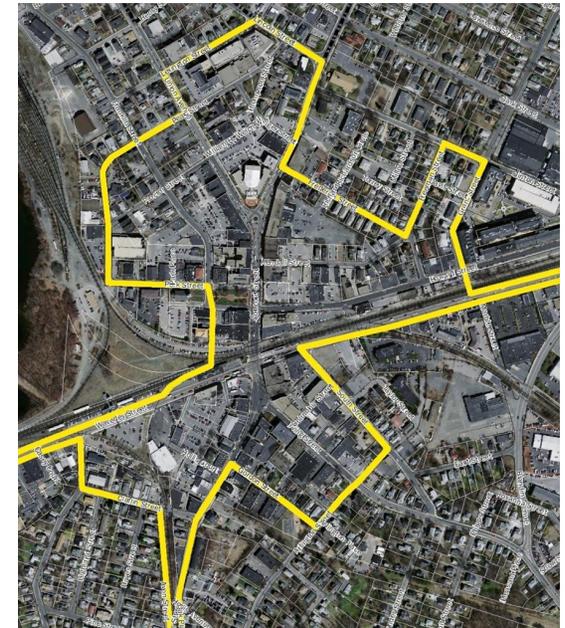
- Top:** Install three gooseneck light fixtures over new doorway. Add new restaurant name and logo over the door. Remove and dispose roll up door and hardware. Install new double door entry. Remove business sign from wall and add new sign with bracket and LED lights. Install two gooseneck light fixtures over new doorway.
- Bottom Left:** Add new awning over window & two framed dry erase boards on either side of window. Paint window trim.

Sign & Façade Program, Framingham, MA

Downtown Framingham, Inc. is a non-profit Main Streets Organization that promotes the preservation and enhancement of Framingham's downtown character and economic vitality. This organization helps to share resources with current and prospective businesses, including the Town's Sign and Façade Improvement Program.

The Sign and Façade Program was established to provide technical and financial assistance to Downtown businesses making external improvements. This program matches private money, up to a third of the project's cost or \$10,000 for facades and two-thirds or \$3,000 for signs, with Federal funding through the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). In doing so, the City seeks to promote local merchants and enhance the physical appearance of the Central Business District.

Learn more: <https://downtownframinghaminc.org/smallbusinessresources>
<https://www.framinghamma.gov/1969/Sign-Facade-Program>



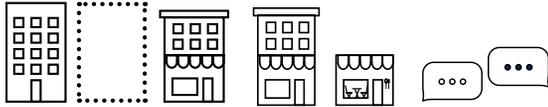
CASE STUDY



A2. Economic Development Support and Leadership

Strategy A2.2: Establish a town Economic Development Task Force to spearhead ongoing town efforts to promote and strengthen the economic health of local businesses.

Secondary Goals



The Economic Development Taskforce would unite representatives from existing groups who are already focused on promoting local business, including the Chamber of Commerce, Planning Department, Housing Partnership Board, and Cultural District Partnership, among others. The taskforce would also include members from a new Main Streets Organization. The Town Manager’s office will work with these entities to appoint representatives with relevant economic development expertise, including the Chamber’s existing Economic Development Committee which currently serves as a conduit between the business community in Winchester and the town government. The Chamber’s Committee works to encourage the expansion of existing commercial businesses, attract new complementary businesses, and assists with improving properties to enhance the vibrancy of the town.

The Town itself is a key stakeholder in the Town Center given the number of municipal buildings and employees located in the area. By collaborating with the Chamber of Commerce and other entities, and being a strong partner, the Town can help improve the local business environment. Areas where the Town can lead include securing funding for projects, targeting investments, promoting a supportive regulatory environment, and community engagement.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager and Select Board (100%)

Chamber of Commerce, Planning Department/Planning Board, Main Streets Organization, and Cultural District Partnership

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Town Budget, Main Streets Organization, and/or Chamber of Commerce



CREATE AND PRESERVE HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL, ESPECIALLY SMALL-SCALE DEVELOPMENT THAT HARMONIZES WITH WINCHESTER'S CHARACTER AND PROVIDES EASY ACCESS TO EVERYDAY AMENITIES AND NEEDS.

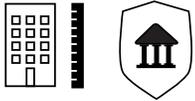
GOAL A3



A3. Affordable and Context-Responsive Housing

Strategy A3.1: Strengthen the existing zoning bylaw and design review process for large houses and consider amendments to dimensional regulations to further ensure new houses or additions reinforce the existing neighborhood development pattern.

Secondary Goals



The redevelopment of smaller single-family houses into larger houses has implications for neighborhood character, historic preservation, and energy use. The aim of this strategy is to help address the issue of “tear-downs” in Winchester. Developers, or homebuyers, demolish existing small homes and replace them with large homes (sometimes this is called “mansionsization”).

Note that state law in M.G.L. Ch 40A, Sec 6 allows owners of legal, nonconforming, one- or two-family houses to make changes to them, up to and including tear-downs and reconstruction at a larger size. Developers or homeowners must show that such changes will not be substantially detrimental to the neighborhood.

Stronger dimensional regulations could include adopting Floor Area Ratio requirements, evaluations to determine if the maximum height requirements appropriately reflect existing building heights in residential zoning districts (RA, RB, RDA, RDB, RDC, and RG) and adjustments based on this analysis. In addition, consider adopting design guidelines and reducing the size threshold for new/expanded buildings to trigger site plan review, per Section 9.5 of the Zoning Bylaw (currently 6,000 s.f. in the RDA-20 district; 5,000 s.f. in the RDB-10 district; and 3,600 s.f. in the RG-6.5 district).

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, Design Review Committee, and Historical Commission (75%)

Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Department Budgets



A3. Affordable and Context-Responsive Housing

Strategy A3.2: Expand and strengthen Winchester’s inclusionary housing zoning requirements to apply town-wide to better support the creation of affordable housing units through larger-scale residential or mixed-use developments and to generate funds for the Winchester Affordable Housing Trust.

Secondary Goals

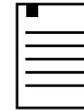


Winchester’s Zoning Bylaw, Section 7.3.19 Inclusionary Housing, requires all projects in the Center Business District (CBD) that include a housing component of six or more units to incorporate affordable units. In 2019, Town Meeting voted to extend the affordable housing requirements to apply to the General Business Districts (GBD) 2 and 3. Consider expanding inclusionary zoning opportunities to “accessory dwelling units (ADUs),” developments over three units, including those under the Planned Residential District provisions, and the residential uses of “garden apartment house,” “townhouse or dwelling,” “multi-family,” “apartment house”, and “cluster residential housing.” All of these are permitted by special permit in residential districts.

Housing should follow universal design principles to provide access to all residents, including those with disabilities. Units affordable to those at or below 50 percent of the area median income (AMI) must be included—in order to serve the needs of intellectually or developmentally disabled residents who live on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

Consider including a fee associated with all new construction that does not meet the inclusionary threshold to provide at least one on-site unit to offset the need for more affordable housing. In addition, review the requirement for six or more units to become more impactful. For developers who opt to pay a fine in lieu of constructing on-site units, consider defining a more substantial fee equal to the cost of the actual unit(s) lost. The Independent Elderly Housing Overlay District (IEHOD) includes a similar affordable housing provision, noted in Section 8.2.7, based on five percent of construction costs.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, Housing Partnership Board, and Disability Access Commission (DAC) (75%)

Select Board and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Department Budgets

Note: The Zoning Bylaw per Section 7.1 includes affordable housing incentives in the form of density bonuses granted through special permit by the Zoning Board of Appeals for apartment houses in the RB-20 district, multiple family in the RA-120 district, PRD districts, and multiple use developments.



PROMOTE HOUSING TYPES THAT ALLOW RESIDENTS TO AGE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. HOUSING SHOULD BE LOCATED NEAR COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES AND ENABLE ACCESS TO EVERYDAY AMENITIES AND NEEDS.

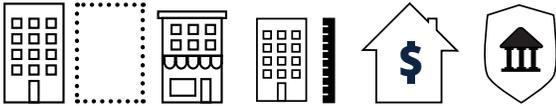
GOAL A4



A4. Age Within Winchester

Strategy A4.1: Consider more flexible conversions of existing houses to create smaller and more financially attainable housing options without increasing building density or significantly altering the appearance of existing buildings and neighborhoods.

Secondary Goals



Conversion of single-family houses is only allowed by special permit in the RG District and applies only to houses that were constructed before the enactment of the Zoning Bylaw and that have a larger minimum lot size than currently required for a single-family house. In addition, the Zoning Bylaw only allows Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) by-right in the Town’s Residential Districts, but requires occupants to be domestic employees, prohibits kitchen facilities in the unit, and disallows rent or use as a separate dwelling. Study allowing conversions to two or more units and the creation of additional units with more flexibility to encourage sensitive conversions of larger single-family houses to provide additional housing options for residents of all abilities.

Adults of all ages having a range of mental, physical, and developmental disabilities (such as Autism) would benefit from having access to such living arrangements. Units affordable to those at or below 50 percent of the area median income (AMI) must be included—in order to serve the needs of intellectually or developmentally disabled residents who live on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

This strategy would also support the Council on Aging’s Age-Friendly Community Initiative by allowing older adults to age within the community either by supplementing their income by renting out an additional unit(s) or moving into a more manageable size ADU home.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, Housing Partnership Board, and Select Board (75%)

Design Review Committee, Council on Aging, and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

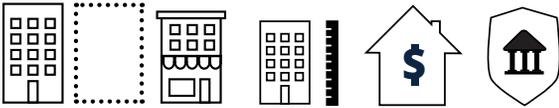
Department Budgets



A4. Age Within Winchester

Strategy A4.2: Expand areas that zoning allows for multi-unit developments to increase Winchester’s diversity of housing options—especially for those of all abilities and for smaller households.

Secondary Goals



As explained in the recommendations of the *2018 Housing Production Plan*, housing options that provide alternatives to single-family houses can offer desirable moderate-sized market-rate units for smaller households, such as young professionals, seniors, moderate-to-middle-income families, and adults with developmental or intellectual disabilities. These options tend to be more moderately priced for homeownership and rental than single-family homes.

Their relatively compact design also makes these housing types more efficient and environmentally sustainable than single-family homes, both in terms of construction materials, heating and cooling needs, and the preservation of open space. These housing alternatives can include Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), townhouses (single-family attached), two-family houses, congregate housing, and multi-family houses. The Town can consider allowing these uses by-right in certain zoning districts. New developments should follow universal design principles to create housing that is accessible for all residents.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, Housing Partnership Board, and Select Board (75%)

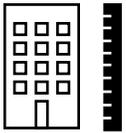
Design Review Committee and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

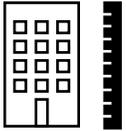
Funding Sources

Department Budgets



ENCOURAGE CONTEXTUALLY-RESPONSIVE NEW DEVELOPMENT. NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE CAREFULLY PLANNED AND APPROPRIATELY SCALED, WITH A FOCUS ON CREATING DENSER DEVELOPMENT IN SOME AREAS.

GOAL A5



A5. Context-Responsive Development

Strategy A5.1: Promote new infill development that reinforces existing neighborhood development patterns with design guidelines tailored to neighborhood character.

Secondary Goals



Create design guidelines for new development in existing residential neighborhoods that will help encourage contextually-responsive new development that is carefully planned and appropriately scaled, and that reinforces (not detracts) from existing residential neighborhood character. For Winchester's historic neighborhoods, design guidelines should be tied to Local Historic District designations, where determined. Design guidelines could also establish viewshed protections, where appropriate, by ensuring maximum building heights that do not dwarf historical landmarks. Viewshed protection should include specific requirements for materials submitted prior to review of proposed projects, including historic and contemporary photos.

Incorporate context-sensitive street network designs that provide dedicated space for all users, including pedestrians, transit riders, bicycle riders, and people with disabilities in addition to motor vehicles. Measurable information such as surrounding land uses and counts of each mode of travel can help to establish the appropriate context. Wherever possible, Winchester should minimize the width of vehicular travel lanes, particularly on residential streets. Winchester should limit turning radii at intersections by design for typical (not rare) situations. This means accommodating emergency vehicle access that preserves safety while allowing for occasional larger vehicles to cross the centerline while turning.

See case study on page 32.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, and Housing Partnership Board (75%)

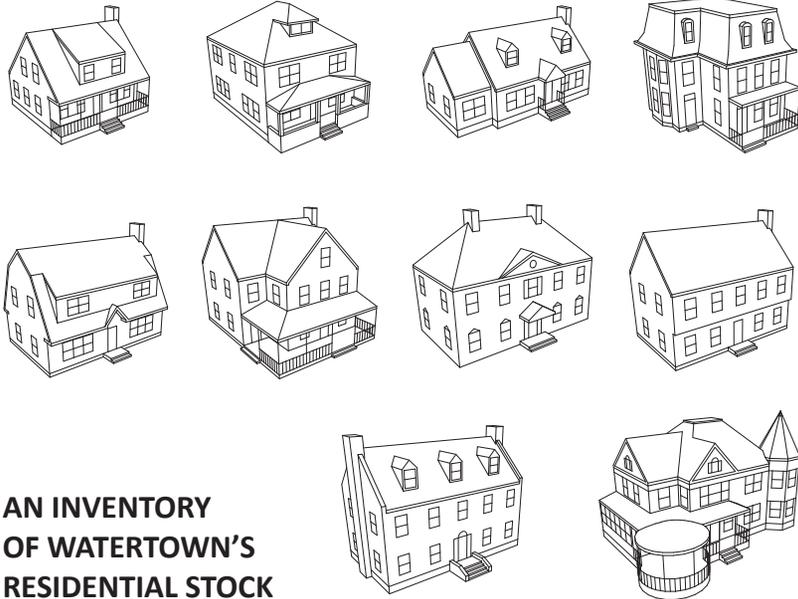
Design Review Committee, Select Board, and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

\$ – \$\$

Funding Sources

Department Budgets



**AN INVENTORY
OF WATERTOWN'S
RESIDENTIAL STOCK**



**A POTENTIAL FRAMEWORK
FOR ORGANIZING THE
RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS**

Design Guidelines, Watertown, MA

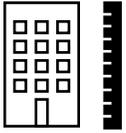
After completing a Comprehensive Master Plan in 2015, the Watertown Community realized there was a need for specific design guidelines to address infill development and preserve character in its residential neighborhoods. In 2016, Watertown staff worked with the community to create a new set of guidelines for this purpose.

The recently adopted Comprehensive Plan for Watertown recognized the importance of protecting the character of our many residential neighborhoods. Watertown residents have expressed concerns about the amount of development that is taking place and the scale of that change. New infill development - if not done well with the appropriate siting, dimensional criteria and typology characteristics - has the potential to undermine the very quality of a neighborhood that makes it a place in which people want to live.

The Town is therefore pursuing Residential Design Guidelines that will establish a common frame of reference and an associated language that the public can understand. The Guidelines will clarify expectations about what is permitted (and why) in order to maintain the existing neighborhood character and promote a more harmonious relationship between the existing neighborhood fabric and new construction. Ensuring that setbacks and other dimensional regulations are met for proposed tear-downs and developing guidelines to maintain existing neighborhood character are recommendations of the Watertown Comprehensive Plan.

Learn more: <https://www.watertown-ma.gov/831/Design-Standards-Guidelines-2014-15>

CASE STUDY



A5. Context-Responsive Development

Strategy A5.2: Hire a part-time Zoning Enforcement Officer to assist citizens, developers, and builders with zoning interpretation and compliance.

Secondary Goals



Zoning Enforcement Officers are exclusively responsible for enforcing the Winchester’s Zoning Bylaws which are used to regulate building density, use, height, and location; in addition to parking and open space requirements for sites. This position would report to the Building Department and provide necessary support to the Zoning Board of Appeals; Design Review Committee; Planning Department/ Planning Board, and Building Department. They would field and follow-up on all zoning questions from departments, residents, boards, and committees. They would also ensure that all properties abide by site plan and special permit conditions.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Meeting, Select Board, and Town Manager (75%)

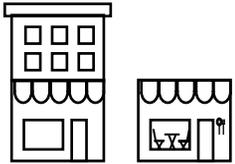
Planning Department/Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Design Review Committee, Building Department, and other Committees and Departments as needed (25%)

Funding Cost

\$

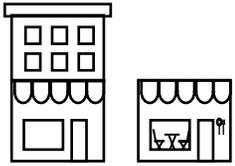
Funding Sources

Town Budget



**TO CAPTURE A LARGER SHARE OF THE ESTIMATED RETAIL LEAKAGE,
PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INCREASED RETAIL
DIVERSITY AND VIBRANCY IN TOWN CENTER AND THE IDENTIFIED
EVOLVING OPPORTUNITY AREAS.**

GOAL A6



A6. Increase Retail Diversity and Vibrancy

Strategy A6.1: Update dimensional and use regulations to help protect the nonresidential tax base while better aligning with Winchester’s market and potential future uses in the identified Evolving Opportunity Areas.

Secondary Goals



Zoning changes are a lever which can help facilitate development/ redevelopment in Winchester. To achieve certain development goals, the Town will have to examine the Zoning Bylaw to understand what limitations presently exist and why the market alone is not producing desired development outcomes. The goal would be to review the table of uses to determine what uses are permissible and whether any should be changed to by-right or by Special Permit. Additionally, if there is a desire to add other allowable uses in certain zoning districts, such language could be added.

Dimensional regulations should also be a key consideration for any zoning changes in industrial and business districts. As the cost of construction, labor, and materials continue to rise, and as residential and business space demands change, dimensional regulations must remain flexible. The Town should examine dimensional standards such as minimum lot size, building heights, front and rear setbacks, and any density restrictions on commercial and industrial development to ensure there is a balance between local control and financial viability. There may be opportunities to increase development intensity in certain locations across Winchester while protecting or preserving the elements of building design that make the town unique and desirable.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, Design Review Committee, and new Economic Development Taskforce (75%)

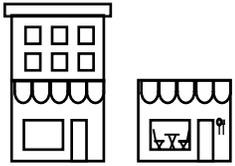
Select Board and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Department Budgets



A6. Increase Retail Diversity and Vibrancy

Strategy A6.2: Update sign regulations to promote creative and attractive signage throughout town.

Secondary Goals



The Sign Bylaw is Chapter Nine of the Town of Winchester’s Code of Bylaws. Currently the bylaw should be reviewed to promote creative and attractive signage that enhances the streetscape and supports economic vibrancy in the Town’s commercial areas. New signage in Town Center should strive to be in line with ongoing branding efforts for the area.

Further, a review of that document indicated that there are some potentially problematic sections with regard to recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings in the Reed v. Town of Gilbert decision and potential enforcement concerns. Some examples are listed below and on the following page.

- *Section 2.2. Illuminated Signs* – This section allows the Board of Appeals to approve illuminated signs for use between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. However, there are no criteria or standards provided as to the basis in which the Board would make such a determination. The inclusion of criteria would strengthen the decision-making process for the Board.
- *Section 2.6. Sign Exemptions* – Section 2.6 (h) allows for temporary signs for four separate purposes, all commercial in nature. There does not appear to be any provision in the Sign Code that allows for temporary political signs (campaign signs) or for “free speech” signs. Note that this would require a simple “temporary sign” provision change with restrictions but that does not identify specific uses.

Continued on next page

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, Design Review Committee, and new Economic Development Taskforce (75%)

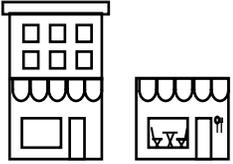
Select Board and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

\$ And/or Staff Time

Funding Sources

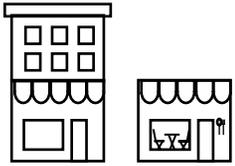
Department Budgets



A6. Increase Retail Diversity and Vibrancy

- *Section 3.2. Signs Allowed in Residential Districts* – This section allows signs based on their content which is problematic.
- *Section 3.3 (a) and (b) Signs Allowed in Conservancy-Institutional Districts* – These sections reference churches and synagogues, schools, etc. The Supreme Court case restricted communities from regulating noncommercial speech signs by identification of specific uses. (if you have to read the sign in order to know what sign category it falls into, then that violates the 1st amendment for noncommercial speech signs). This could be remedied simply by deleting the references to particular uses but retaining the remaining language in those sentences.
- *Section 4. Business and Industrial District Signs* – There should be an added section that allows a commercial business or industrial sign to be changed to a non-commercial sign without approval by the Town as long as the size, height, location etc. remain the same.

Further analysis of the current Sign Bylaw is warranted to identify and recommend potential solutions.



A6. Increase Retail Diversity and Vibrancy

Strategy A6.3: Leverage the Town’s new Cultural District status, streetscape improvements, wayfinding, and new branding to **increase visitation in Town Center and to reinforce synergies between economic activity areas in Winchester.**

Secondary Goals

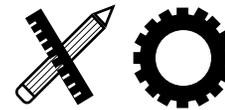


Winchester’s Town Center is a vibrant and beloved asset to the community and serves as the Town’s municipal, economic, and community hub. Both large annual town-wide events, such as Town Day or the En Ka Fair, and smaller regularly occurring events, such as the weekend Farmers Market, are held there. However, throughout the Master Plan process, residents expressed a desire for more activity and reasons to visit downtown, including a greater variety of businesses.

Winchester’s cultural district presents an opportunity to unite Winchester’s many arts, culture, and historic organizations with its business and economic development groups, including Winchester’s Cultural Council and District Commission; Winchester’s Artist Network (WAN); Farmer’s Market; the Historic Commission; Historical Society; Network for Social Justice; Chamber of Commerce, and others. The Town’s Cultural District Partnership represents a unique opportunity for collaboration and coordination between the public and private sectors.

A Cultural District is a walkable, compact, and easily-identifiable geographic area with a concentration of cultural facilities, activities, and assets. Cultural Districts have four main goals—attracting artists and cultural enterprises, encouraging economic development and enhancing property values, establishing the district for tourism purposes, and fostering local cultural development and historic preservation.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager, new Economic Development Taskforce, Cultural District Partnership, and Select Board (60%)

Historical Society, new Main Streets Organization, Chamber of Commerce, TTAC, new Communications and Engagement Coordinator, and Planning Department/Planning Board (40%)

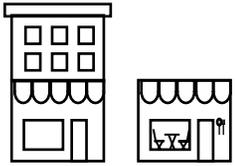
Funding Cost

\$ – \$\$\$ and Staff Time

Funding Sources

Town Budget, Cultural Council Grants, and/or Capital Planning

Continued on next page



A6. Increase Retail Diversity and Vibrancy

Streetscape improvements, wayfinding, and branding will create an identity for Town Center, enhance safety and the pedestrian experience, and improve connections between businesses and other destinations located in and around the district, including along Shore Road between Town Center and the Arthur Griffin Museum. Public improvements should be coordinated with property owners and businesses to have maximum impact.

The Cultural District Partnership should identify broad design elements for wayfinding signage, banners, business signs, and window displays, as well as locations for public art installations, plantings, benches, and other beautification initiatives. Signage will not only help publicize the district and its boundaries but serve to connect visitors to other town assets and destinations such as Wright-Locke Farm. See case study.

Events, music, small gatherings, art walks, block parties, and merchant-sponsored events will also all provide additional reasons for residents and visitors to frequent the area. The Cultural District Partnership plans to host more arts-centered events such as a juried photography or public art installations, in addition their annual Arts in August celebration. Other events and activities could include: outdoor performances; winter festivals; more multicultural festivals; pop-up galleries, stores, and dining; celebration/reenactments of historic events; and school-related events.

To attract more visitors from outside Winchester, the Town may consider collaborating with neighboring communities, such as Woburn, Arlington, or other Boston suburbs, to create a regional marketing and advertising campaign, including a centrally located place for events and attractions to maximize efforts.

The screenshot shows the Arts Arlington website. At the top, there is a logo for Arts Arlington and a navigation menu with options: ARTS CALENDAR, EXPLORE, SIGNATURE PROGRAMS, CULTURAL DISTRICT, FOR ARTISTS, NEWS, and ABOUT US. Below the navigation is a 'Map' section featuring a map of the Cultural District in Arlington, MA. The map is overlaid with numerous colored pins representing different types of activities. A 'REFERENCE KEY' is provided below the map, listing categories: ART (blue), MUSIC (orange), DANCE (green), THEATRE (purple), HISTORY (yellow), WRITTEN & SPOKEN WORD (pink), FILM & VIDEO (red), CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, & LESSONS (dark red), and SIGNATURE EVENTS & FESTIVALS (light red). To the right of the map is a collage of photos showing various art installations and community events. Below the collage is the title 'Arlington Arts & Culture Action Plan' and the date 'August 2017'. At the bottom of the screenshot, the text reads: 'Cultural District Marketing, Arlington, MA' and 'In 2018, the marketing committee of the Arlington Cultural District (ACD) sent out a Call for Ideas to brainstorm with the community about art and events that would enliven the ACD, with a special emphasis on "The Gap" - the area between Capitol Square and Arlington Cemetery. Following this effort, the Town designed and developed a page on the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture ArtsArlington.org website, along with other marketing materials. In 2019, they promoted the site as the primary destination for information on the arts and cultural events in town, and created a printed map and brochure of the ACD and installed ACD signage. Learn more: <http://artsarlington.org>

CASE STUDY



MAINTAIN THE TOWN'S VISUAL BEAUTY AND HISTORIC, CHARACTER, NEIGHBORHOODS, STRUCTURES, AND ARCHITECTURE THROUGH STRONGER LOCAL PROTECTIONS.

GOAL A7



A7. Historic Character

Strategy A7.1: Adopt one or more Local Historic Districts to protect historic structures and resources that are critical components of neighborhood character and to ensure the compatibility of new development.

Secondary Goals



Approximately 16 percent of Winchester’s 7,423 buildings are surveyed, listed, or protected in some way. The Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) data, maintained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), lists 1,182 historic resource records for Winchester, of which 1,139 are individual buildings and 39 are multi-building areas. Winchester has seven National Register Historic Districts. Although many of Winchester’s resources are identified in State and National inventories for their architectural or historic importance, few structures are adequately protected at the local level—the preservation level with the most strength and positive impact.

Town Center, in addition to multiple residential neighborhoods that are listed on the National and/or State Register of Historic Places, would be potential candidates to consider establishing as Local Historic Districts (LHD). The Select Board appointed an LHD Study Committee in 2018 which is engaged in preparing a study report for the Town Center based roughly on the National Register District already established there. Additional potential Local Historic Districts could leverage the Town’s current historic survey efforts to expand its inventoried resources, which includes a 2017 Survey Plan and two phases of ongoing survey in the “Old West Side” and “North End.”

Continued on next page

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Select Board, Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, Design Review Committee, and Historical Commission (75%)

Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Department Budgets



A7. Historic Character

Establishing a Local Historic District would allow the Town to qualify for Certified Local Government (CLG) status with MHC. CLG status would help the Town access additional grant funding for future preservation projects. Previous grant cycles through MHC only focused on projects proposed by CLG communities, excluding Winchester from applying. Establishment of CLG status would make more funding available and quicken Winchester's efforts in preservation planning, establishing tools for preservation, and managing the Town's historic assets.

Note: In April 2015, Winchester adopted the Heritage Districts Bylaw in the Rangeley Park neighborhood, a historic 1870s neighborhood.



A7. Historic Character

Strategy A7.2: Complete the Town's inventory of historic resources to lay the foundation for further historic designations and other preservation protections.

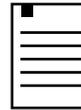
Secondary Goals



In 2017, Winchester's Historical Commission completed a Survey Plan for updating and completing its historic resource inventories. To know what must be protected, the Town must identify what those resources are and where they are located. This was a critical first step to improve and protect the Town's historic resources. Protecting historic resources helps foster a community's sense of place and residents' pride in their town, among other benefits.

There are two phases of ongoing survey covering Winchester's "Old West Side" and "North End." Subsequent neighborhoods identified in the 2017 Survey Plan for years three through seven include the areas defined as Symmes Corner; the West Side; the Highlands; the Center; and Myopia Hill. Historic Resource Survey work is often undertaken by consultants and can be funded through Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), like the Old West Side and North End surveys. Survey work could also be funded through the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Recent and updated survey work are a crucial foundation for historic register nominations, the creation of national and Local Historic Districts, the formation of additional heritage districts, and other potential regulatory activities.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Historical Commission (90%)

Town Archives and Planning Department/Planning Board (10%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) Grants, Historical Commission Budget



A7. Historic Character

Strategy A7.3: Provide more resources to adequately beautify and maintain public streetscapes, integrated open spaces, and passive recreation opportunities.

Secondary Goals



Winchester's Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for maintaining and improving public health and safety for Winchester residents through the maintenance, repair, and improvement of town infrastructure. The DPW handles all municipal and school facilities, streets and sidewalks, parks, water and sewer systems, fleet maintenance, refuse disposal, cemeteries, and snow and ice removal.

The DPW, in collaboration with the Conservation Commission, Recreation Department, and Main Streets Organization, should establish streetscape and park improvements and maintenance priorities for Winchester's open space and passive recreation sites, particularly for sites near Town Center, such as Mill Pond and along the Aberjona River. All improvements and projects should follow the Town's accessibility requirements and the guidance of Winchester's Disability Access Commission.

As part of this process, include a review of the recommendations from the Winchester Downtown Streetscape Study to select areas for specific improvements, including benches, walkways, picnic tables, and landscaping. Additional funding could come through the Town Budget a new Main Streets Organization, or through public-private partnerships in redevelopment areas.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

DPW, Engineering and Recreation Departments, Design Review Committee, TTAC, Conservation Committee, and Disability Access Commission (DAC) (75%)

Select Board and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time — \$\$\$\$

Funding Sources

Capital Planning or increase in Annual Operating Budget, Public-Private Partnerships and other grants



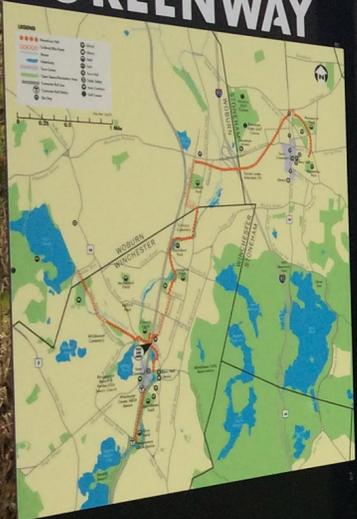
A7. Historic Character

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In addition to expanding dedicated resources, the Town should continue working with local community groups, such as Girl Scouts and Scouts of America; Winchester Home and Garden Club; and committees, such as Winchester's Permanent Street Tree Committee, to help raise funds and recruit volunteers through new programs such as "Adopt-A-Street" and "Adopt-a-Space". In addition, consider founding a local chapter of "Keep Massachusetts Beautiful" to promote further volunteer-led litter removal and plantings in public spaces. An official policy should be developed to ensure volunteer safety during cleanup activities, and specify any resources that will be provided by the Department of Public Works (safety vests, trash bags, signs, etc.).



**TRI-COMMUNITY
GREENWAY**



CONNECTING PEOPLE TO PLACES



IMPROVE WALKING AND BIKING SAFETY THROUGHOUT WINCHESTER FOR ALL AGES AND ABILITIES, CONNECTING PEOPLE SAFELY TO SCHOOLS, PARKS, PUBLIC TRANSIT, COMMERCIAL AREAS, AND OTHER KEY DESTINATIONS.

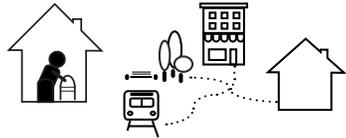
GOAL B1



B1. Safe Walking and Biking Routes

Strategy B1.1: Improve accessibility and safety for pedestrians in Town Center and vicinity.

Secondary Goals



Although the Town Center is generally highly walkable and includes features that attract people to visit, the sidewalk network in many locations needs reinvestment. Materials range from brick to concrete to asphalt. Some curb ramps are not ADA-compliant and there are some ramps that are missing altogether. Some crosswalks are stamped asphalt while others are painted. Sidewalks are too narrow in certain locations and run adjacent to vehicle travel lanes on one side and parking areas on the other. Many of Town Center's brick sidewalks are uneven due to tree roots.

The Town should revisit its ADA planning documents, such as the *ADA Access Audit and Transition Plan*, to identify which recommended projects have yet to be implemented and establish a priority investment plan. This would include an inventory of existing conditions and flagging in detail sidewalk, ramp, crosswalk materials, and adjacent features (building, parking, travel lane, driveway, parking lot, etc.).

Slope and width measurements are also critical to identify areas needing ADA-specific improvements, including installation of contrasting tactile warning devices. Crosswalks should be examined for placement, connection to curb ramps, length, condition, and visibility. Traffic signals should be checked for presence, ease of access to, and operability of pedestrian buttons, including whether audible or not. All barriers should be identified, whether barriers to accessibility or potential trip hazards.

Continued on next page

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Engineering Department, DPW, Select Board, TTAC, Design Review Committee, Disabilities Access Commission (DAC), and Planning Department/Planning Board (100%)

Funding Cost

\$\$\$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget, Capital Planning, and other grants



B1. Safe Walking and Biking Routes

The Town can then establish priorities for improvement and an implementation strategy. This could include using town staff resources for strategic improvements, such as tree grate covers for areas with brick sidewalks. This can be undertaken in concert with other downtown reinvestment strategies such as streetscapes, branding, wayfinding, lighting, and site and special permit conditions. Overall, the goal is to make all sidewalks and crossings fully accessible, safe, and appealing.

Example Accessibility and Walkability Issues – Main St opposite Park St
Photo: Google Street View October 17 (annotated by Bill Schwartz, Nelson\Nygaard)

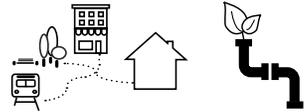




B1. Safe Walking and Biking Routes

Strategy B1.2: Undertake a strategic town-wide bicycle and pedestrian plan to establish a phased approach to creating a network connecting residents and visitors to key town destinations.

Secondary Goals



Many communities have undertaken bicycle and pedestrian plans to focus strategies and investments. The work undertaken for this Master Plan brought attention to the limited existing bicycle facilities and flagged many areas of safety concern for pedestrians.

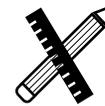
A town-wide bicycle and pedestrian plan would identify all gaps in the current network, determine which roads are suitable for bicycle riding based on the level of traffic stress (or comfort), and recommend improvements. The pedestrian element would flag existing gaps in the sidewalk network, maintenance needs, and accessibility improvements, particularly the Town Center.

The plan should consider:

- Creating a walking path as proposed by the Aberjona Initiative to reactivate the riverfront area as a central natural feature in the community.
- Improving access to the Middlesex Fells by establishing walking/ biking routes from Town Center and other neighborhoods.

Continued on next page

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Select Board, Engineering Department, and TTAC (75%)

Planning Department/Planning Board, Design Review Committee, and Disabilities Access Commission (DAC) (25%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget, MassDOT, Complete Streets, and other grants



B1. Safe Walking and Biking Routes

- Exploring options to improve connectivity to MBTA stations outside Winchester's borders, such as bike routes to Alewife and the future Green Line extension.
- Improve the experience and visibility of on-road sections of the existing Tri-Community Bike Path, including through Town Center, such as additional signage and providing a connection between the Minuteman Bikeway in Arlington.

Under the guise of “test, then invest,” Winchester should consider using pilot projects and small-scale infrastructure designs to evaluate feasibility, time investment, and cost before investing effort of full-scale construction. Pilots are easier to design, test, and adjust than full-scale projects. Typical pilots include bike lanes, crosswalks, and roadway/intersection width/radius reductions.



B1. Safe Walking and Biking Routes

Strategy B1.3: Create and distribute local maps that illustrate key walking and biking transportation connections as well as recreational areas in town.

Secondary Goals



Through the TTAC, the Town should prepare public information materials on existing walking and bicycle resources throughout Winchester. Key destinations can be mapped such as town buildings, parks and other open space areas with trails, Winchester Hospital, schools, T stations, and the Town Center. Maps can identify amenities, such as access points, public restrooms, and activity areas, as well as recommended recreational routes based on length and difficulty.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

New Communications and Engagement Coordinator, TTAC, Engineering Department, and DPW (75%)

Disabilities Access Commission (DAC) and Recreation Department (25%)

Funding Cost

\$ and/or Staff Time

Funding Sources

Town Budget, Public-Private Partnerships, Friends of the Fells, and/or other grants



**WORK CLOSELY WITH THE MBTA TO IMPROVE PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION SERVICE TO ENCOURAGE MORE RIDERSHIP AND
ALLEVIATE PARKING CONCERNS.**

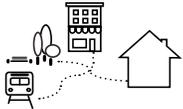
GOAL B2



B2. MBTA Transit

Strategy B2.1: Track progress for and participate in MassDOT’s Rail Vision commuter rail planning project.

Secondary Goals



Winchester’s two commuter rail stations are included as part of the MBTA Rail Vision’s Inner Core, which envisions train service every 15 minutes in both directions using flexible electric-powered train sets. The ultimate vision for the Inner Core includes electrification of multiple lines, including the Lowell Line. In November 2019, the MBTA’s Fiscal Management and Control Board endorsed initial electrification of the Fairmount line, the Boston-Providence line, and the Rockport line through Chelsea, Revere, and Lynn. Because electrification of the Lowell Line is a critical requirement for efficiently operating 15-minute service in Winchester, the Town should actively participate in and advocate for this upgrade.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Engineering Department, TTAC, Town Manager, and Select Board (90%)
Disability Access Commission (DAC) (10%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

None required



B2. MBTA Transit

Strategy B2.2: Work with the MBTA to improve accessibility and user experience for regional bus service.

Secondary Goals



Through its Plan for Accessible Transportation Infrastructure (PATI) project, the MBTA, through the Office of System-wide Accessibility, has identified accessibility upgrade needs for all bus stops in the system, including in Winchester. The survey scored stops according to whether they have both front and rear signs, a hard surface landing pad for accessible boarding, an accessible and clear walking path to access the stop, and an accessible crossing, among other features. Winchester should request information from the MBTA on stops that require accessibility upgrades to identify what improvements are needed, particularly to ensure a person using a wheelchair can access the stop. Other improvements related to signs and potential stop consolidation or relocation are typically the MBTA's responsibility.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

DPW, Select Board, Town Manager, Engineering Department, and Disability Access Commission (DAC) (90%)

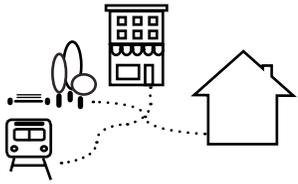
Planning Department/Planning Board and Design Review Committee (10%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

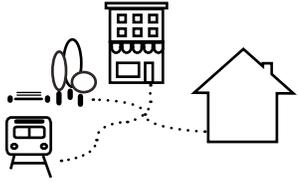
Funding Sources

Capital Planning and potentially grants



CREATE AND SUPPORT A COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK TO PROVIDE SAFE AND VIABLE CONNECTIONS TO KEY DESTINATIONS AND TO ENCOURAGE THE USE OF ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MODES AND REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION.

GOAL B3



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

Strategy B3.1: Undertake a town-wide transit demand management study to better understand the feasibility of alternative transit options.

Secondary Goals



To address the lack of transit options in certain parts of Winchester for those who do not drive or wish to avoid driving, Winchester should engage a consultant to undertake a transit needs study, which could consider options. Such improvements could include a new shuttle service or an expanded hospital shuttle, a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network, additional cycling and walking infrastructure, additional commuter rail service capacity, and carpooling options.

Building on available market data, a transit study would determine the level of need and gaps, identify the most common destinations for service, evaluate different models of operation, identify potential for ridership, and estimate costs. In the context of this study, Winchester should also evaluate existing bus and rail ridership characteristics and investigate the user experience for current transit riders and explore gaps in connections to/from the stations in less transit-served neighborhoods.

As part of this study, the Town should explore options for adding more commuter parking, particularly if the Rail Vision project is advanced to increase service frequencies on the Lowell Line. Weekday parking demand at Winchester's two train stations is near capacity, meaning that some current or potential rail users may be discouraged from using the train if driving and parking is their only option. It should also explore options to connect users to the Green Line terminus. *Continued on next page*

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Engineering Department, TTAC, Disability Access Commission (DAC), and Select Board (90%)

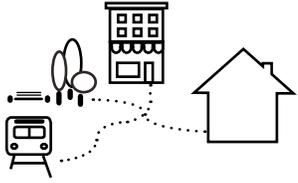
Town Manager, DPW, Planning Department/Planning Board, Schools, Jenks Center, Hospital, Council on Aging and MBTA (10%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

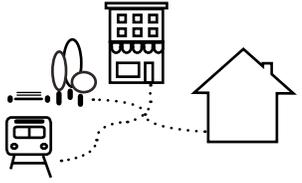
Town Budget + State Economic and Community Development Funds



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

As part of this process, town staff and the TTAC should research case studies and best practices, and collect data to better understand Winchester's micromobility needs. The marketplace for these services is evolving rapidly and many municipalities are evaluating how to best accommodate these changes in ways that improve mobility while minimizing any negative effects.

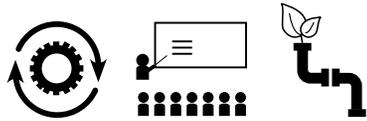
By incorporating these options and services, Winchester can increase the use of transit and rail, thus reducing the need for travel by private vehicle, reducing congestion, and improving safety, community activity, and sustainability. Winchester should participate in regional discussions about emerging trends in on-demand transportation and micromobility by attending MassDOT's annual Moving Together conference or other workshops and events, and by working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council. Lessons can also be learned from other communities' experiences, including e-scooter pilot programs.



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

Strategy B3.2.1: Consider increasing the subsidy for school bus service (making it more affordable) to encourage more participation and study why it is currently underutilized by students.

Secondary Goals



Middle and high school start times recently changed to coincide with nearby elementary school start times, creating parent drop-off traffic congestion and additional pedestrian-safety issues around Winchester's schools. For those that cannot walk or ride a bicycle to school, increasing the number of students traveling by bus can alleviate ongoing traffic congestion taking place during school drop-off and pickup times. The current town program that requires some families to pay for the cost of bus service may be an impediment to participation. In addition, for those who participate in after school activities, the absence of a late bus service makes this transportation option impossible to some students. Winchester should evaluate whether increasing bus subsidies can lower the number of students being driven to/from school. Subsidies in place today may not be adequate. While this recommendation would have direct budget impacts, it may be possible to address ongoing traffic congestion issues in certain parts of the town by adding additional service.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Schools, Engineering Department, and Town Manager (60%)

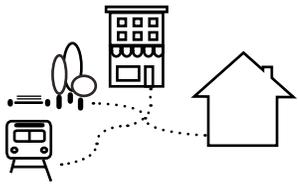
Select Board and Town Meeting (40%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

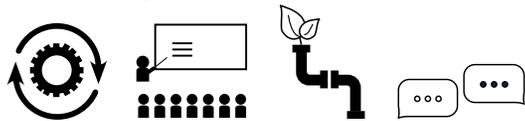
School Budget



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

Strategy B3.2.2: Establish semi-remote school drop-off areas to disperse traffic congestion.

Secondary Goals



Establishing alternate school drop-off areas is an effective strategy for both managing congestion adjacent to schools and encouraging more physical activity. A safe and clear system is needed to establish and connect drop-off zones with school entrances. Some locations may require staff or parent volunteer monitoring. Students who are able to walk even a small distance from drop-off areas to the school have an opportunity for physical activity before the start of the school day. Generally, because the dwell time for drop-offs is momentary, the amount of curb space dedicated to this activity is small. Where space is available, the zones can also be used for student pickups, in which drivers must park and wait for students to arrive. The Town should consider developing coordinated walking, drop-off, and bus plans to illustrate all options available to students and their families and to establish a high level of safety.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Engineering Department, Select Board, School Committee, School Department, and DPW (75%)

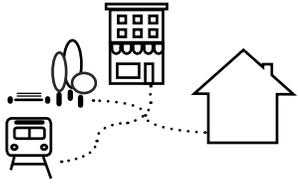
Town Manager, TTAC, New Communications and Engagement Coordinator, and Planning Department/Planning Board (25%)

Funding Cost

\$

Funding Sources

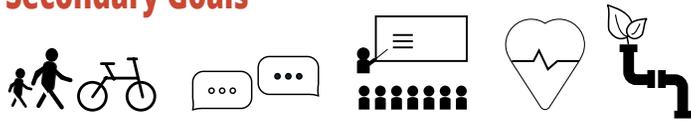
Capital Planning + Staff Time



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

Strategy B3.2.3: Promote walking and carsharing options to foster connections between students and address traffic congestion issues.

Secondary Goals



Middle and high school start times changed recently to coincide with nearby elementary school start times, creating parent drop-off traffic congestion and pedestrian-safety issues around Winchester's schools. All five elementary schools in Winchester are already listed as "Safe Routes to School Partners," a program that promotes healthy alternatives for children and parents in their travel to and from school.

Consider also implementing a Walking School Bus program, which entails small groups of children who walk to school with one or more adults. It can be as informal as two families taking turns walking their children to school or as formal as well-planned walking routes with meeting points, a timetable, and a regularly rotated schedule of trained volunteers. For example, a more formal walking route could connect the school to a semi-remote drop-off area.

At the high school, review shared transportation solutions, such as a shuttle or car-pooling to connect students from the school to their afterschool activities, like off-campus fields or rehearsal spaces. Programs like these would have the dual-benefit of decreasing traffic and car usage and fostering connections between students and between parents.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

School Committee, School Department, TTAC, and New Communications and Engagement Coordinator (90%)

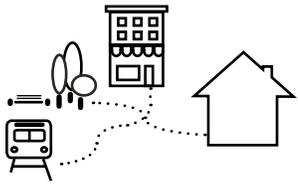
Town Manager (10%)

Funding Cost

\$

Funding Sources

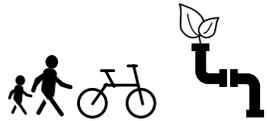
School Budget



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

Strategy B3.3: Include clear requirements for developers to incorporate transportation mitigation, including robust analysis of single-occupancy-vehicle alternatives, Transportation Demand Management Plans, and universal design principles.

Secondary Goals



Most of the development proposals coming before the Town of Winchester are residential projects. As such, the Town's Subdivision Rules and Regulations focus on the requirements for such projects. This includes traffic study requirements in Section 6.5.2.10. These requirements direct applicants to undertake a traffic study using accepted standards for estimating new vehicle trips and for analyzing the level of service (LOS). This approach focuses almost exclusively on automobiles and as written, the rules do not explicitly require measures to mitigate traffic impacts. Nor do the rules require an evaluation of measures to reduce automobile use such as transportation demand management (TDM) or the walking, transit, and bicycle elements of project circulation and access.

In collaboration with the Traffic and Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC), revise Winchester's requirements for new development projects to incorporate comprehensive transportation impact assessments that evaluate all modes of access, site circulation, and impacts.

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Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Engineering Department, TTAC, and Zoning Board of Appeals (75%)

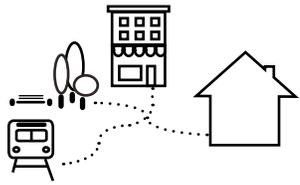
Select Board, Town Meeting, Building Department, and Disability Access Commission (DAC) (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

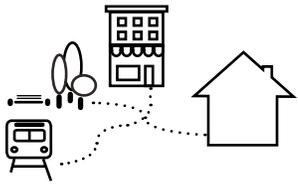
Department Budgets



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

Identify transportation demand management (TDM) strategies that reduce automobile use to the extent possible. Where new trips lead to project impacts, identify mitigation measures to restore conditions to the pre-development level of operation to the extent feasible. Require project proponents to fund the cost of a peer review consultant to evaluate the proponent's consultant report. Consult with other Massachusetts communities such as the City of Cambridge in developing standards for transportation impact studies.

In addition, consistently requiring TDM strategies and investing in transit can help shift travel patterns in Winchester. Maintaining such programs and investments over time improves their chances for sustainability and financial support.



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

Strategy B3.4: Ensure the continued achievement of local Complete Streets goals by **updating the Town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan** and expanding capacity (staffing and funding) for oversight and implementation.

Secondary Goals



Complete Streets is a policy-based planning tool, created and promoted by Smart Growth America, to support mobility and accessibility for all people. The program requires that transportation engineers consider and accommodate the needs of all transportation modes when conducting transportation improvement projects, including personal automobiles, safety and freight vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and other micromobility modes, and public transit. In doing so, roads and mobility networks should comprehensively and completely serve all people regardless of age, ability, race, income, or other factors.

In 2016, Winchester adopted a Complete Streets policy and created a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, which has guided the implementation of Complete Streets-compliant transportation improvement projects over the last three years. The Traffic and Transportation Advisory Committee (TTAC) and Engineering Department are responsible for this implementation, and have indicated that the majority of projects identified in the 2016 Plan have been accomplished or are no longer relevant. The Town should initiate an update to the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan to guide transportation projects and ensure Complete Streets compliance over the next five to ten years.

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Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Engineering Department, Select Board, TTAC, and Disability Access Commission (DAC) (70%)

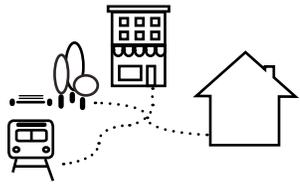
Town Manager and Planning Department/Planning Board (30%)

Funding Cost

\$\$\$\$

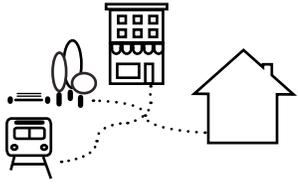
Funding Sources

Town Budget



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

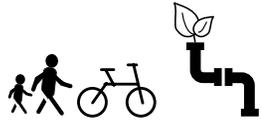
In addition, the Engineering Department has indicated that funding and staffing limitations pose barriers to an extensive and ever-growing list of transportation needs in Winchester. Mobility and transportation safety are significant challenges and concerns in the community, which the Town should prioritize and invest in over the next ten years. Hiring an additional staff person in the Engineering Department and establishing a dedicated and predictable funding stream for transportation improvement and planning projects will help to increase the Town's capacity to efficiently and effectively address Winchester's transportation needs.



B3. Comprehensive Transportation Network

Strategy B3.5: Provide alternative last mile options to/from MBTA mass transit stations to increase the viability of their use and to alleviate traffic congestion and parking pressures.

Secondary Goals



When thinking about how to support and encourage shared and alternative transportation options (including the MBTA, carpooling, walking, or micromobility modes) and shift away from single occupancy vehicles (SOVs), connections are essential, especially for suburban communities. For Winchester, encouraging the use of MBTA bus and commuter rail service is vital to reaching this goal of reduced SOV preference and dependence. However, the Town must also think about how residents travel from a bus stop or train station to their home - the “last mile” (give or take).

Currently, to access the commuter rail in Winchester, many residents must drive from their home to one of the two train stations. Parking challenges and the added complication (and potentially longer time) of changing modes may deter residents from using the commuter rail—particularly those who need ADA access and handicap parking. For example, new MBTA accessible outbound exits are on the Southwest side of Waterfield Road (elevator) and Shore Road (ramp). The nearest bus stop in the Winchester Common parking lot is across the Town Center Rotary or Waterfield Road—both potentially dangerous road crossings and with sidewalks in need of improvements.

Further, residents who cannot easily and safely walk to bus service are unlikely to use it. In addition to Winchester’s local MBTA stops, the Town should consider investing in infrastructure to connect residents to the new Green Line terminus, as identified in the Town’s new bike and pedestrian plan. *Continued on next page.*

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Select Board, Planning Department/Planning Board, Engineering Department, and DPW (90%)

Council on Aging, TTAC, and Disability Access Commission (DAC) (10%)

Funding Cost

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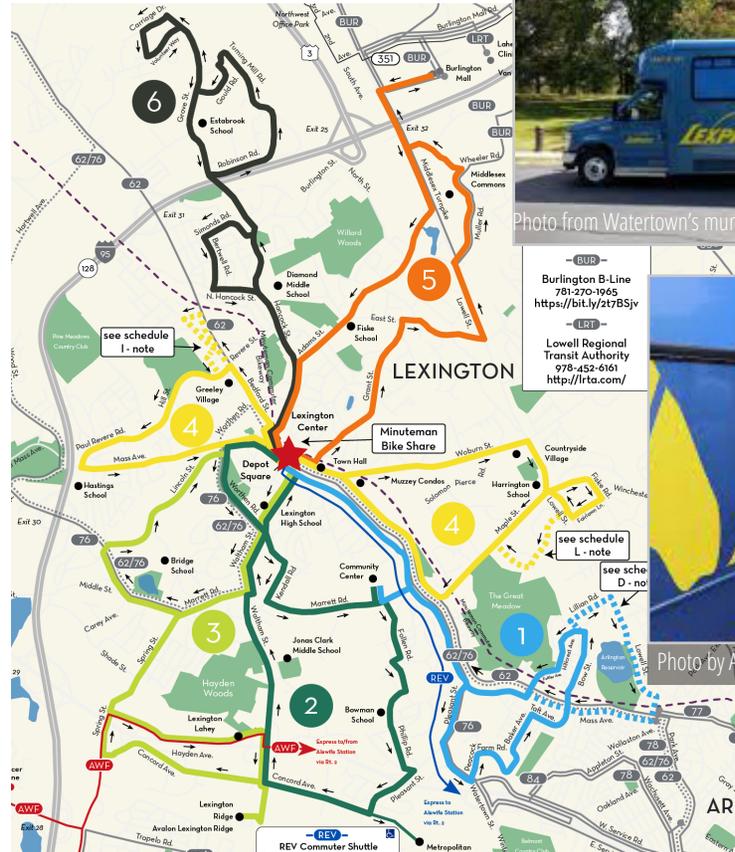
Funding Sources

Town Budget, Capital Planning, and Grants

Travel options for shorter distances have expanded in recent years with new offerings for shared scooters and shared bikes. Shared mobility services, as well as safe and well-maintained pedestrian and micromobility infrastructure, can help address the last-mile problem. The overarching concept is to provide services that meet a traveler's needs on demand, minimizing gaps and wait times in travel routes.

On-demand shared mobility options and services include the shared use of a vehicle (personal carpooling or ride-hailing such as Lyft or Uber), or micromobility modes (such as a shared bike or scooter program), carsharing (e.g., Zipcar), and local transit (such as frequently running buses or shuttles). The marketplace for these services is evolving rapidly and many municipalities are evaluating how to best accommodate them in ways that improve mobility while minimizing any negative effects. By incorporating these options and services, Winchester can increase the use of transit and rail, thus reducing the need for SOV travel, reducing congestion, and improving safety, community activity, and sustainability.

Winchester should consider these infrastructure and service options as it undertakes new studies, identifies transportation improvement projects, and allocates funds for transportation maintenance and advancement in the community. Through TTAC, Winchester should participate in regional discussions about emerging trends in on-demand and shared transportation by attending MassDOT's annual Moving Together conference and working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and neighboring communities. Many lessons can be learned from other communities' experiences, including the City of Newton's use of "Via" as a microtransit solution for its seniors, Lexington's "Lexpress" local shuttle service, or the Boston region's Bluebikes bike-share program.



Lexpress Local Transit, Lexington MA

Lexpress is Lexington's local public transportation bus service, which includes six key routes that run once an hour and provide connections to other MBTA and regional transit services. Lexpress is managed by the Town's Transportation Services Division.

Lexpress was created in 1979 by a group of dedicated residents in partnership with the MBTA to reach parts of the community that the MBTA could not get to. It was one of the first community bus services in the country. Lexpress was designed as a "coverage" system (as opposed to a "ridership" system), meaning that with a small fleet of buses, it could cover all of Lexington.

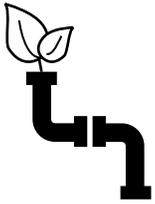
Learn more: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/lexpress/pages/> or <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/transportation-services/about-lexpress>

CASE STUDY



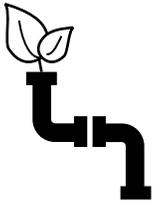
WRIGHT-LOCKE FARM
WLFARM.ORG

ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY



INTEGRATE INITIATIVES WITHIN TOWN STRUCTURES, NEW DEVELOPMENT, REHABILITATION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GASES AND BECOME CLIMATE-PREPARED.

GOAL C1



C1. Sustainable Infrastructure

Strategy C1.1: Create a new Sustainability Director position for the town and incorporate well-defined and measurable sustainability objectives into municipal job descriptions and duties.

Secondary Goals



Consider hiring a Sustainability Director to lead the identification of opportunities to improve the sustainability of municipal facilities and operations, track the Town’s progress towards targets, and pursue funding opportunities. Municipal job descriptions should be updated to include relevant sustainability goals and the role of employees in promoting sustainability should be defined across all Town departments. Winchester’s Climate Communications Strategy should also be developed and deployed by the Sustainability Director in collaboration with the Climate Action Plan Implementation Committee.

The Director should participate in regional planning activities and collaborate with neighboring cities and towns to seek additional opportunities, including financial, to collectively implement and integrate sustainability strategies and share best practices.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager and HR Director (90%)

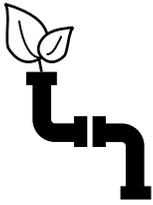
All Town Departments and Boards (10%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget + Subsequent Grants



C1. Sustainable Infrastructure

Strategy C1.2: Assess municipal buildings and facilities through efficiency and sustainability ratings to determine which should be prioritized and create an improvement plan.

Secondary Goals



To assess sustainability ratings, town staff could conduct energy and water audits for Town buildings, and direct residents, property managers, and business owners to opportunities for free energy assessments through MassSave. The Town should prioritize retrofits and improvements to municipal building mechanical and plumbing systems, and seek funding through grants and subsidies. The Town should develop an implementation plan, which could include: installing solar panels or other alternative energy systems, improving insulation, installing permeable paving in public parking areas and other town facilities, upgrading lighting, creating rain gardens or other sustainable landscaping, or implementing compost programs, among others.

As part of the improvement plan, the Town should establish green building standards for renovation or construction of Town facilities, including goals to achieve zero net energy or energy positive status for new structures. The Town should seek certification for municipal properties through programs such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) or the International Green Construction Code (IgCC), by incorporating best practices for building materials, waste management, energy, and water efficiency including sustainable landscaping. Work with the new Sustainability Director to identify and prioritize additional improvements for town buildings, and keep track of emerging technologies and best practices for green buildings.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

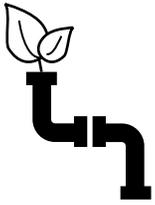
Building Department, DPW, Energy Management Committee, and Educational Facilities Planning and Building Committee (EFPBC) (100%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget



C1. Sustainable Infrastructure

Strategy C1.3: Develop a comprehensive communications plan that provides educational materials on local issues, such as becoming a zero-waste community, guidance on energy and water saving measures and subsidies, natural hazard preparedness, and strategies to increase resiliency.

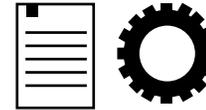
Secondary Goals



Establish a multifaceted strategy for conveying critical information related to climate issues, including a robust website, workshops from Public Health and Public Safety officials, brochures, and other announcements through local media outlets. This strategy should identify the most effective means to regularly provide community members with resources to help reduce consumption of energy and water, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and prepare and respond to extreme heat, cold, flooding and related natural hazards. Part of the plan could include educating residents around construction and landscape situations that create water infiltration and remediation resources.

Community members could also receive timely updates on other climate-related risks, including cyanobacteria blooms in local water bodies, and health threats associated with vector-borne diseases, such as EEE and West Nile Virus. In addition, create a public awareness campaign to encourage better recycling practices, incorporating existing resources, such as recycling IQ Kit and recycle SMART, and to coordinate for emergency situations, such as pandemics. The new Communications and Engagement Coordinator and Sustainability Coordinator positions can work together to develop and execute this communications plan.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

New Sustainability Coordinator, New Communications and Engagement Coordinator, and Town Manager (75%)

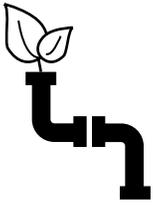
Select Board and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

\$

Funding Sources

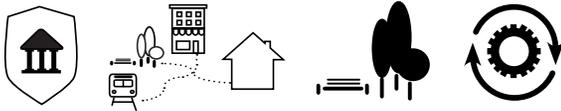
Town/Department Budgets



C1. Sustainable Infrastructure

Strategy C1.4: Adopt regulatory requirements and zoning or financial incentives to promote sustainable development practices, including the re-use of existing buildings over new development and environmentally-conscious new development.

Secondary Goals



After completing the improvement plan listed in strategy C1.2, consider adopting stronger local zoning provisions to promote sustainable, environmentally-conscious development that minimizes the use of non-renewable resources and incorporates sustainable best practices. Sustainability principles that can be supported by zoning regulations include promoting re-use of existing buildings through more flexible conversion provisions, higher density development and mixed-use in key locations, requirements or incentives for green buildings and building materials, solar or wind energy systems, and other best practices to ensure energy efficiency.

Demolition and stormwater management are two ongoing challenges that can be addressed through zoning regulations and incentives. In addition, regulatory changes can encourage sustainability best practices, such as electric-charging stations in new development or redevelopment. Some best zoning practices based on the Great Plains Institute include e-charging stations as a permitted use, required electric vehicle parking capacity and minimum parking requirements, and electric vehicle equipment standards.

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Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, Design Review Committee, new Sustainability Coordinator, and Energy Management Committee (75%)

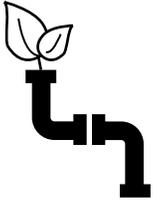
Select Board and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget

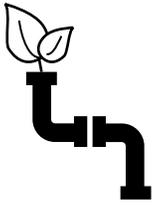


C1. Sustainable Infrastructure

Demolition in the municipal and private sectors is an ongoing concern in Winchester. A report by the National Trust for Historic Preservation found that building re-use had a lower environmental impact over demolition and new construction in buildings of comparable size and scale. This includes not only the addition to landfills, but the loss of the embodied energy in existing buildings, the energy expended hauling away debris to a landfill, and energy consumed building new construction. Promoting the reuse of existing buildings through flexible conversion provisions or incentives for rehabilitation are two methods.

To address ongoing stormwater runoff and flooding concerns in town, consider regulatory requirements and/or financial incentives through permitting fees to encourage best practices for stormwater management on private properties. Stormwater management helps ensure healthy groundwater recharge and helps prevent stormwater discharges from causing or contributing to the pollution of surface and groundwater.

The Town should coordinate with residents and local businesses to develop a reworked version of the Stormwater Bylaw that was proposed, but not adopted, at the November 2019 Town Meeting. Consider establishing a stormwater utility, which would function similarly to the existing water and sewer enterprise and be approved by Town Meeting on a regular basis.



C1. Sustainable Infrastructure

Strategy C1.5: Create a town-wide or neighborhood-based solar conversion program with volume discounts and a retrofitting program to convert cooling and heating systems to energy-efficient and sustainable alternatives.

Secondary Goals



Leveraging the new Sustainability Director’s capacity, the Town should compile a database of solar photo-voltaic programs and other building improvements to increase energy efficiency for municipalities and private property owners, such as the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) Program, Community Shared Solar, and tax credits and exemptions. As part of this, identify town facilities with the highest potential for solar conversion and establish agreements with private entities to install and maintain the system—similar to contracts used for Vinson-Owen, the DPW building, and the High School.

One program could be a town-wide or neighborhood-based program that offers volume-based discounts for private solar conversion. For example, if at least 15 households in a designated neighborhood buy-in to the solar conversion program, they can receive a cost discount and/or tax break on their personal installment and conversion. The Town could coordinate with other municipalities in the region to explore discounts on solar installations through a joint procurement program, and should aim to generate a surplus of electricity in order to earn net metering credits from Eversource, which will help offset the cost of equipment and maintenance.

Other programs could include setting up an online library for homeowners and business owners with resources for free energy assessments and discounts on heating, cooling, and insulation improvements to reduce overall energy consumption; or creating a virtual marketplace to connect customers with local vendors and contractors approved to complete solar upgrades through MassSave and other state programs.

ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY• 75

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager, Building Department, new Sustainability Coordinator, and Energy Management Committee (75%)

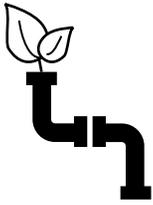
Select Board and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Grants; Town Budget



C1. Sustainable Infrastructure

Strategy C1.6: Replace town fleet with electric or hybrid vehicles and install e-charging stations at public buildings/facilities (excluding safety vehicles, if not feasible).

Secondary Goals



Continue to expand the Town's electric vehicle program by replacing the remaining non-emergency vehicles by purchasing or leasing battery electric or plug-in hybrid electric models for use by Town staff, as needed. Adopt a Green Fleet Policy to require vehicle requests to compare multiple options that consider fuel efficiency and emissions. Apply for funding through the MassEVIP program or Clean Vehicle Program to offset some of the costs to procure the vehicles and add additional charging stations at public facilities.

Work with MAPC to participate in their Green Mobility Group Purchasing Program to benefit from discounts realized through joint procurement. Expand efforts such as the Eversource Make-Ready Infrastructure Program, to install and maintain additional charging stations at other public parking areas. Explore the use of these stations as "e-mobility hubs" that can also be used for electric vehicle car sharing, and micromobility options (e-scooter and e-bike charging).

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

DPW and Town Manager (60%)

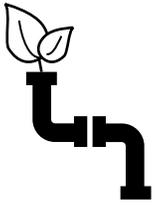
Department Heads and Town Meeting (40%)

Funding Cost

\$\$\$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget, Grants, and Capital Planning



C1. Sustainable Infrastructure

Strategy C1.7: Move toward becoming a zero-waste community.

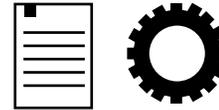
Secondary Goals



Winchester should aim to reduce its solid waste generation and increase waste diversion by encouraging businesses and residents to increase recycling and composting, and leading by example through the Town's offices and schools. Based on the success of the SMART program to incentivize waste reduction, the Town should consider adopting pay-as-you-throw town-wide and should reevaluate pricing structures to reflect actual waste disposal costs.

To address the issue of private residences using third-parties for waste collection, the Town should work with private curbside waste haulers to ensure enforcement of recycling requirements. Schools and town offices should also adopt stronger waste and recycling standards, and track improvements to highlight the Town's focus on sustainability. The Sustainability Director and CAP Implementation Committee should work to build community support for updating local regulations to move towards becoming a zero-waste community. Establishing a voluntary zero-waste goal can be used as a stepping stone to an official Town policy. The Town should observe the rising costs of recycling and waste disposal and recognize how it impacts progress toward zero-waste goals.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

New Sustainability Coordinator and Town Manager (75%)

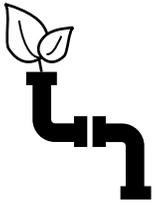
Select Board and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

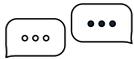
Town/Department Budgets



C1. Sustainable Infrastructure

Strategy C1.8: Encourage and incentivize more residents to opt into WinPower, especially WinPower 100.

Secondary Goals



Winchester’s Community Choice Electricity program, WinPower, has provided residents and small businesses with electricity service that generally has a more stable and lower price. In addition, the default program is supplied by 10% more renewable energy than the Eversource basic service. A majority of residents have already opted into WinPower, but further outreach should be done to relay the program’s value, and educate consumers about the additional environmental benefits of choosing WinPower 100, which uses 100% renewable energy. The Town should aim to increase the proportion of renewable energy for the default WinPower service, and identify additional sources of funding to help subsidize the higher billing rate for plans that include more renewable sources. Consider requiring all new developments to use WinPower 100.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

New Sustainability Coordinator and Town Manager (75%)

Select Board, Planning Department/Planning Board, and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Town Budget



SEEK OUT AND SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES TO LEVERAGE FUNDING WITH LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL PARTNERS TO INVEST IN WINCHESTER.

GOAL C2



C2. Seek Funding Opportunities

Strategy C2.1: Hire a **Grants Writer** to pursue and coordinate various federal, state, and private grants to support community goals.

Secondary Goals

This strategy supports all goals identified in the 2030 Master Plan.

To be fiscally-responsible and still make progress on implementation, additional funding will be needed to accomplish many of the goals and strategies outlined in this plan. A grants writer, housed in the Town Manager's Office, would support implementing the Master Plan and other initiatives outlined in Town planning documents. The position would identify funding opportunities; prepare and submit grant applications on behalf of the Town and its departments; and assist in the implementation and administration of the grant and any necessary reporting. In addition to these primary tasks, the position would work with staff to determine their funding needs and help identify projects that could be a collaborative effort between departments or other entities.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager and HR Director (100%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget and Subsequent Grants



C2. Seek Funding Opportunities

Strategy C2.2: Adopt the **Community Preservation Act** to create a local funding source to support Master Plan goals related to open space, recreation, historic preservation, and affordable/community housing.

Secondary Goals



The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a local-option tool that allows communities to put aside and spend funds that are dedicated for open space conservation, outdoor recreation, historic preservation, and community housing. Winchester attempted to adopt the CPA in 2007, but the initiative failed at that time. It is not uncommon for communities to attempt to adopt CPA multiple times before acceptance. The Community Preservation Act could generate revenue from a local property tax surcharge of up to 3 percent of local property taxes and a variable annual distribution from the State's Community Preservation Trust Fund.

The Town can adopt up to four exemptions including the first \$100,000 of taxable property value for residential and/or commercial/industrial properties and low-income households or low/moderate-income senior households.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department, Select Board, Town Manager, and Town Meeting (100%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

N/A



C2. Seek Funding Opportunities

Strategy C2.3: Qualify for Certified Local Government (CLG) status to expand funding for historic preservation initiatives.

Secondary Goals



The Certified Local Government Program (CLG), as outlined in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1980, 36 CFR Part 61, extends federal and state programs to the local level -- the preservation level with the "most teeth." For example, communities can participate directly in the review and approval of National Register nominations. Communities that have enacted historic preservation legislation, such as establishing a Local Historic District, are eligible to apply to the Massachusetts Historic Commission for certification. Once established as a CLG, communities are eligible to compete for at least 10 percent of the federal funds allocated to MHC. This additional funding could be used to pay for surveys, National Register nominations, rehabilitation work, design, educational programs, and training. Previous grant cycles through MHC focused on projects proposed by CLG communities, excluding Winchester from applying. Establishment of CLG status would make more funding available and fast track Winchester's efforts in preservation planning and establishing tools for preservation.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Historical Commission and Select Board (90%)

Planning Department/Planning Board, Building Department, and Town Manager (10%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

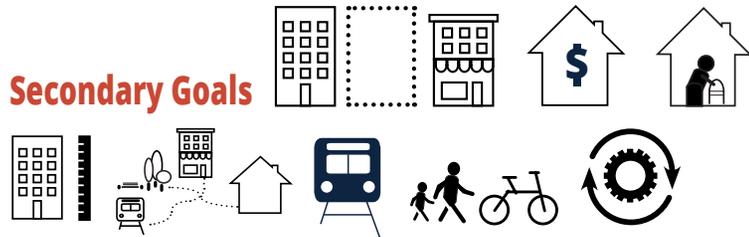
Funding Sources

N/A



C2. Seek Funding Opportunities

Strategy C2.4: Strive to become designated as a Housing Choice Community to gain preference for state grants/programs.



Secondary Goals

The Housing Choice Designation recognizes communities that have achieved production targets and set policies that encourage future sustainable growth. With the Housing Choice Designation, communities are able to take advantage of new financial resources, including exclusive access to Housing Choice Community Capital Grants, and preferential treatment for many state grants - including PARC and LAND grants - and capital funding programs - including MassWorks, Complete Streets, MassDOT Capital Projects, and the State Revolving Fund for Water and Sewer Infrastructure. There are 79 communities in Massachusetts that have the two-year Housing Choice Designation.

There are two routes to become eligible for this designation. The community must demonstrate "high production" (meaning greater than 5% housing growth OR 500 units over the last 5 years) OR "production and planning" (meaning greater than 3% housing growth or 300 units over the last 5 years AND 5 of 11 housing best practices (one Affordable)).

To apply, Winchester needs records of permitting over the past 5 year, and, for communities that grew at a more moderate pace, evidence of best practice policies related to housing production.

More Information: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-the-housing-choice-designation>
For Best Practices: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/housing-choice-2019-program-summary-and-designation-criteria/download>

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

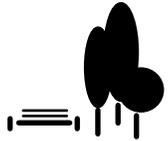
Building Department, Planning Department/Planning Board, and Assessors Office (75%)
Town Manager, Select Board, and Housing Partnership Board (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

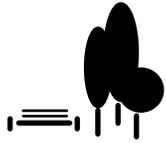
Funding Sources

Town Budget



**PRESERVE AND IMPROVE WINCHESTER'S EXISTING OPEN SPACE,
STREET TREES, WATER QUALITY, AND NATURAL RESOURCES.**

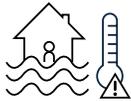
GOAL C3



C3. Open Space and Natural Resources Conservation

Strategy C3.1: Enhance passive open spaces with improved water quality, invasive species management, and green infrastructure to reduce pollution to surface water bodies and to maintain and enhance habitats for flora and fauna.

Secondary Goals



In order to aid in compliance with stormwater discharge requirements and improve flow and water quality along the Aberjona River, ongoing maintenance of open spaces and waterways continues to be a priority. Restoration of riparian habitat and dredging along the river and in the ponds in Town Center will help mitigate periodic flooding and reduce contaminant and sediment loads. Wetland habitats at Winning Farm should continue to be monitored and maintained, and areas of invasive plant species should be identified and controlled to ensure the health of wetlands and native trees. In particular, Wedge Pond should be a focused priority item. Although it is still swimmable, increasing nutrients and pollutants from runoff have severely affected the water quality at the site.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

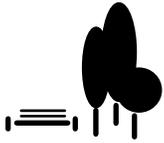
DPW, Recreation Department, Conservation Commission, Health Department, Town Forest, Open Space Committee, Recreation Committee, and Field Management Committee (100%)

Funding Cost

\$\$\$\$

Funding Sources

Grants and Town Budget



C3. Open Space and Natural Resources Conservation

Strategy C3.2: Update Winchester’s street tree inventory and coordinate with the DPW and Tree Committee to prioritize appropriations from the Street Tree Fund for new plantings and maintenance.

Secondary Goals



Conduct a full inventory of street trees, including the size and health of trees. Work with the Engineering Department to map the results of the inventory and identify gaps in the canopy, particularly in areas where shade trees may provide benefits in terms of energy conservation for public or private buildings, and offer pedestrians more continuous cover during summer months. This data can be combined with existing urban heat island measurements to highlight hotspots where more tree cover may be needed. Annual tree planting needs and Budget appropriations should consider these priority areas, in conjunction with resident requests for trees, and the replacement of trees removed due to poor health or hazardous conditions.

Explore options to conduct a more extensive urban forest assessment, including trees on private property and town-owned land, using satellite imagery or field-based sampling to analyze the tree canopy density and health. The results of this study can provide a key input to an urban forest management plan, including the identification of areas where additional tree plantings are needed and existing trees should be preserved to help mitigate urban heat island effect, improve air quality, and reduce runoff from storms.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

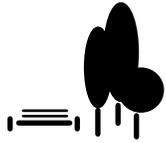
Tree Committee, DPW, Engineering Department, and Planning Department/Planning Board (100%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

Department Budgets and Volunteer Time



C3. Open Space and Natural Resources Conservation

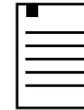
Strategy C3.3: Amend zoning to include a new comprehensive Landscaping Requirements subsection that includes provisions to protect existing trees from potentially harmful impacts of construction.

Secondary Goals



A comprehensive Landscaping Requirement subsection can be incorporated in the General Requirements section of the Zoning Bylaw that includes provisions to protect existing trees from impacts of construction, including Zoning Board or Planning Board review of proposed removal of large trees due to development or redevelopment and mitigating potential construction-related impacts on existing trees.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Planning Department/Planning Board, Design Review Committee, Tree Committee, and Conservation Commission (75%)

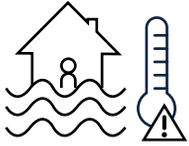
Select Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Town Meeting (25%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Department Budgets



PREPARE FOR CLIMATE IMPACTS BY PROTECTING PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND PROPERTIES, AND PRIORITIZING HEALTH, ESPECIALLY FOR THE COMMUNITY'S MOST VULNERABLE POPULATIONS.

GOAL C4



C4. Climate Resiliency

Strategy C4.1: Re-evaluate the flood risk for all properties and strategically implement further flood mitigation measures, as needed, to protect these resources.

Secondary Goals



Using updated flood modeling results and projections of areas expected to be inundated in the future, the Town should conduct a flood vulnerability assessment for all properties. Based on the potential Department of flooding and probability of damages occurring, identify sites where the design and installation of flood protection or retrofits should be prioritized to reduce the risk of impacts to these sites. In addition, identify stormwater and floodplain management improvements that will help further reduce the chance of inundation around key properties. Winchester should leverage state and federal funding opportunities, such as the Municipal Vulnerability Program Action Grants and FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants to advance these projects that help preserve its properties and historic resources.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager and Engineering Department (80%)

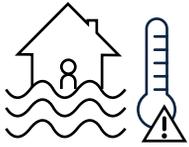
Planning Department/Planning Board, Assessors, Select Board, and DPW (20%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget and Grants



C4. Climate Resiliency

Strategy C4.2: Develop a local hazard mitigation and municipal vulnerability preparedness and response strategy to support residents, private landowners, and businesses as threats impact locally, especially populations that are particularly vulnerable.

Secondary Goals



Public safety and public health officials should review and update existing emergency plans and public information strategies to ensure residents, businesses, and Town employees are prepared for a wide range of local threats, including climate-related events, medical emergencies (such as pandemics), natural disasters, and terrorism. Emergency responders must ensure that hazard response and recovery strategies provide adequate shelters, cooling centers, and redundancies in transportation options for the Town's growing population. Plans should address how flooding, extreme temperatures, and water availability may impact vulnerable populations and critical infrastructure.

The Communications and Engagement Coordinator and Sustainability Director should collaborate to disseminate updated information about climate-related and other threats. It should include how to prepare for and cope with hazards of all kinds, including emergency kits, evacuation routes, shelter locations, food security, and update sources for during and after emergencies. Ensure that community members not fluent in English receive a copy of this information in their native language.

The Town should work with the Disability Access Commission (DAC) to incorporate residents with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities or those with medical issues or require special needs—such as electricity for home healthcare devices (i.e. oxygen or others). The Town should also work with community members to establish a Community Emergency Response Team, recruit and train volunteers, and conduct drills and tabletop exercises to reinforce emergency response skills.

ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY• 90

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

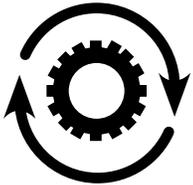
Town Manager, Select Board, Police, Fire, Health Department, and Engineering Department (75%)

Disability Access Commission (DAC), Planning Department/ Planning Board, Council on Aging, and Housing Partnership Board (25%)

Funding Cost

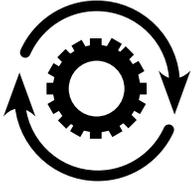
Funding Sources

Town Budget and Grants



PROVIDE TOWN SERVICES IN A STREAMLINED AND EQUITABLE MANNER TO SERVE A GROWING AND CHANGING COMMUNITY.

GOAL C5



C5. Streamlined and Equitable Services

Strategy C5.1: Work with the Town Departments to understand and address their high rates of turnover and develop a longer-term succession plan to ensure stability and diversity.

Secondary Goals

The Town should evaluate staffing plans and benefits to help retain staff for longer periods of time. High turnover rates can lead to issues for long-term succession planning and promoting from within departments. Schools, for example, have also had challenges with the diversity of their applicant pool.

For example, the Fire Department is one department challenged with retaining young firefighters after they have received their full training. Part of this is related to the pay differential between Winchester fire fighters and that of surrounding communities. This is a concern as several senior fire staff are approaching retirement age and there is a fairly wide spread in age and experience across the department.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

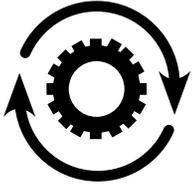
Department Heads, School Committee, Superintendent, and Town Manager (100%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

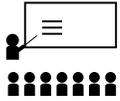
Department Budgets



C5. Streamlined and Equitable Services

Strategy C5.2: Create a funding stream through capital planning dedicated to maintaining municipal buildings in accordance with the Maintenance and Replacement Schedule from the *Town's Facilities Master Plan* and *ADA Access Audit and Transition Plan*.

Secondary Goals



The Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for the maintenance and repair of all municipal and school buildings. Many municipal buildings in Winchester are old and require consistent maintenance to keep buildings in a state of good repair. The Facilities Manager is responsible for developing an annual five-year capital request that includes prioritization of funding for short-term maintenance needs on facilities. Plans could also consider funding horizons beyond five-years.

Additionally, the Town also works with the DPW to generate a ten-year capital plan for longer-term capital and maintenance funding requests. To ensure that adequate funding is available for both regular maintenance and larger capital expenditures, the Town should closely review funding requests and the amounts allocated and determine if more funding is needed to adequately maintain all town-owned facilities, including schools.

In addition to the maintenance describe above, ensure that there is a schedule for improvements and adequate funding for recommended projects from the Town's *ADA Access Audit and Transition Plan*.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Select Board, Town Manager, Capital Planning Committee, Disability Access Commission (DAC), and DPW (100%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

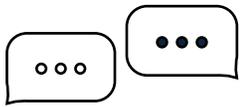
Town Budget and/or Capital Planning



JENKS

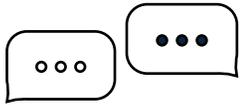
SENIOR CENTER

**BUILDING
COMMUNITY**



ESTABLISH ROBUST AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND TOWN GOVERNMENT—AND WITHIN TOWN GOVERNMENT—TO INCREASE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN TOWN DECISIONS WITH ELEVATED AWARENESS OF TOWN ISSUES AND INITIATIVES.

GOAL D1



D1. Robust Communication

Strategy D1.1: Hire a town Communications and Engagement Coordinator to administer, coordinate, and expand town communications, to act as a town liaison for community groups, and to enhance avenues for meaningful resident participation in Town Government.

Secondary Goals

This strategy supports all goals identified in the 2030 Master Plan.

Under the direction of the Town Manager’s Office, a town Communications and Engagement Coordinator would serve as a liaison between town departments and as a leader in the Winchester community. The position would coordinate and improve communications on Town activities, including outreach and education around funding for the maintenance of Winchester’s capital investments. The capital program and recommendations are an integral part of the Finance Committee’s Budget Report to Town Meeting and an organized outreach campaign can help inform Winchester residents of necessary capital improvements and help potentially alleviate resistance to necessary budget expenditures. Part of the outreach/education process should be directed at conveying why long-term investments are important to ensure the continued upkeep of Town-owned properties and infrastructure. The position would work closely with the IT department, including streamlining town processes and improving electronic communications, and with the Disability Access Commission, to ensure that communications are accessible to all.

The Communications and Engagement Coordinator position could also raise awareness of the community’s cultural resources and community events by housing all communications and engagement efforts of existing community entities, including but not limited to, Winchester Cultural Council, Network for Social Justice, Farmer’s Market, Winchester Chinese School, Parent-to-Parent, the Coalition for a Safe Community, Jenks Center, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and the EnKa Society, under one umbrella.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager and HR Director (90%)

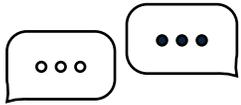
IT Department, Select Board, Building Department, and Disabilities Access Commission (DAC) (10%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget



D1. Robust Communication

Strategy D1.2: Explore opportunities to digitize town files and communications, including the Town's permitting system.

Secondary Goals

This strategy supports all goals identified in the 2030 Master Plan.

Digitizing the Town's archives and files is important to protect the community's legacy and providing easy access to them while helping improve communications and transparency. These resources are important to protect and preserve for current and future generations' understanding of the community's roots.

Transferring the Town's documentation and permitting system to a more user-friendly online platform could offer greater ease and efficiency for residents.

These online platforms can safeguard against recording errors and can provide a tracking mechanism with status updates which improves service delivery to applicants and residents. These software solutions can also minimize paper use and printing costs and provide information to residents in a more efficient manner.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

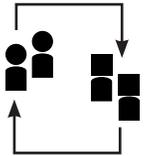
New Communications and Engagement Coordinator, IT Department, Town Clerk, and Building and Assessors Departments (100%)

Funding Cost

\$\$\$

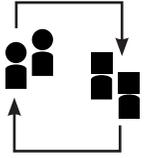
Funding Sources

Town Budget



EXPAND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES THAT INCREASE CULTURAL, ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS, ABILITY, AND ECONOMIC DIVERSITY AND COLLABORATION.

GOAL D2



D2. Diversity

Strategy D2.1: Update Zoning Bylaw and regulations with modernized and inclusive language.

Secondary Goals

Comprehensively review and update Winchester's Zoning Bylaw to reflect 21st century living and ensure a fair and inclusive community. This could include updating the bylaw's use of family and household standards to modern lifestyles and appropriate definitions, among other changes. Amend the zoning bylaw to provide for special permit and site plan review to include recommendations by the Disability Access Commission on accessibility.

Strategy Type

Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

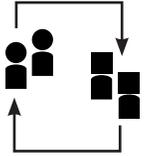
Planning Department, Planning Board, and Town Manager (100%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

Town Budget



D2. Diversity

Strategy D2.2: Conduct mandatory trainings for town staff, elected officials, and volunteer boards and committees to increase awareness of topics related to diversity, racial equity, inclusivity, ethics, and open meeting laws.

Secondary Goals

Establish a training program and materials to educate new and existing town employees about different racial, ethnic, and other cultural biases and how to promote equitable treatment and inclusion within their departments. As part of this, include a more robust and regular in-person ethics training.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

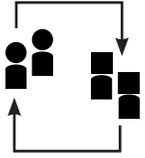
Town Clerk, Town Manager, and Department Heads (100%)

Funding Cost

\$

Funding Sources

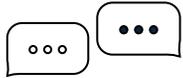
Town Budget



D2. Diversity

Strategy D2.3: Increase outreach and recruitment efforts to attract more diverse employment in town government and representation on Winchester’s town boards, committees, and local commissions.

Secondary Goals



Work with community organizations and diversity consultants to design job descriptions and recruitment strategies that attract more diverse candidates for municipal employment opportunities and volunteer positions within local government.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

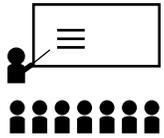
Town Manager, Select Board, Town Staff, and Town Boards and Committees (100%)

Funding Cost

\$

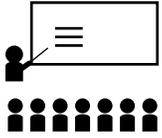
Funding Sources

Town Budget



MAINTAIN WINCHESTER'S INVESTMENT IN ITS TEACHERS, SCHOOL FACILITIES, AND STUDENTS TO OFFER A HIGH-QUALITY AND WELL-ROUNDED K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOMS.

GOAL D3



D3. Schools

Strategy D3.1: Create a long-term maintenance and replacement plan and allocate funding for school facilities and equipment.

Secondary Goals



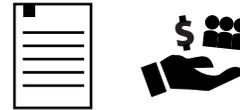
The school district is comprised of five elementary schools that serve pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, one middle school serving grades six through eight, and one high school serving grades nine through twelve. The schools were built in different eras, resulting in different configurations and layouts, internal mechanics and systems, and different maintenance schedules. These complexities can create a variety of capital needs depending on the building, and results in a greater need for planning and budgeting long-term maintenance and capital improvements. Without appropriate funding and systematic investment, deferred maintenance will impact school buildings and could result in a more rapid deterioration of facilities.

The Town has a *Facilities Master Plan* which documents specific needs and identifies priorities as well as a full inventory of each building and the lifespan, and replacement needs, of interior and exterior components. The plan identified Lynch and Muraco Elementary Schools, both over fifty years old, as two major projects to prioritize.

The Town must ensure adequate money is budgeted to address the ongoing maintenance and equipment needs of all facilities regardless of their age to ensure the school district remains one of the top school districts in Massachusetts.

Continued on next page

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

School Department, DPW, Educational Facilities Planning and Building Committee (EFPBC), and Town Meeting (95%)

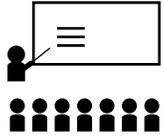
Disability Access Commission (DAC) (5%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

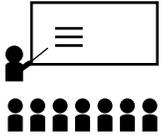
Funding Sources

Town Budget and Capital Planning



D3. Schools

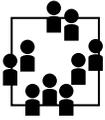
The Town plans to leverage funding from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to help offset some of the costs for both Lynch and Muraco—but the schedules are tied to when the State approves the application and reimbursement. The MSBA’s Board of Directors approves grants based on need and urgency as expressed by the City, Town, Regional School District or independent school, validated by the MSBA. Renovations to school facilities should not only address the building structure but should also address ongoing circulation and access concerns. For access concerns, refer to recommendations outlined in the *ADA Access Audit and Transition Plan*.



D3. Schools

Strategy D3.2: Determine how school and recreation department facilities, such as the Mystic Valley School, the Parkhurst School, and the Sanborn Carriage House buildings, should be used in the future to best support the Town of Winchester.

Secondary Goals



The *Facilities Master Plan* recommended spending \$3 million to renovate the Carriage House and move the school’s central administration offices out of the Parkhurst School facility. If this recommendation is followed, the Town should work with the School Department to determine what to do with the vacant space in the Parkhurst School, for its best and highest use.

Some potential use ideas for the Parkhurst School may include swing space for students during construction projects, a dedicated public school pre-school program, conversion into an active elementary school—if enrollment growth should exceed projections/capacity measures. It may also be suited for community or other town purposes. If the Carriage House is not renovated, the Town of Winchester and School Committee should evaluate how best to protect the valued historical resource from further deterioration.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

School Department, Town Manager, Select Board, and Town Meeting (90%)

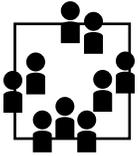
Historical Commission and Historical Society (10%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

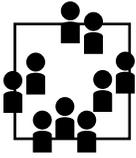
Funding Sources

Department Budgets



**INCREASE AND IMPROVE SPACES FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS,
ARTISTIC VENTURES, ATHLETIC FIELDS, AND RECREATIONAL
FACILITIES THAT ENCOURAGE RESIDENTS TO GATHER AND INTERACT.**

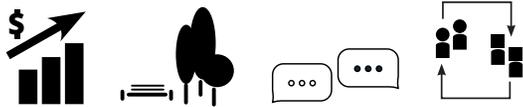
GOAL D4



D4. Community Events and Spaces

Strategy D4.1: Increase visibility and use of existing outdoor areas, particularly those that are underutilized, such as the lawn behind the library or open lots in neighborhoods, by hosting community-wide events and adding/improving infrastructure and amenities.

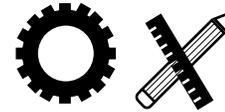
Secondary Goals



In suburbs and other mostly built-out communities, limited open space is under increasing pressure to perform important ecosystem services, offer additional health benefits, and serve as community gathering spaces. Winchester's outdoor areas and spaces should be celebrated and activated through increased programming, events, and infrastructure and amenities improvements.

Through the Master Plan process, residents expressed a desire to increase the use and visibility of existing outdoor areas, such as Bellino Park or Wildwood Cemetery, especially to help improve connectivity between neighborhoods. Other spaces, such as the lawn behind the library, could be activated through increased programming, such as summer concerts. The lawn is designed as a natural amphitheater and was used as a community gathering space for summer concerts in the 1980s. Neighborhood open lots also offer significant opportunities for community gardens, pocket parks, and other small-scale green development. Although small in size, green spaces on private property make up large parts of the urban land base and provide important roles for habitat and ecosystem services.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Recreation Department, Engineering Department, and DPW (75%)

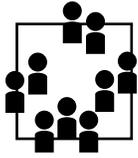
Fields Committee, other relevant Boards and Committees, and other relevant Local Organizations (25%)

Funding Cost

\$\$

Funding Sources

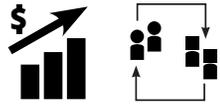
Capital Planning or Debt Exclusion, Cultural Council, and/or State Grants



D4. Community Events and Spaces

Strategy D4.2: Explore the possibilities of creating a multi-generational community center in/near Town Center to provide educational and cultural opportunities, event space, and to support the wellness of all residents.

Secondary Goals



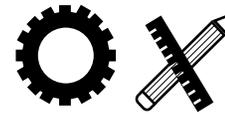
The Town's Recreation Department used to run the Winchester Youth Center in the McCall Middle School. Since closing, it has left a gap in youth services. Younger residents have shared a desire for more events where they feel welcome.

During the outreach for this process, older residents also expressed feelings of isolation and shared a desire for more interactions with youth. The Jenks Center and Council on Aging have sought to expand some programming into intergenerational activities that support our older residents who visit the Jenks Center.

The Town could improve the support of wellness for people of all ages with a multi-generational community center. Independent of the school, various community groups alongside the Jenks Center and Recreation Department could collaborate to run programming and events that support the needs and interest of youth, seniors, and people of all ages.

Proximity to the Jenks Center, some of Winchester's schools, and Town Hall would help the space thrive. A physical space in or near Town Center would be needed to house and adequately support these expanded endeavors. It could be as simple as a full-sized classroom trailer.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager, Select Board, Recreation Department, and Jenks Center (75%)

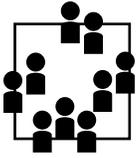
Council on Aging, Health Department, Schools, Library, and other Boards and Committees (25%)

Funding Cost

\$\$\$\$ for physical expansion and/or Staff/Board Time for programming

Funding Sources

Town Budget, Capital Planning, and Grants



D4. Community Events and Spaces

Strategy D4.3: Allow for and schedule weekend and summer performances at the Lincoln School auditorium.

Secondary Goals



Lincoln School is an elementary school of approximately 400 students. The entire building and grounds underwent major renovations in 2003. The school has an auditorium which is underutilized during non-school hours. The School Department and the Cultural District Commission could collaborate to increase the usage of the auditorium and provide community events, such as plays, concerts, movies, and others. Given the auditorium's proximity to the Town Center, the location holds significant potential for such events and activities to bring the community together.

Working together would be mutually beneficial for the School Department and the Cultural District Commission. The School Department could earn some revenue by leasing the space for town-related events and use the money towards covering any additional costs associated with leasing out the space. The town benefits by having centrally located additional space made available for its community programming.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager, School Department, Historical Commission, Recreation Department and Committee, Cultural Council, and new Communications and Engagement Coordinator (100%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

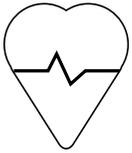
Town Budget and Grants



BUILD A WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY THAT PROMOTES WELL-BEING AND POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH FOR ALL.

GOAL D5

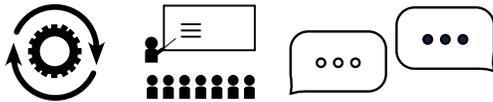
BUILDING COMMUNITY • 110



D5. Community Well-being

Strategy D5.1: Develop a coordinated campaign to promote positive mental health and well-being through programming, services, and resource-sharing.

Secondary Goals

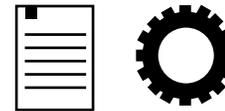


Research indicates that mental health and overall well-being are linked to three primary components of life: people, places, and opportunity. “People” includes social networks and connections as well as culture and activities. “Places” includes the existence of, safety, and feel of physical infrastructure, including private spaces such as one’s home or transportation (car), and public spaces such as work and school environments, outdoor spaces, transportation, and others. “Opportunity” is integrated into the elements of people and place but also includes knowledge and education, income, and others. All of these factors influence our level of stress, comfort, openness to others, physical health, and sense of self-efficacy, among many others.

Positive mental health is “a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community” (world health organization). In other words, the people, places, and opportunities that shape a person all provide the tools necessary to achieve and maintain a positive state of mental health.

Continued on next page

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Town Manager and Board of Health (90%)

School Department and Committee, Jenks Center, Council on Aging, and Recreation Department (10%)

Funding Cost

\$ and/or Staff/Board Time, depending on the level of additional programming and materials

Funding Sources

Town Budget and Grants



D5. Community Well-being

The Winchester community and surrounding region have many existing resources to support the overall well-being of local residents, including a Jenks Center Social Worker; Winchester Coalition for a Safer Community's Interface initiative; and the Board of Health's resource directory. To adequately leverage and expand upon these resources, key entities such as the Jenks Center, Schools, Board of Health, and other community groups and organizations, should work together to provide coordinated programming and advertise resources around mental health, community building, life skills, and opportunities.

In particular, expanded Recreation Department and/or multi-generational community center programming should include a focus on mental health and well-being to meet various needs in the community. Such programs could include AA meetings or other support groups, mindfulness and meditation classes, basic "how-to" classes to help new residents acclimate, find a job, or secure housing, and readily advertised outside resources such as help lines, safety shelters, counseling, and other organizations with expertise in this areas. It could also include support for new parents, single parents, and families of young children with special needs.

Winchester schools will continue to play a key role in the provision of preventative programming for youth. Guidance counselors, school nurses, adjustment counselors, special education staff, psychologists, teachers, and students will continue to build on the foundation of working together to provide and widely advertise local and regional services and resources, offer safe spaces, and integrate stress management tactics into course curriculum and extracurriculars. For example, schools could offer mindfulness and meditation classes or build on existing "how-to" lessons or workshops to help students learn how to proactively manage workloads and activities and reduce stress, provide secluded and comfortable spaces, or support student clubs, groups, and activities that provide an outlet and opportunity to build connections.

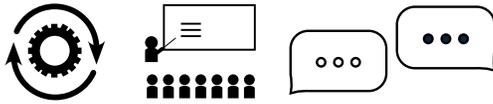
More Information: www.frbsf.org/community-development/publications/community-development-investment-review/2018/October/catalyzing-community-action-for-mental-health-and-wellbeing/



D5. Community Well-being

Strategy D5.2: Improve the availability of prevention and care service resources for substance abuse and mental health.

Secondary Goals



Winchester should continue to build a centralized and easily-accessible collection of informational material, service networks, and other resources for the public related to mental health, substance abuse, and overall well-being. The Board of Health currently has a resource directory born out of their 2018 Community Needs Assessment—but there is a greater opportunity to create a more centralized and physical hub.

This mental health hub could be connected to the Jenks Center, Town Hall, Recreation Department, or the new multi-generational community center. The space would be dedicated to the discussion of mental health, substance abuse prevention and care, and other topics related to well-being. Contact information and links to local and regional services should be provided. Advertisement of these new hubs for information and discussion should be incorporated into community health programming, existing local services, and should be widely displayed around town, particularly in schools, the library, health care facilities, town hall, and other key locations.

The Town’s “age-friendly” designation from the World Health Organization and AARP emphasizes building networks of social supports for all ages and specifically seniors.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Board of Health (90%)

Town Manager, School Department and Committee, Jenks Center, Council on Aging, and Recreation Department (10%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

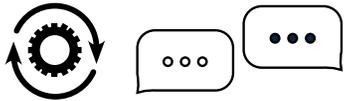
Town Budget and Grants



D5. Community Well-being

Strategy D5.3: Conduct mandatory trainings for town staff, elected and appointed town officials, and volunteer boards and committees to increase awareness of topics related to mental health, substance abuse, and overall well-being.

Secondary Goals



Establish a training program and materials to educate new and existing town employees about prevalent concerns, issues, and needs in the community related to mental health and well-being as well as other community health topics such as substance abuse. The training program should equip town staff and volunteers in critical positions to recognize warning signs and be sensitive to various health and mental health conditions, and distribute information about resources and services as necessary.

Strategy Type



Timing



Responsible Party (% responsible):

Board of Health, Town Manager, and Department Heads (100%)

Funding Cost

Staff/Board Time

Funding Sources

Town Budget

STRATEGY INDEX



A1.2.1 Create an area plan for the North Main Street Corridor to envision public realm improvements and to identify development opportunities, zoning amendments, and design guidelines to help shape future development.

A1.3.1 Collaborate with neighborhood residents to create an area plan for the Holton/Cross Street Area to increase the value of the non-residential tax base, including updated zoning that strategically responds to the market, and to create more cohesive neighborhood buffering.

A1.4 Adopt the community's desired future land uses and real estate market potential for key commercial and potential redevelopment sites along the Cambridge Street Corridor; amend zoning and design guidelines to reflect these findings.

A1.5 Strengthen Swanton Street as a primary connection between North Main and Washington Streets through zoning amendments to foster redevelopment opportunities and through public streetscape and wayfinding.

A3.1 Strengthen the existing zoning and design review process for large houses and consider amendments to dimensional regulations to further ensure new houses or additions reinforce the existing neighborhood development pattern.

A3.2 Expand and strengthen Winchester's inclusionary housing zoning requirements to apply town-wide to better support the creation of affordable housing units through larger-scale residential or mixed-use developments and to generate funds for the Winchester Affordable Housing Trust.

A4.1 Consider more flexible conversions of existing houses to create smaller and more financially attainable housing options without increasing building density or significantly altering the appearance of existing buildings and neighborhoods.

A4.2 Expand areas that zoning allows for multi-unit developments to increase Winchester's diversity of housing options—especially for those of all abilities and for smaller households.

A5.1 Promote new infill development that reinforces the existing neighborhood development patterns with design guidelines tailored to neighborhood character.

A6.1 Update dimensional and use regulations to help protect the nonresidential tax base while better aligning with Winchester's market and potential future uses in the identified *Evolving Opportunity Areas*.

A6.2 Update and enforce sign regulations to promote creative and attractive signage throughout town.

A7.1 Adopt one or more Local Historic Districts to protect historic structures and resources that are critical components of neighborhood character and to ensure the compatibility of new development.

A7.2 Complete the Town's inventory of historic resources to lay the foundation for further historic designations and other preservation protections.

B3.1 Undertake a town-wide transit demand management study to better understand the feasibility of alternative transit options.

B3.2.2 Establish semi-remote school drop-off areas to disperse traffic congestion.

B3.3 Include clear requirements for developers to incorporate transportation mitigation, including robust analysis of single-occupancy-vehicle alternatives, Transportation Demand Management Plans, and universal design principles.

C1.3 Develop a comprehensive communications plan that provides educational materials on local issues, such as becoming a zero-waste community, guidance on energy and water saving measures and subsidies, and natural hazard preparedness and strategies to increase resiliency.

C1.4 Adopt regulatory requirements and zoning or financial incentives to promote sustainable development practices,

including the re-use of existing buildings over new development and environmentally-conscious new development.

C1.7 Move toward becoming a zero-waste community.

C3.3 Amend zoning to include a new comprehensive Landscaping Requirements subsection that includes provisions to protect existing trees from potentially harmful impacts of construction.

C4.1 Re-evaluate the flood risk for all properties and strategically implement further flood mitigation measures, as needed, to protect these resources.

C5.2 Create a funding stream through capital planning dedicated to maintaining municipal buildings in accordance with the Maintenance and Replacement Schedule from the Town's Facilities Master Plan and ADA Access Audit and Transition Plan.

D2.1 Update zoning bylaws and regulations with modernized and inclusive language.

D2.2 Conduct mandatory trainings for town staff, elected officials, and volunteer boards to increase awareness of topics related to diversity, racial equity, inclusivity, ethics, and open meeting laws.



Continued



D2.3 Increase outreach and recruitment efforts to attract more diverse employment in town government and representation on Winchester's town boards, committees, and local commissions.

D3.1 Create a long-term maintenance and replacement plan and allocate funding for school facilities and equipment.

D5.1 Develop a coordinated campaign to promote positive mental health and well-being through programming, services, and resource-sharing.

A1.2.1 Create an area plan for the North Main Street Corridor to envision public realm improvements and to identify development opportunities, zoning amendments, and design guidelines to help shape future development.

A1.2.2 Consider establishing a District Improvement Financing (DIF) program in the southern portion of the North Main Street corridor to allow the Town to borrow funds to target physical improvements in the district based on future tax revenue increases.

A1.5 Strengthen Swanton Street as a primary connection between North Main and Washington Streets through zoning amendments to foster redevelopment opportunities and through public streetscape and wayfinding improvements.

A6.3 Leverage the Town's new Cultural District status, streetscape improvements, wayfinding, and new branding to increase visitation in Town Center and to reinforce synergies between economic activity areas in Winchester.

A7.3 Provide more resources to adequately beautify and maintain public streetscapes, and integrated open spaces and passive recreation opportunities.

B1.1 Improve accessibility and safety for pedestrians in Town Center and vicinity.

B1.2 Undertake a strategic town-wide bicycle and pedestrian plan to establish a phased approach to creating a network connecting residents and visitors to key town destinations.

B2.2 Work with the MBTA to improve accessibility and user experience of regional bus service.

B3.2.2 Establish semi-remote school drop-off areas to disperse traffic congestion.

B3.4 Ensure the continued achievement of local Complete Streets goals by updating the Town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and expanding capacity (staffing and funding) for oversight and implementation.

B3.5 Provide alternative last mile options to/from local MBTA mass transit stations to increase the viability of their use and to alleviate traffic congestion and parking pressures.

C1.6 Replace town fleet with electric or hybrid vehicles and install e-charging stations at public buildings/facilities (excluding public safety vehicles, if not feasible).

C3.1 Enhance passive open spaces with improved water quality, invasive species management, and green infrastructure to reduce pollution to surface water bodies and to maintain and enhance habitats for flora and fauna.

C3.2 Update Winchester's street tree inventory and coordinate with the DPW and Tree Committee to prioritize appropriations from the Street Tree Fund for new plantings and maintenance.

C4.1 Re-evaluate the flood risk for all properties and strategically implement further flood mitigation measures, as needed, to protect these resources.

C5.2 Create a funding stream through capital planning dedicated to maintaining municipal buildings in accordance with the Maintenance and Replacement Schedule from the Town's Facilities Master Plan and ADA Access Audit and Transition Plan.

D3.2 Determine how school and recreation department facilities, such as the Mystic Valley, Parkhurst School, and the Sanborn Carriage House buildings, should be used in the future to best support the Town of Winchester.

D4.1 Increase visibility and use of existing outdoor areas, particularly those that are underutilized, such as the lawn behind the library or neighborhood vacant lots, by hosting community-wide events and adding/improving infrastructure and amenities.

D4.2 Explore the possibilities of creating a multi-generational community center in/near Town Center to provide educational and cultural opportunities, event space, and to support the wellness of all residents.



A1.3.2 Work with property owners in the Holton/Cross Street Area to support marketing for commercial, industrial, and/or office uses (as determined by the Holton/Cross Area Plan).

A2.1 Create a Main Streets organization to promote Town Center, the Cultural District, and local businesses, and to collaborate with businesses and other entities to organize events that draw people to Town Center and catalyze business activity.

A6.3 Leverage the Town's new Cultural District status, streetscape improvements, wayfinding, and new branding to increase visitation in Town Center and to reinforce synergies between economic activity areas in Winchester.

B1.3 Create and distribute local maps that illustrate key walking and biking transportation connections as well as recreational areas in town.

B2.1 Track progress for and actively participate in MassDOT's Rail Vision commuter rail planning project.

B2.2 Work with the MBTA to improve accessibility and user experience of regional bus service.

B3.2.1 Consider increasing the subsidy for school bus service (making it more affordable) to encourage more participation and study why it is currently underutilized by students.

B3.2.3 Promote walking and carsharing options to foster connections between students and address traffic congestion issues.

B3.5 Provide alternative last mile options to/from local MBTA mass transit stations to increase the viability of their use and to alleviate traffic congestion and parking pressures.

C1.2 Assess municipal buildings and facilities through efficiency and sustainability ratings to determine which should be prioritized and create an Improvement Plan.

C1.3 Develop a comprehensive communications plan that provides educational materials on local issues, such as becoming a zero-waste community, guidance on energy and water saving measures and subsidies, and natural hazard preparedness and strategies to increase resiliency.

C1.5 Create a town-wide or neighborhood-based solar conversion program with volume discounts and a retrofitting program to convert cooling and heating systems to energy-efficient and sustainable alternatives.

C1.7 Move toward becoming a zero-waste community.

C1.8 Encourage and incentivize more residents to opt into WinPower, especially WinPower 100.

C4.2 Develop a local hazard mitigation and municipal vulnerability preparedness and response strategy to support residents, private landowners, and businesses as threats impact locally, especially populations that are particularly vulnerable.

D1.2 Explore opportunities to digitize town files and communications, including the Town's permitting system.

D4.1 Increase visibility and use of existing outdoor areas, particularly those that are underutilized, such as the lawn behind the library or neighborhood vacant lots, by hosting community-wide events and adding/improving infrastructure and amenities.

D4.2 Explore the possibilities of creating a multi-generational community center in/near Town Center to provide educational and cultural opportunities, event space, and to support the wellness of all residents.

D4.3 Allow and schedule weekend and summer performances at the Lincoln School auditorium.

D5.1 Develop a coordinated campaign to promote positive mental health and well-being through programming, services, and resource-sharing.

D5.2 Improve the availability of prevention and care service resources for substance abuse and mental health.



A1.1 Increase community planning staff capacity to strengthen the Town's ability to promote desired development objectives and expand survey, planning, historic preservation, and regulatory support.

A1.2.2 Consider establishing a District Improvement Financing (DIF) program in the southern portion of the North Main Street corridor to allow the Town to borrow funds to target physical improvements in the district based on future tax revenue increases.

A2.1 Create a Main Streets organization to promote Town Center, the Cultural District, and local businesses, and to collaborate with businesses and other entities to organize events that draw people to Town Center and catalyze business activity.

A2.2 Establish a town Economic Development Task Force to spearhead ongoing town efforts to promote and strengthen the economic health of local businesses.

A5.2 Hire a part-time Zoning Enforcement Officer to assist citizens, developers, and builders with zoning interpretation and compliance.

A7.3 Provide more resources to adequately beautify and maintain public streetscapes, and integrated open spaces and passive recreation opportunities.

B3.4 Ensure the continued achievement of local Complete Streets goals by updating the Town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and expanding capacity (staffing and funding) for oversight and implementation.

C1.1 Create a new Sustainability Director position for the town and incorporate well-defined and measurable sustainability objectives into municipal job descriptions and duties.

C2.1 Hire a Grants Writer to pursue and coordinate various federal, state, and private grants to support community goals.

C2.2 Adopt the Community Preservation Act to create a local funding source to support Master Plan goals related to open space, recreation, historic preservation, and affordable/community housing.

C2.3 Qualify for Certified Local Government (CLG) status to expand funding for historic preservation initiatives.

C2.4 Strive to become designated as a Housing Choice Community to gain preference for state grants/programs.

C5.1 Work with town departments to understand and address their high rates of turnover and develop a longer-term succession plan to ensure stability and diversity.

C5.2 Create a funding stream through capital planning dedicated to maintaining municipal buildings in accordance with the Maintenance and Replacement Schedule from the Town's Facilities Master Plan and ADA Access Audit and Transition Plan.

D1.1 Hire a town Communications and Engagement Coordinator to administer, coordinate, and expand town communications, to act as a town liaison for community groups, and to enhance avenues for meaningful resident participation in Town Government.

D2.2 Conduct mandatory trainings for town staff, elected officials, and volunteer boards to increase awareness of topics related to diversity, racial equity, inclusivity, ethics, and open meeting laws.

D2.3 Increase outreach and recruitment efforts to attract more diverse employment in town government and representation on Winchester's town boards, committees, and local commissions.

D3.1 Create a long-term maintenance and replacement plan and allocate funding for school facilities and equipment.

D5.3 Conduct mandatory trainings for town staff, elected and appointed town officials, and volunteer boards and committees to increase awareness of topics related to mental health, substance abuse, and overall well-being.



A1.1 Increase community planning staff capacity to strengthen the Town's ability to promote desired development objectives and expand survey, planning, historic preservation, and regulatory support.

A1.2.1 Create an area plan for the North Main Street Corridor to envision public realm improvements and to identify development opportunities, zoning amendments, and design guidelines to help shape future development.

A1.4 Adopt the community's desired future land uses and real estate market potential for key commercial and potential redevelopment sites along the Cambridge Street Corridor; amend zoning and design guidelines to reflect these findings.

A2.2 Establish a town Economic Development Task Force to spearhead ongoing town efforts to promote and strengthen the economic health of local businesses.

A3.1 Strengthen the existing zoning and design review process for large houses and consider amendments to dimensional regulations to further ensure new houses or additions reinforce the existing neighborhood development pattern.

A3.2 Expand and strengthen Winchester's inclusionary housing zoning requirements to apply town-wide to better support the creation of affordable housing units through larger-scale residential or mixed-use developments and to generate funds for the Winchester Affordable Housing Trust.

A4.1 Consider more flexible conversions of existing houses to create smaller and more financially attainable housing options without increasing building density or significantly altering the appearance of existing buildings and neighborhoods.

A4.2 Expand areas that zoning allows for multi-unit developments to increase Winchester's diversity of housing options—especially for those of all abilities and for smaller households.

A5.1 Promote new infill development that reinforces the existing neighborhood development patterns with design guidelines tailored to neighborhood character.

A6.3 Leverage the Town's new Cultural District status, streetscape improvements, wayfinding, and new branding to increase visitation in Town Center and to reinforce synergies between economic activity areas in Winchester.

A7.1 Adopt one or more Local Historic Districts to protect historic structures and resources that are critical components of neighborhood character and to ensure the compatibility of new development.

A7.2 Complete the Town's inventory of historic resources to lay the foundation for further historic designations and other preservation protections.

B1.2 Undertake a strategic town-wide bicycle and pedestrian plan to establish a phased approach to creating a network connecting residents and visitors to key town destinations.

B1.3 Create and distribute local maps that illustrate key walking and biking transportation connections as well as recreational areas in town.

B3.1 Undertake a town-wide transit demand management study to better understand the feasibility of alternative transit options.

B3.2.1 Consider increasing the subsidy for school bus service (making it more affordable) to encourage more participation and study why it is currently underutilized by students.

B3.2.2 Establish semi-remote school drop-off areas to disperse traffic congestion.

B3.5 Provide alternative last mile options to/from local MBTA mass transit stations to increase the viability of their use and to alleviate traffic congestion and parking pressures.

C1.1 Create a new Sustainability Director position for the town and incorporate well-defined and measurable sustainability objectives into municipal job descriptions and duties.

C1.2 Assess municipal buildings and facilities through efficiency and sustainability ratings to determine which should be prioritized and create an Improvement Plan.

C2.1 Hire a Grants Writer to pursue and coordinate various federal, state, and private grants to support community goals.

C2.2 Adopt the Community Preservation Act to create a local funding source to support Master Plan goals related to open space, recreation, historic preservation, and affordable/community housing.

C2.3 Qualify for Certified Local Government (CLG) status to expand funding for historic preservation initiatives.

C2.4 Strive to become designated as a Housing Choice Community to gain preference for state grants/programs.

C3.3 Amend zoning to include a new comprehensive Landscaping Requirements subsection that includes provisions to protect existing trees from potentially harmful impacts of construction.

C4.1 Re-evaluate the flood risk for all properties and strategically implement further flood mitigation measures, as needed, to protect these resources.



Continued

C4.2 Develop a local hazard mitigation and municipal vulnerability preparedness and response strategy to support residents, private landowners, and businesses as threats impact locally, especially populations that are particularly vulnerable.

D1.1 Hire a town Communications and Engagement Coordinator to administer, coordinate, and expand town communications, to act as a town liaison for community groups, and to enhance avenues for meaningful resident participation in town government.

D1.2 Explore opportunities to digitize town files and communications, including the Town's permitting system.

D2.1 Update zoning bylaws and regulations with modernized and inclusive language.

D5.1 Develop a coordinated campaign to promote positive mental health and well-being through programming, services, and resource-sharing.



A1.2.2 Consider establishing a District Improvement Financing (DIF) program in the southern portion of the North Main Street corridor to allow the Town to borrow funds to target physical improvements in the district based on future tax revenue increases.

A1.3.1 Collaborate with neighborhood residents to create an area plan for the Holton/Cross Street Area to increase the value of the non-residential tax base, including updated zoning that strategically responds to the market, and to create more cohesive neighborhood buffering.

A1.3.2 Work with property owners in the Holton/Cross Street Area to support marketing for commercial, industrial, and/or office uses (as determined by the Holton/Cross Area Plan).

A1.5 Strengthen Swanton Street as a primary connection between North Main and Washington Streets through zoning amendments to foster redevelopment opportunities and through public streetscape and wayfinding improvements.

A2.1 Create a Main Streets organization to promote Town Center, the Cultural District, and local businesses, and to collaborate with businesses and other entities to organize events that draw people to Town Center and catalyze business activity.

A5.2 Hire a part-time Zoning Enforcement Officer to assist citizens, developers, and builders with zoning interpretation and compliance.

A6.1 Update dimensional and use regulations to help protect the nonresidential tax base while better aligning with Winchester's market and potential future uses in the identified *Evolving Opportunity Areas*.

A6.2 Update and enforce sign regulations to promote creative and attractive signage throughout town.

A7.2 Complete the Town's inventory of historic resources to lay the foundation for further historic designations and other preservation protections.

B1.1 Improve accessibility and safety for pedestrians in Town Center and vicinity.

B3.3 Include clear requirements for developers to incorporate transportation mitigation, including robust analysis of single-occupancy-vehicle alternatives, Transportation Demand Management Plans, and universal design principles.

B3.4 Ensure the continued achievement of local Complete Streets goals by updating the Town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and expanding capacity (staffing and funding) for oversight and implementation.

B3.5 Provide alternative last mile options to/from local MBTA mass transit stations to increase the viability of their use and to alleviate traffic congestion and parking pressures.

C1.3 Develop a comprehensive communications plan that provides educational materials on local issues, such as becoming a zero-waste community, guidance on energy and water saving measures and subsidies, and natural hazard preparedness and strategies to increase resiliency.

C1.4 Adopt regulatory requirements and zoning or financial incentives to promote sustainable development practices, including the re-use of existing buildings over new development and environmentally-conscious new development.

C1.5 Create a town-wide or neighborhood-based solar conversion program with volume discounts and a retrofitting program to convert cooling and heating systems to energy-efficient and sustainable alternatives.

C1.6 Replace town fleet with electric or hybrid vehicles and install e-charging stations at public buildings/facilities (excluding public safety vehicles, if not feasible).



Continued

C5.2 Create a funding stream through capital planning dedicated to maintaining municipal buildings in accordance with the Maintenance and Replacement Schedule from the Town's Facilities Master Plan and ADA Access Audit and Transition Plan.

D3.2 Determine how school and recreation department facilities, such as the Mystic Valley, Parkhurst School, and the Sanborn Carriage House buildings, should be used in the future to best support the Town of Winchester.

D4.2 Explore the possibilities of creating a multi-generational community center in/near Town Center to provide educational and cultural opportunities, event space, and to support the wellness of all residents.

D4.3 Allow and schedule weekend and summer performances at the Lincoln School auditorium.



A7.3 Provide more resources to adequately beautify and maintain public streetscapes, and integrated open spaces and passive recreation opportunities.

B2.1 Track progress for and actively participate in MassDOT's Rail Vision commuter rail planning project.

B2.2 Work with the MBTA to improve accessibility and user experience of regional bus service.

B3.2.3 Promote walking and carsharing options to foster connections between students and address traffic congestion issues.

B3.4 Ensure the continued achievement of local Complete Streets goals by updating the Town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and expanding capacity (staffing and funding) for oversight and implementation.

C1.7 Move toward becoming a zero-waste community.

C1.8 Encourage and incentivize more residents to opt into WinPower, especially WinPower 100.

C3.1 Enhance passive open spaces with improved water quality,

invasive species management, and green infrastructure to reduce pollution to surface water bodies and to maintain and enhance habitats for flora and fauna.

C3.2 Update Winchester's street tree inventory and coordinate with the DPW and Tree Committee to prioritize appropriations from the Street Tree Fund for new plantings and maintenance.

C5.1 Work with town departments to understand and address their high rates of turnover and develop a longer-term succession plan to ensure stability and diversity.

D2.2 Conduct mandatory trainings for town staff, elected officials, and volunteer boards to increase awareness of topics related to diversity, racial equity, inclusivity, ethics, and open meeting laws.

D2.3 Increase outreach and recruitment efforts to attract more diverse employment in town government and representation on Winchester's town boards, committees, and local commissions.

D4.1 Increase visibility and use of existing outdoor areas, particularly those that are underutilized, such as the lawn behind the library or neighborhood vacant lots, by hosting community-wide events and adding/improving infrastructure and amenities.

D5.1 Develop a coordinated campaign to promote positive mental health and well-being through programming, services, and resource-sharing.

D5.2 Improve the availability of prevention and care service resources for substance abuse and mental health.

D5.3 Conduct mandatory trainings for town staff, elected and appointed town officials, and volunteer boards and committees to increase awareness of topics related to mental health, substance abuse, and overall well-being.