

# VISIONING *for the* SOUTHBOROUGH MASTER PLAN



## Acknowledgements

The Town of Southborough's Master Plan Vision Report was developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, in partnership with the Town of Southborough's Master Plan Committee. A District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) grant through the Metropolitan Area Planning Council provided funding for this project.

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## Letter from the Master Plan Committee

DRAFT

## Southborough: Past Vision and Plans

### 2008 Master Plan

#### Vision

The Town of Southborough most recently prepared a Master Plan in 2008. As captured by the tagline “preserving our past; protecting our future,” the 2008 Master Plan’s Vision seeks to balance the imperatives of protecting Southborough’s valued history and high quality of life with the inevitability of change and evolution. Through the goals and objectives defined by the Master Plan process and document, Southborough seeks to treat change as a chance to enhance strategic areas in Town and create opportunities for current residents and future generations.

“Southborough is a community that takes great pride in its physical beauty, extraordinary views, distinct rural character, rich historic legacy, vast natural resources, and citizenry devoted to giving back. Southborough residents enjoy an unequaled quality of life – people appreciate the small town atmosphere with its sense of community and strong civic involvement. Residents value the excellent school system. Southborough also places significant importance in its village centers and neighborhoods.

The vision of this Master Plan is to preserve Southborough’s classic rural New England character and charm while enhancing the village centers and neighborhoods. While residents recognize that change is inevitable, it is important that Southborough safeguard its unique identity. This Master Plan is the Town’s chance to prepare for this change, to put forth the best plan for where change is most appropriate to occur, and suggest what it should look like so that it meets the needs of the community. The Town should build upon the past by reinforcing a sense of belonging to a community with such an exceptional heritage. Southborough needs to ensure that fragile open spaces and water resources are adequately protected. The Town appreciates its active citizenry and seeks to strengthen and increase the number of residents who give their time to better the community. The Town also wants to create opportunities for future generations of Southborough residents to live, work and play here, as current residents have done.”

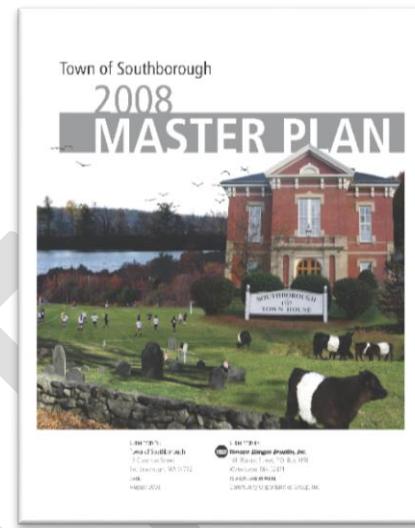
### 2008 Master Plan Goal Statements

The 2008 Master Plan’s goal statements were designed to serve as a policy guide for the development of the Master Plan. Many of these higher level goals remain relevant today.



#### Land Use and Zoning

- LU-1: Update and modernize the zoning bylaw and other land use regulations.
- LU-2: Provide appropriate buffers or transitions between incompatible uses.
- LU-3: Encourage more flexible development in appropriate places through such means as shared septic systems, cluster subdivisions, open space residential development, and by right zoning.
- LU-4: Encourage architectural quality in non-residential development.
- LU-5: Support a Town permitting process that is fair and efficient and follows the goals of the Master Plan.
- LU-6: Promote growth that is environmentally sustainable and capable of withstanding economic downturns.



*“Preserving our past;  
protecting our future.”*

- LU-7: Establish stewardship and preservation of the unique identity of Southborough's neighborhoods and villages and strengthen linkages between areas.
- LU-8: Continue to engage neighboring towns about the development that occurs along the municipal borders.



#### *Housing*

- H-1: Ensure that future generations of Southborough citizens and people who work in Southborough are able to remain as residents of the Town.
- H-2: Encourage a more diverse population.
- H-3: Expand the housing choice in Southborough for families.
- H-4: Encourage small lot zoning in villages and other appropriate areas in Town.
- H-5: Encourage multi-family housing in appropriate locations and at an appropriate scale.
- H-6: Maintain Southborough's attractive and aesthetically diverse housing stock and continue to promote quality in future development.



#### *Economic Development*

- ED-1: Expand commercial development where it is appropriate, along Route 9 and in the villages, at an appropriate scale.
- ED-2: Create opportunities for business to start and prosper in Southborough.
- ED-3: Review/change the permitting process to try and eliminate unreasonable bottlenecks.
- ED-4: Balance the financial benefit to the Town from development and open space.



#### *Open Space and Recreation*

- OS-1: Continue to identify and preserve Southborough's open space and recreation resources.
- OS-2: Expand access opportunities to Southborough's open spaces.
- OS-3: Increase walking and bicycle paths, boardwalks, and trails to create a trail network and connect open space and recreational resources.
- OS-4: Maintain and enhance existing open space and passive recreational facilities.



#### *Natural, Historic, and Cultural Resources*

- NCR-1: Enhance protection of valued open space and natural resources, particularly the Sudbury Reservoir and the SuAsCo watershed.
- NCR-2: Successfully implement the Lower Impact Development Bylaw to promote "green" practices and ensure proper management of stormwater.
- NCR-3: Increase awareness, understanding and appreciation of historic and archeological resources and resource preservation into the planning process.
- NCR-4: Encourage architectural quality and the preservation of community character.
- NCR-5: Establish guidelines for preserving and enhancing existing architectural and historic character and its context, as identified by the Cultural Resources Survey (2000).
- NCR-6: Establish guidelines that encourage new development to conform to the architectural and historic character and context of Southborough's existing buildings.
- NCR-7: Create and enhance cultural opportunities and activities in Southborough.



### *Transportation, Transit, and Circulation*

- T-1: Create a long-term conscientious vision for traffic mitigation while managing traffic and land uses to avoid congestion.
- T-2: Increase public transportation and other non-automobile transportation options on a local, regional and state-wide basis.
- T-3: Consider improvements to roads in Town.



### *Municipal Facilities and Services*

- MF-1: Establish new or improved/upgraded facilities for public safety.
- MF-2: Establish a new community center for use by residents of all ages.
- MF-3: Increase sewage disposal options in Town and at municipal facilities.
- MF-4: Enhance communication with residents and among Town boards, commissions and staff.
- MF-5: Enhance facilities for Town staff and departments.
- MF-6: Create a process for identifying and disposing of surplus Town-owned property.
- MF-7: Provide recreational opportunities for residents of all ages.
- MF-8: Maintain and enhance existing open space and recreational facilities.



### *Southborough's Villages*

- V-1: Promote growth and development within the Downtown to encourage a mixed-use environment.
- V-2: Reinvigorate Southborough's villages by creating small, resident-driven businesses.

The 2008 Master Plan further develops and details objectives and actions consistent with the Plan's overarching goal statements. In 2019, the Master Plan Committee conducted a comprehensive review of these implementation recommendations, categorizing them across Plan elements by progress made since the publication of the 2008 Master Plan. Among the 107 total recommendations, 12 have been completed and another 11 involve regular work which remains ongoing. Approximately 30% of the implementation recommendations have witnessed, at least some initial progress, while the remaining 40% have not yet been addressed. More information is required to determine the status of 7% of the implementation recommendations.

*Table 1: 2008 Master Plan Recommendations Status*

<b>Plan Element</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Started</b>	<b>Not Started</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>	<b>Total</b>
Data Collection	-	-	-	5	-	5
Land Use & Zoning	1	-	2	20	-	23
Housing	-	1	4	1	-	6
Economic Development	3	-	4	1	-	8
Open Space & Recreation	1	6	2	2	-	11
Natural, Historic & Cultural	3	-	6	2	5	16
Transport, Transit, Circulation	-	-	5	6	-	11
Municipal Facilities	4	3	10	6	3	26
Villages	-	1	-	-	-	1

Plan Element	Complete	Ongoing	Started	Not Started	Follow-up	Total
Total	12	11	33	43	8	107

### Summary of Related Plans

In the time since the 2008 Master Plan was completed, the Town of Southborough has pursued other significant planning projects which were informed by the Master Plan. A high-level summary of a selection of these plans is included below.

#### 2009 and 2019 Open Space and Recreation Plan

The Town of Southborough has twice updated its Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) in the past ten years.<sup>1</sup> Southborough's OSRP serves as a guide to direct decisions regarding open space conservation and the development and maintenance of recreational facilities. Having a formally approved OSRP further makes Southborough eligible for state grants which can be used to acquire and improve conservation and recreational amenities.

Southborough's OSRP summarizes the Town's natural and cultural resources and includes an action plan to meet the open space and recreation goals defined by the plan. The 2019 Update includes an overview of goals achieved in the time since the publication of the prior version, including the addition and expansion of open space properties, enhanced educational and outreach programs, and improved municipal organization and partnership with abutting communities and nonprofit partners. However, the plan also notes that no parcels identified as priorities in the 2009 Plan were protected, and more than 100 acres of land prioritized for recreation potential or priority habitat were developed or are targeted for development.

The OSRP's inventory of open space identifies approximately 3,500 acres of land as highly protected open space, composed of state owned Sudbury Reservoir, Town-owned conservation land, and non-profit conservation organization land. Additionally, Southborough has roughly 230 acres of public recreational land, including parks, athletic fields, and school recreation land. Southborough's open spaces serve to preserve prime farmland soil, protect the quality of water resources, and provide habitat for wildlife and plant species.

Continued population growth and development pressures are cited as concerns, for their potential to strain the capacity of existing resources and the possible threat to existing undeveloped land. The OSRP's goals and objectives emphasize the strategic addition and improvement to Southborough's open spaces, including both recreational and conservation properties, so that new service needs are met and the existing benefits of open space are retained in a manner protective of the town's character.

#### 2015 Housing Production Plan

With the support of the Southborough Housing Opportunity Partnership Committee (SHOPC), the Town of Southborough contracted with a consultant to complete a Housing Production Plan that was approved in 2015. The plan includes a housing needs assessment describing demographic and housing characteristics that inform several housing goals and strategies included in the plan. The greatest need identified from this assessment was additional rental housing units, both naturally affordable rental units and deed-restricted Affordable Housing units reaching deep levels of affordability (30 – 50% AMI and less than 30% AMI).

The assessment also resulted in the following conclusions:

- A need for additional Affordable owner-occupied housing for households earning 50-80% AMI as well as ownership opportunities for middle-income households with incomes up to 140% AMI.
- A need for family sized housing units with three or more bedrooms (ownership and rental).

<sup>1</sup> The most recent OSRP update received conditional approval in March 2019 and was submitted to the State Department of Conservation Services for final approval in early 2020.

- A need for more housing options for older adults and persons with disabilities that each include supportive services.
- A regional need for housing for formerly homeless households and homelessness prevention that could include transitional housing and permanent housing with supportive services.

Based on these findings and public input gathered throughout the planning process, eight goals and 14 strategies were established. A target year is identified for implementing each of these strategies from 2015 to 2020. For a complete list of the goals and strategies, the plan can be accessed on the [town's website](#).

### 2015 Report of the Sidewalk Construction Recommendation Committee

The Southborough Sidewalk Construction Recommendation Committee was formed to identify priority streets for sidewalk construction through the development of an impartial review and evaluation. Working closely with the DPW Superintendent – an Ex-Officio member – the Committee created an Evaluation Matrix which scores streets based on 10 variable criteria. The evaluation categories included: traffic volumes, pedestrian activity, safety, available right-of-way, connections to destinations, connectivity, environmental impacts, construction challenges, conformance to town goals, and future need. Streets were scored on a 1-10 scale for each of the ten categories, with the scores across categories then summed to produce a total score. The higher the total score, the higher priority the street for sidewalk construction.

Based on these criteria, the Committee's Report identifies the 10 highest scoring streets in town:

1. Marlboro Road (Route 85), north of Route 30
2. Newton Street
3. Cordaville Road (Route 85), south of Route 30, north of Route 9 (causeway excluded)
4. Oak Hill Road
5. Richards Road (east)
6. Tie - Clifford Street and Main Street (west of Sears Road)
7. School Street
8. Tie - Flagg Road, Latisquama Road, and Parkerville Road

Developing cost estimates fell outside the scope of the Committee, but the report provides a guide for the Town as capital sidewalk projects are proposed and considered.

### 2016 Southborough Public Safety Complex Feasibility Study

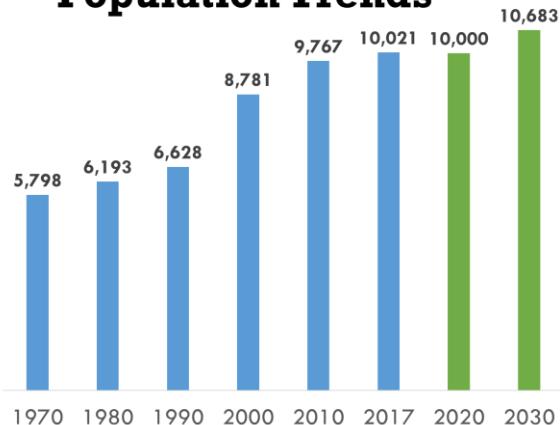
The 2008 Master Plan's Municipal Facilities and Services section specifically cites the need for new or improved facilities for the Town's public safety departments, a recommendation which echoed the findings of the 2005 Southborough Municipal Facilities Plan. Although Town Meeting in 2007 approved funding for design services related to the improvement of the Police Station, the debt exclusion failed to gain majority support through Town election. By 2015 the need for new Police and Fire facilities was acute and a Public Safety Building Committee was formed to make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen related to siting, cost, and design of a new combined facility.

After the Committee identified the departmental space needs and possible location for the new facility, the Town retained an architectural firm to prepare a feasibility study for a new public safety complex. Working closely with Town and departmental leadership, the architects developed a number of site layout options but ultimately recommended an option which required the acquisition of additional land. The Town purchased the St. Mark's Golf Course from St. Mark's School for a reduced price after agreeing to place a large portion of the property under a conservation restriction and a land swap for the sites of the existing Police and Fire headquarters on Main St. In March 2017, Special Town meeting approved a debt exclusion for more than \$22 million to construct the new facility, the largest non-school capital expenditure in the Town's history. The new facility opened for use in fall 2019.

## Southborough Today

### Demographics

#### Population Trends



Southborough's population grew by more than 30% between 1990 and 2010, totaling 9,767 residents at the time of the 2010 Census.

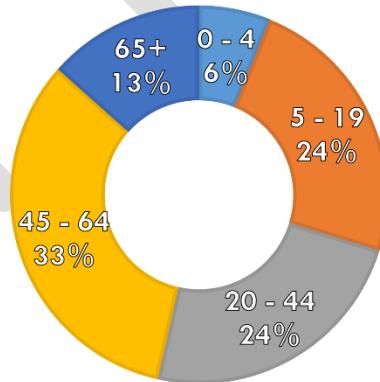
The population has increased slightly over the past seven years, with an estimated population of 10,021 in 2017. Further population projections anticipate a modest upward trend over the coming decade.

#### Population by Age

The median age of Southborough's population is higher than that of Worcester County and the state.

Southborough	Worcester County	Massachusetts
42.5	40.1	39.5

In 2017, about 13% of town residents were age 65 or older. Projections indicate the senior population will increase to approximately 28% in 2030.



#### Education & Income



67% of Southborough residents 25 years and older have completed at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 40% of MA residents and 35% of Worcester County residents.

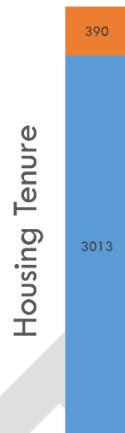
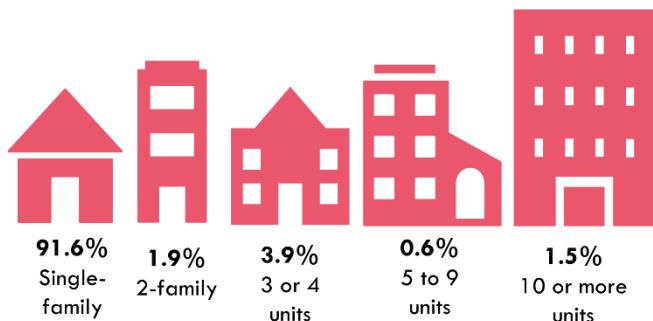
The median household income for Southborough is \$142,426. Comparatively, the median income for Worcester County is \$69,313 and \$74,167 for Massachusetts.



More than 3 out of 5 Southborough households have an income over \$100,000 a year.

## Housing

### Housing Types



Of the 3,558 housing units in Southborough, more than 90% are single-family homes, compared to 62% of Worcester County units.

The large majority, 89%, of Southborough's occupied housing units are owner occupied.

### Household Trends

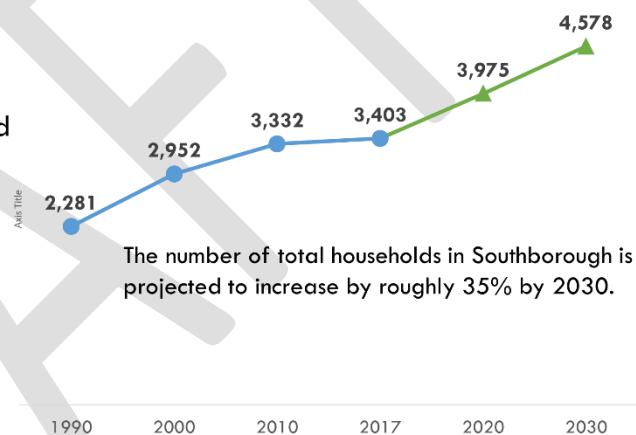
Between 2010 and 2017, the number of family households in Southborough decreased slightly, while the number of one-person households increased by almost 30%.



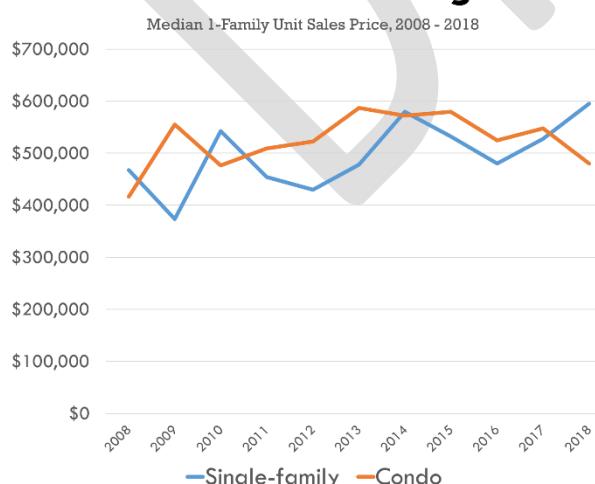
-2.44%



+28.99%



### Home Values & Housing Cost



In six of the past ten years, residential condominiums have had a higher median sales price than single family homes. Most condominiums in Southborough are part of age restricted (55+ years) communities built in recent decades.

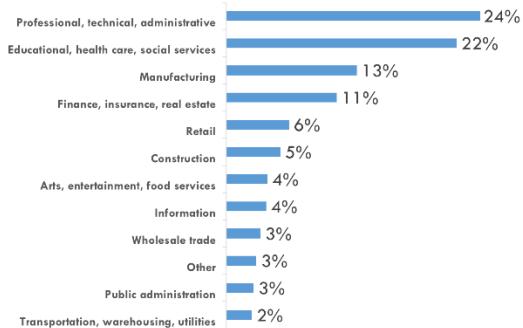
Owner-occupied housing units in Southborough had a median value of **\$584,500** in 2017.

Among the estimated 339 occupied housing units paying rent, the median gross rent is **\$1,113** per month.

Approximately 26% of Southborough households are cost burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on housing-related expenses.

## Economic Development

### The Labor Force



There are 5,061 Southborough residents in the labor force, the majority of which are employed in high-skill, high-wage professions.

From January to September 2019, the average monthly unemployment rate in Southborough was 2.15%, compared to 3.03% for Massachusetts.

**82%** of residents in the labor force work outside of Southborough.

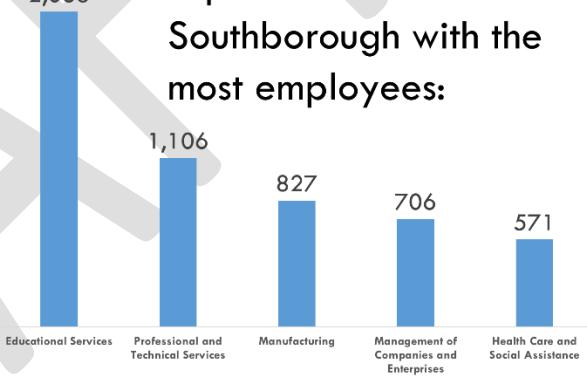
### Business & Industry

There are 459 businesses in Southborough, which collectively employ approximately 8,300 people.

The largest employers in town are Harvard Medical School, St. Mark's School, and Virtusa Corp, each of which employ between 100 and 249 individuals.



**Top five industries in Southborough with the most employees:**



### Town Revenue & Expenditures

#### Revenue (FY19)

**Property tax levy**  
as % of total revenue

**76%**

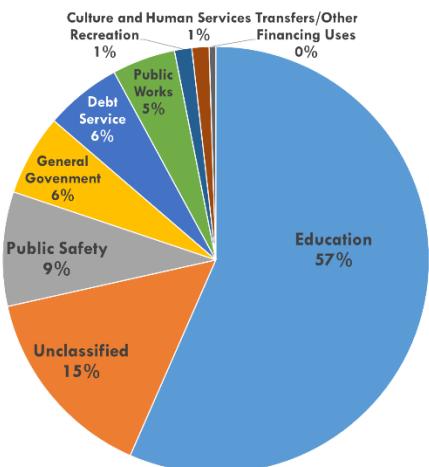
**Property tax rate**  
Per \$1,000 assessed  
value

**\$16.74**

**Avg. single-  
family tax bill**

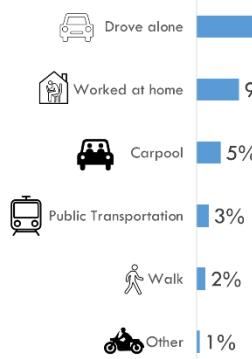
**\$10,274**

#### Expenses (FY19)



## Transportation

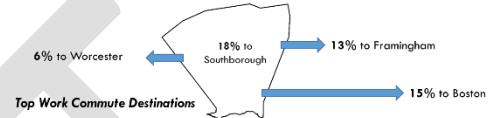
### Commute to Work



The large majority of Southborough residents drive to work alone. About 9% work from home and 5% carpool to work.

On a typical weekday 1,051 inbound daily riders board the MBTA Commuter Rail at Southborough Station. This makes the Southborough Station the 18<sup>th</sup> busiest station within the entire Commuter Rail system.

The mean travel time to work for Southborough residents is 31.7 minutes, compared to 28.7 minutes for Worcester County workers.



Source: ACS 2017 5-year Estimates; ACS 2009-2013 Commuting Flows; MBTA Ridership and Service Statistics 2014

### Getting around Town

On average, there are 2.25 vehicles per Southborough household, compared to 1.67 per all Massachusetts households.

The majority of Southborough's 86 miles of road are comprised of local roadways (54%); 17% are minor and major collectors which connect the local roads to the arterial network, and 24% are principal arterials, roadways which generally connect cities and towns and allow for higher speeds. The remaining 5% are interstate highways.

Southborough has a number of local walking trails and is connected to the regional Bay Circuit Trail.

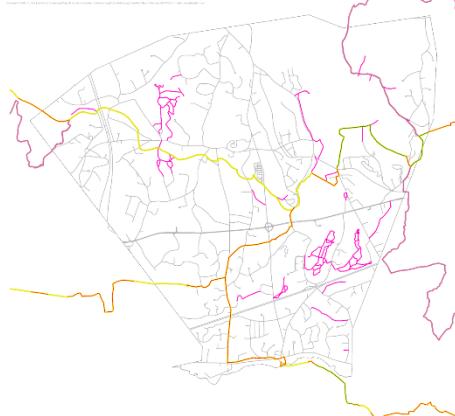
Functional Classification

- Highway
- Other numbered route
- Major road - arterials and collectors
- Minor street or road



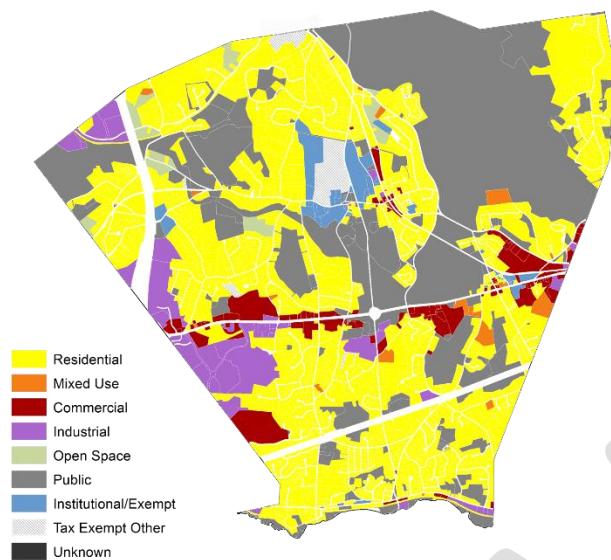
Regional Greenway

- Existing
- Under Construction / In Design
- Envisioned / Planned



## Land Use and Zoning

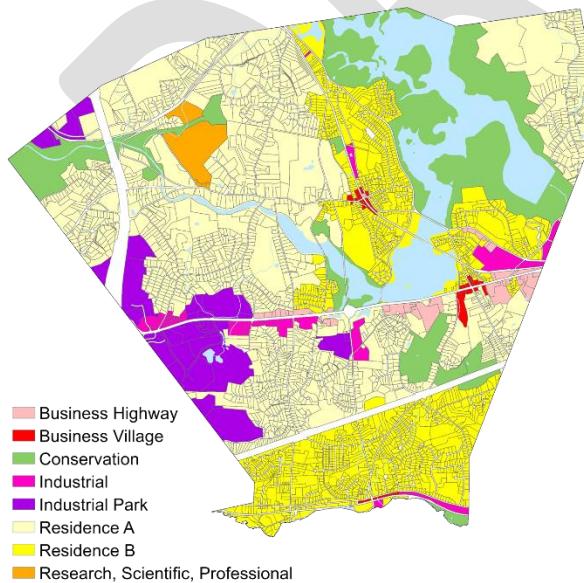
### Land Use



- Over a third of Southborough's land is classified as tax-exempt
- Single family housing is the largest land use type by area in Southborough
- Approximately 5% of land area in town is developable or potentially developable

Property Type	Acres	% Total
<b>Residential</b>	<b>4,365</b>	<b>44%</b>
Single Family	3,489	35%
Two/Three Family	95	1%
Multifamily	42	0%
Other Residential	196	2%
Vacant – Developable or Potentially	474	5%
Vacant - Undevelopable	69	1%
<b>Commercial/Industrial</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>9%</b>
Commercial/Retail	312	3%
Industrial	197	2%
Vacant - Developable	398	4%
Vacant - Undevelopable	0	0%
<b>Mixed Use</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Exempt</b>	<b>3,687</b>	<b>37%</b>
Public	3,376	34%
Private Institutional	311	3%
<b>Chapter 61 Land</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>8%</b>
Right-of-Ways	737	7%
Water	9	0%
Uncoded	6	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,935</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Zoning



Southborough's Zoning Bylaw establishes eight zoning districts, and three overlay districts.

District	Parcels	Area (Acres)	% of Total Area
<b>Residence A</b>	1,733	3,960	43.8%
<b>Conservation</b>	14	2,014	22.3%
<b>Residence B</b>	1,790	1,991	22.0%
<b>Industrial Park</b>	37	601	6.7%
<b>Industrial</b>	55	175	1.9%
<b>Research, Scientific, Professional</b>	6	135	1.5%
<b>Business Highway</b>	45	117	1.3%
<b>Business Village</b>	49	40	0.4%

The largest number of lots are located in the Residence B district, while the largest district by land area is Residence A. Both districts primarily allow detached single family dwellings. While the RA district has a minimum lot size of 1-acre, the RB district has a minimum lot size of 25,000 sq. ft.

# A Vision for the Future of Southborough

## Master Plan and Visioning Elements

### Purpose

Visioning for a master plan is a process whereby a community evaluates its historic and present-day assets and imagines how and how it should evolve in order to leave a legacy for the next generation. Visioning helps community leaders, residents, business owners, and other stakeholders identify overarching priorities for the preservation, enhancement, and growth of different areas, and sets the tone for a wider array of more specific master plan elements and goals.

## *master plan elements*



### Master Plan Elements

#### *What's required?*

Typical comprehensive master plan elements include plan elements such as natural, historic and cultural resources; open space and recreation; economic development; housing; public facilities and services; transportation and circulation; land use; and zoning. More specific goals within these master plan elements can inform decision on policies, by-laws and zoning regulations, and provide mutual certainty and predictability for residents and businesses alike.

Chapter 41, Section 81D of the General Laws of Massachusetts provides the legal basis for the creation of Master Plans. Though a community can add more elements, under this statute, the following nine elements of a Master Plan are identified:

- Goals and policies
- Land use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Natural Resources
- Open Space and Recreation
- Public Services and Facilities
- Transportation and Circulation
- Implementation

## Southborough Master Plan Themes

While all Master Plans share some common elements, it is imperative that each community's Master Plan be structured in a way that best represents and serves the local context. Informed by their experience and deliberations, the Town of Southborough's Master Plan Committee has identified ten Plan themes, which serve as a framework to organize the MPC's analysis and evaluation, as well as the goal statements.

- Diversity of Housing
- Diversity of Commercial Activity
- Accessibility (internal and external)
- Enhanced Sense of Community
- Protection/Enhancement of Historic Assets
- Protection of Open Space and Green Initiatives
- Continued Strengthening of Schools (public and private)
- Population/Build-out Targets
- Expanded funding mechanisms
- Public Facilities/Utilities Resiliency

## Community Engagement

In addition to the insights and direction generated by the Master Plan Committee, the Southborough Master Plan Visioning process relied upon Southborough residents and other stakeholders to communicate their opinions and personal visions of Southborough's past, present, and future. Stakeholders were primarily engaged through a Vision Open House event and a community survey.

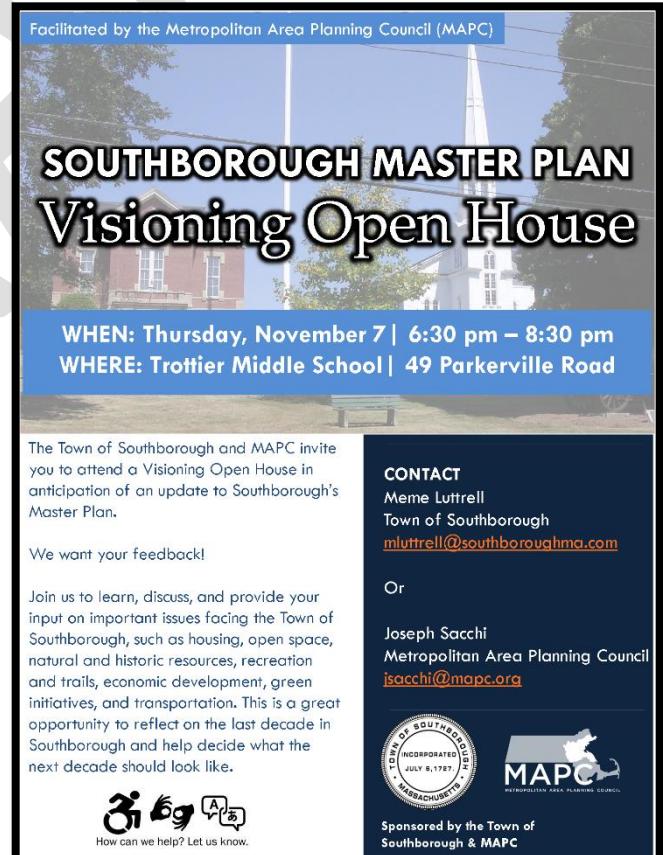
### Vision Open House

#### Open House Overview

The Southborough Master Plan Vision Open House was held on the evening of Thursday, November 7, 2019 at the Trottier Middle School. Approximately 35 people braved a chilly autumn rainstorm to gather and learn about the Master Plan visioning process, discover current conditions within Southborough, and provide their input and suggestions for the town going forward.

When attendees first arrived, they were invited to sign in and place a dot on two maps, reflecting where they live and work. They then had the opportunity to help themselves to the provided refreshments, socialize with other attendees, and browse the informational boards set up throughout the room.

Karen Cvitkovich of the Master Plan Committee welcomed the audience and invited the other Master Plan Committee members in attendance to introduce themselves. Next, Joseph Sacchi, Regional Planner II from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, gave a brief presentation summarizing what Master Plans are and what they accomplish, a summary of goals from the 2008 Master Plan, the 11 themes identified by the MPC for the Master Plan Update, and other significant planning projects completed by the Town in recent years.



The poster for the Southborough Master Plan Visioning Open House. It features a photograph of a brick building with trees in the background. The text on the poster includes:

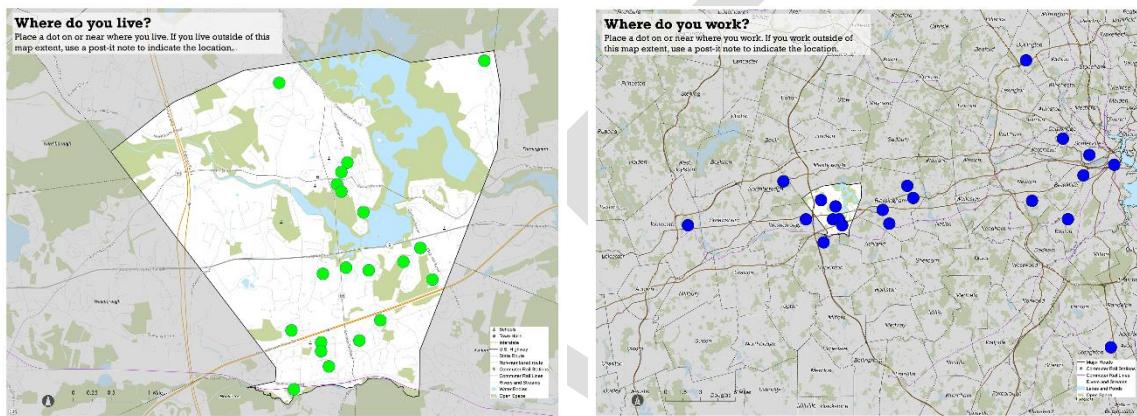
- Facilitated by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)
- SOUTHBOROUGH MASTER PLAN**
- Visioning Open House**
- WHEN: Thursday, November 7 | 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm**
- WHERE: Trottier Middle School | 49 Parkerville Road**
- The Town of Southborough and MAPC invite you to attend a Visioning Open House in anticipation of an update to Southborough's Master Plan.
- We want your feedback!
- Join us to learn, discuss, and provide your input on important issues facing the Town of Southborough, such as housing, open space, natural and historic resources, recreation and trails, economic development, green initiatives, and transportation. This is a great opportunity to reflect on the last decade in Southborough and help decide what the next decade should look like.
- How can we help? Let us know.
- CONTACT**  
Meme Luttrell  
Town of Southborough  
[mluttrell@southboroughma.com](mailto:mluttrell@southboroughma.com)
- Or  
Joseph Sacchi  
Metropolitan Area Planning Council  
[jsacchi@mapc.org](mailto:jsacchi@mapc.org)
- TOWN OF SOUTHBOROUGH**  
INCORPORATED JULY 8, 1787  
MASSACHUSETTS
- MAPC**  
METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL
- Sponsored by the Town of Southborough & MAPC

After the presentation, attendees were invited to circulate through the open house stations and participate in the engagement activities at each. The interactive displays were intended to both present data and generate feedback to inform the direction and development of the Master Plan Vision. MAPC staff and MPC members were available to answer questions and guide attendees through the stations.

### Open House Stations

#### Where do you...?

When attendees signed in for the event, they were given one dot each for two maps, one prompting “Where do you live?” and the other “Where do you work?” The responses received indicated that all attendees who completed the exercise live in Southborough, while work carries them throughout the region.



### Southborough at a Glance

The Southborough at a Glance station included a number of boards with narrative and visual descriptions of data related to current conditions in Southborough, pertaining to demographics, housing, economic development, transportation, land use, and zoning.<sup>2</sup> Attendees were invited to record their reactions to the data, with prompts asking whether they found any of the information surprising or concerning. Although no specific reactions to the infographics were recorded in writing, they attracted attention and generated informed questions and conversation among participants.



<sup>2</sup> Please see the “Southborough Today” section of this Visioning report for a replication of the data presented at this station.

## Housing

Increasing the diversity of Southborough's housing stock is one of the goals identified within the Master Plan Update's themes. In order to gauge attendees' feelings about different options for enhanced housing type diversity, the Housing station featured a visual preference exercise. Respondents ranked different housing types other than single-family that could be developed with Town support.<sup>3</sup> Presented options included clustered housing and cottage housing development, duplexes and triplexes, townhouses, multi-family housing, and mixed-use housing. Participants were able to vote for multiple housing types but were directed not to vote for the same housing type twice. There was a total of 37 votes.

Mixed-use was the housing type with the most support. Cottage development, multi-family housing, and townhouses also had considerable support. Cottage development, multi-family housing, and townhouses also had considerable support.

The Housing station also included space for open ended comments. The received comments are consistent with the results of the prioritization exercise. The main theme of these comments was the need to diversify the town's housing stock to create housing options for a variety of households. Seniors, young families, single-person households, and municipal employees were identified in comments. Other comments related to aging in place, greater diversity, moderate increases in density, and housing for those who've been displaced, such as temporary housing.

**SOUTHBOROUGH Visioning**

Single family

HOUSING

MAPC

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Please place a dot below the different housing types that you think are appropriate for Southborough. Use a post-it note to record specific comments.

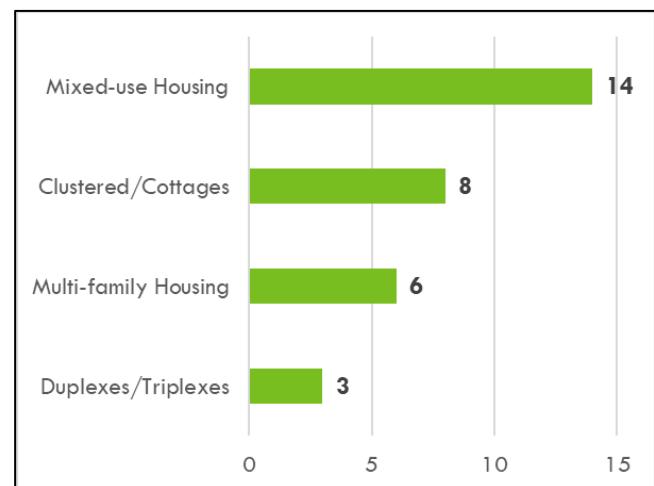
Clustered/Cottages

2 or 3 Family Homes

Townhouses

Multi-family Housing

Mixed-use Housing



<sup>3</sup> Detached single-family homes were not included as an option because they represent 91% of the housing stock, as noted in the existing conditions, and their development is fully supported by current zoning regulations.

## Economic Development

**SOUTHBOROUGH Visioning**



**DOWNTOWN**



What type of activities and development would you like to see in Downtown Southborough?  
Place dots next to all you would support.

Retail & Dining	Pub!	5
Cultural Programming (e.g. music, arts)	5	
Multifamily Residential	2	
Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)	10	
Other	Community wide events	4
	Green space	3

**SOUTHBOROUGH Visioning**



**MBTA STATION AREA  
CORDAVILLE AND SOUTHVILLE**



What type of activities and development would you like to see in Cordaville and Southville?  
Place dots next to all you would support.

Retail & Dining	5
Cultural Programming (e.g. music, arts)	2
Multifamily Residential	3
Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)	4
Other	Business/Commercial
	Historic bridge trails
	Sidewalk to Hopkinton Park

**SOUTHBOROUGH Visioning**



**FAYVILLE**



What type of activities and development would you like to see in Fayville?  
Place dots next to all you would support.

Retail & Dining	3
Cultural Programming (e.g. music, arts)	4
Multifamily Residential	3
Mixed Use (Commercial & Residential)	2
Other	Open space
	Rail trail

Economic development is important to municipalities in order to provide opportunities for employment and commercial activities, which contributes to the overall tax base. Although Southborough possesses qualities which could attract and support commercial and industrial growth, such as a highly educated population and access to major transportation routes, regulatory and infrastructural constraints limit its ability to support such development.

Prior planning efforts have identified Southborough's three existing villages (Downtown, Cordaville and Southville, Fayville) as strategic target areas for economic development. The Master Plan Committee has identified diversity of commercial activity as a goal, so the Economic Development station included a prioritization exercise prompting attendees to indicate the type of activities and development they would like to see in each of Southborough's villages. Since the exact boundaries of each village area are contestable, existing zoning districts were used to define the represented area.

The Downtown area poster attracted the most engagement, with responses indicating strong support for mixed use – commercial & residential development, as well as a desire for more retail and dining options. These responses support already existing efforts by the Economic Development Committee and others to pursue a vision of downtown defined by walkability, locally owned commercial amenities, mixed-use, and attractive public space.<sup>4</sup>

The Cordaville and Southville village area – centered around the MBTA Commuter Rail Station – received relatively fewer responses, but retail and dining were the preferred commercial development type for that area. The location of the commuter rail station could also be leveraged to attract mixed-use or multi-family residential development. However, Fayville is also home to recreational and historical resources, such as Fayville Village Hall, making it a potentially attractive site for cultural programming.

Each of the boards received comments indicating the importance of usable green space and connections to surrounding recreational resources.

<sup>4</sup> Southborough Economic Development Committee “Southborough Downtown Initiative: What, Why and How?” [https://www.southboroughtown.com/sites/southboroughma/files/news/di\\_brochure\\_website.pdf](https://www.southboroughtown.com/sites/southboroughma/files/news/di_brochure_website.pdf)

The topic station for “Commercial Diversity” inviting open ended comments attracted very little engagement, with a single comment indicating that the Town should actively attract businesses to commercially zoned areas. However, many of comments collected under the “Sense of Community” topic focused on the development and character of the downtown area. A vibrant, revitalized town center was identified as a key asset in maintaining Southborough’s distinct character and building more cohesive community relationships through a shared meeting place for activities and events.

### Transportation

At the Transportation open house station, participants were prompted to place dots on a map of town indicating where transportation issues of various types exist.

The two most frequently cited issues were lack of sidewalks and high vehicular speeds, with 22 and 17 dots placed respectively.

Responses to the open house activity generally reinforce the findings of the Sidewalk Construction Recommendation Committee Report. The three highest priority road sections, as determined by the Committee’s evaluation matrix - Marlboro Road, Newton Street, Cordaville Road - each attracted multiple requests for sidewalks through the open house activity.

Although less prominent than pedestrian issues, the engagement exercise also garnered requests for supportive bicycle infrastructure, such as bike lanes and bike parking. Comments generally confirmed that infrastructure improvements are required to connect destinations and make them accessible by non-vehicular travel modes. Walking and biking are both also key recreational activities.

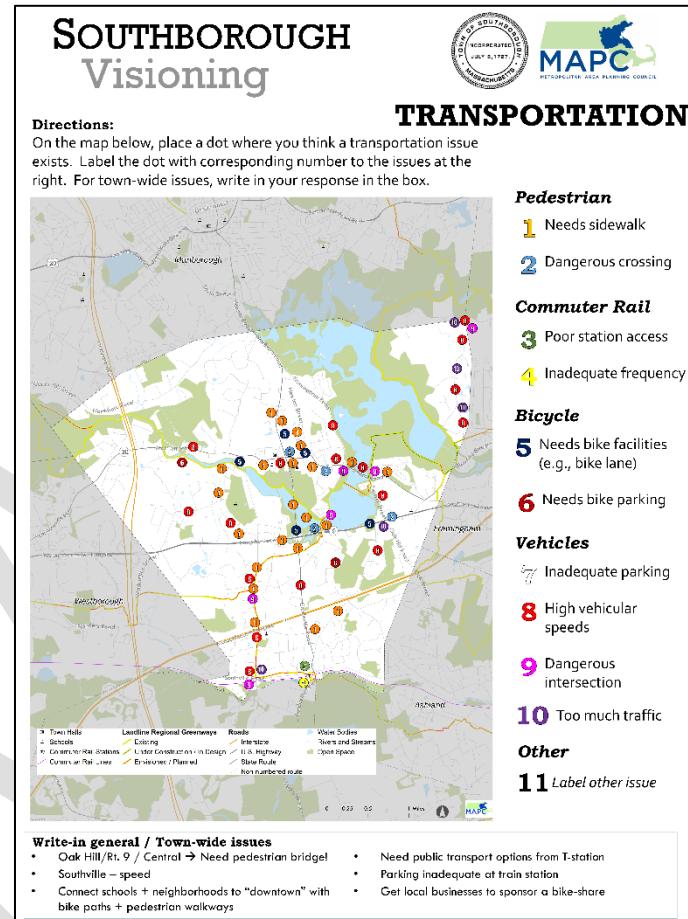
Southborough’s commuter rail station is a valued resource, but connectivity to destinations within Southborough is lacking. Comments suggested that additional public transportation options – which could serve a wider swath of Southborough residents and visitors – should be considered.

High vehicular speeds were noted in areas throughout town, but Pine Hill Road in the northeast corner of town seems to be a problem spot for traffic volume and speed.

There were no indications on the open house board that inadequate parking is a notable challenge at any place in town.

### Unique Community Resources

Every resident has individually treasured places, and the Unique Community Resources open house stations invited attendees to identify those places of especial importance to them. While not a comprehensive inventory, responses confirm that Southborough’s open spaces, scenic resources, and recreational amenities strongly contribute to the character and enjoyment of the town. Comments collected under the “Protection



of Open Space" topic station suggest that better management of the Town controlled open space should be prioritized. Additionally, trails and other walking routes within and between Southborough's open spaces are encouraged.

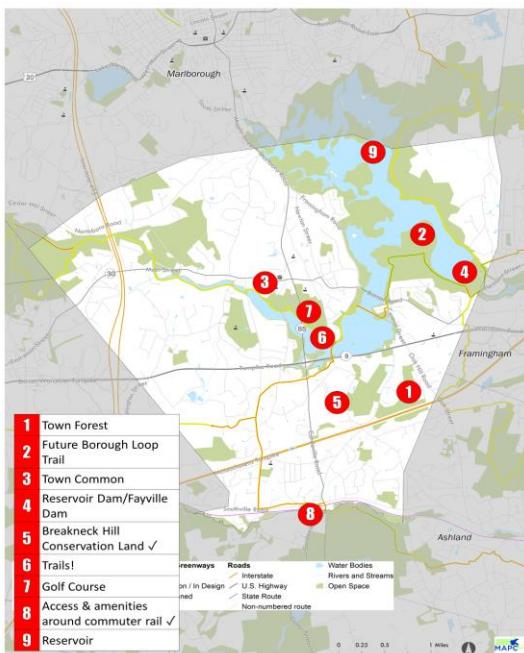
## SOUTHBOROUGH Visioning



### Directions:

What makes Southborough special to you? Place a dot next to a civic, natural, or cultural resource that is especially important to you.

### UNIQUE COMMUNITY RESOURCES



## Survey

Subsequent to the Vision Open House, a survey was produced that asked more specific questions as they relate to the Master Plan themes identified by the MPC. The survey was open for a month from April 27, 2020 until May 22, 2020. The survey received almost 300 responses.

The questions and responses are summarized below:

### Protection of Open Space, Green Initiatives, and Recreation

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Moderately Important	Important	Extremely Important	Total
Strategic acquisition of additional open space	11%	19%	19%	28%	23%	287
Management of existing conservation and other open space properties	5%	6%	16%	39%	35%	290
Enhance connectivity of open space within Southborough and with neighboring communities	11%	18%	23%	31%	16%	289

Reduce nonpoint source water pollution through stormwater management best practices	7%	14%	21%	37%	22%	288
Develop recreation facilities and activities to meet a broad range of ages and interests	4%	8%	17%	33%	39%	290
Natural resource use	8%	14%	25%	34%	19%	289
Control invasive species and expand planting of native and pollinator-supporting plant species	9%	15%	25%	24%	27%	291
Increase the energy efficiency of buildings, using strategies such as the adoption of LEED standards	8%	14%	25%	27%	27%	288

A number of additional comments were provided including:

- Enhanced connectivity between trails and different areas of town, including the reservoir
- More walking (better sidewalks) and biking options
- Community pool
- Better access to open spaces, recreational, and school properties
- Both traditional and non-traditional (skate park, dirt biking) recreational opportunities
- Increased access to solar
- Develop an urban forest management plan
- Improve quantity/quality/maintenance of playing fields
- Establish a dog park
- Build a community recreation center
- Better wayfinding signage

In summary, there is strong support in Southborough for open space, environmental and recreational issues and strategies. At least 70% of the participants in the poll felt each of the issues and strategies were moderately important to extremely important. Management of existing conservation and other open space properties and developing recreational opportunities for people of all ages received the highest levels of support. This was further reflected in the open-ended comments, which included frequent mentions of developing a community recreation center and a community pool.

#### Diversity of Housing

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Moderately Important	Important	Extremely Important	Total
Increase the diversity of housing "types" in Southborough, e.g. single-family, two-family, multi-family, mixed-use	43%	19%	17%	14%	7%	273
Increase the supply of housing at a range of affordability levels	31%	22%	17%	17%	12%	273

Reach "safe-harbor" status relative to 40B requirements (need about 100 new units)	31%	25%	18%	15%	10%	271
Increase the supply of ADA-accessible housing options	18%	30%	19%	23%	10%	273
Incentivize the development of desirable housing stock via amendments to the Town's zoning bylaws or other means	34%	23%	20%	11%	11%	270

Additional comments included:

- Mixed use housing in overlay district downtown is critical to serve the needs of seniors, young people, and businesses looking to attract workforce
- Increase affordable housing for single mothers, over-55 (separate units vs. condos)
- Allow accessory dwelling units
- The town already has enough housing/development
- The town should have more amenities to make it attractive for residents
- Incorporate affordability requirements
- Address issues with the zoning to allow for housing where appropriate
- Let the market determine how housing is developed in Southborough

Although a number of the comments reflected support for more housing diversity and increased affordability, the survey results indicate that respondents do not feel that housing initiatives are as important as other issues. Half or more of the responses reflected that housing issues were either not important or only somewhat important.

#### Sense of Community; Schools; Historic Assets

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Moderately Important	Important	Extremely Important	Total
Work with the schools, as a primary source of community engagement with "school families," to coordinate with their strategic plan and evolution of their programs	8%	12%	22%	35%	23%	273
Create a "focus" location in the town, (e.g. downtown, Park Street) to bring the community together and provide venue(s) for cultural events and intergenerational activities	7%	8%	17%	29%	39%	275
Create support for "cultural activities" as a way to draw all age and interest groups in Southborough together	7%	11%	19%	36%	26%	274
Develop capacity for communication and exchange of information to support	8%	16%	27%	31%	18%	275

community engagement, using resources such as Southborough Access Media (SAM), social media, and the Town website						
Leverage the Town's historic assets and Historic District	9%	17%	27%	27%	19%	270

Additional comments included:

- Revitalize and beautify a cohesive downtown and add more restaurants and small businesses
- Support all business village districts – places to shop and gather
- Coordinate safety and security
- More town amenities, including a community center and pool
- Leverage historic resources but do not let them impede economic development and recreation
- Involve schools and other institutions in creating new events and activities
- Finalize Historic District

There is strong support for maintaining and strengthening the community character through respondents support for creating a location(s) in town where people can gather and engage in a variety of cultural activities. In response to the survey questions and in the open-ended comments, residents want to see enhancements to the village centers as places to shop, eat and play. Additionally, there was support for leveraging the town's historic assets as a way to build on the community's character.

#### Accessibility and Connectivity; Transportation

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Moderately Important	Important	Extremely Important	Total
Address increasing traffic flows, particularly from "through traffic" on Southborough's roads	4%	14%	20%	29%	33%	269
Strategically enhance "connectivity" within Southborough and with surrounding communities (e.g. sidewalks, trails, pedestrian crossings)	4%	7%	13%	33%	44%	270
Enhance the use of transit assets (e.g. local bus, MBTA)	19%	15%	24%	25%	17%	270
Work with MassDOT to ease Route 9 congestion	4%	13%	15%	33%	36%	269
Implement the proposed Accessibility Compliance Committee structure	18%	20%	33%	19%	11%	254

Additional comments included:

- Find ways we can walk/bike more safely in town and to downtown, include bike racks
- There is a gap in the regional trail system in Southborough

- Add sidewalks along the main roads; fix/upgrade existing sidewalks (including ADA compliance)
- Route 9 will always be congested and the majority of it is through traffic
- Focus more on what we want Southborough to be and this means growth and better housing diversity - it will come with traffic but it will also displace cut-through traffic
- As a suburban community, we should not waste material assets on lightly used transit options
- Focus on pedestrian, bicycle facilities and expanding commuter rail parking which is the form of MBTA transit that is heavily used
- Find way to connect north and south sides of town/crossings on Rt. 9
- Repair roadways
- Slow down traffic/enforce speed limits

Support for transportation improvements focused mostly on pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, as well as finding ways to improve vehicular traffic. There was support for the commuter rail station, including additional parking, but less support for other forms of transit that were considered to be lightly used.

Commercial Diversity, Public Services & Resiliency, Build-Out, Funding

	Not at all Important	Somewhat Important	Moderately Important	Important	Extremely Important	Total
Reconcile pressure of rising cost of government (including schools) with the Proposition 2½ limits on tax revenue growth	11%	12%	27%	30%	20%	250
Utilize commercial/industrial space to generate new tax revenue	4%	7%	14%	29%	46%	261
Increase vitality of villages	13%	13%	19%	27%	27%	259
Identify and develop additional infrastructure needed to support commercial development (e.g. wastewater treatment)	9%	15%	22%	29%	25%	259
Identify potential natural disaster/climate change risks and enhance community resiliency	13%	16%	20%	31%	20%	261
Plan for additional public facility construction (e.g. Senior Center/Community Center)	17%	23%	23%	26%	11%	261
Develop approaches to building public/private partnerships and philanthropic support	10%	16%	27%	29%	19%	257

Additional comments included:

- Revitalize village districts, starting with downtown – fix the antiquated zoning
- Actively support and encourage local businesses and ease the residential tax burden

- Private schools that do not pay taxes should be providing more financial/infrastructure support to town
- Tax burden is not sustainable – more commercial needed
- More affordable housing
- Build a community pool/recreation center
- Invest in green infrastructure
- Senior Center and Library should be improved
- New Senior Center not needed/justified
- Change zoning to encourage more commercial uses on Rt. 30
- Commercial development – allowing people to shop and eat in town will create a sense of community
- Infrastructure investment needed to support downtown development
- More independent small shops, no chains – commercial diversity
- Support better sidewalks, bike paths
- Examine impacts of housing on education
- People support businesses in neighboring towns because Southborough lacks commercial that meets residents' needs – people pass through Southborough rather than stop here
- Encourage high revenue office parks in business zones/corporate headquarters – housing diversity close to jobs
- Encourage residential solar use

This section of the survey received the most open-ended comments, a number of which echo the sentiments from previous comments. They included providing opportunities to enhance the village centers to create places where people can meet, shop and eat. Additional comments included the reiterated support for better sidewalks, bike paths, a community center, and a pool facility. There was strong support for increasing the tax base with additional commercial development, including providing infrastructure improvements to support commercial growth. There was less support for certain public facility improvements such as the Senior Center.

## Master Plan Committee

The Town established a Master Plan Committee (MPC) to review the 2008 Master Plan and determine how best to update it. When the MPC first met in March 2019 it was determined that rather than rewriting the entire plan, the Town should endeavor to update it as efficiently as possible. One of the goals of the MPC was to collaborate to develop, review and gain approval of an objective/goal statement for the Master Plan. The MPC was divided into five components to assist in the effort to coordinate the gathering of data, input and feedback relating to the objective/goal statement for their component, ensuring that all possible sources of information has been considered. The five components are:

- Commercial Diversity and Public Services
- Housing Diversity
- Accessibility and Connectivity
- Open Space, Environment and Recreation
- Sense of Community

The following is a summary of the objectives statements from each working group. The full document from each working group can be found in the Appendix to this report.

## Commercial Diversity and Public Services

### Objectives/Goals:

- Diversity of Commercial Development
  - The high-level goal for this area is to have an economically strong, diverse, and self-sustaining business community in Southborough. Because of the variety of commercial and demographic circumstances across Southborough, the following commercial areas were considered: Route 9, Downtown, Fayville, and Cordaville/Southville.
    - Route 9
      - Increase use-intensity for currently underutilized property parcels
      - Increase commercial tax revenue by:
        - reducing office space vacancies
        - encouraging development on targeted, high-potential sites (such EMC/Dell)
      - Improve commercial marketing position by better distinguishing Southborough from surrounding towns (Westborough, Framingham, Northborough, Marlborough, Ashland, Hopkinton)
      - Develop Collaborative Rt 9 development plan with area towns
    - Downtown
      - Make storm water management and waste water systems work
      - Promote the downtown through such projects as:
        - improving aesthetics (sidewalks, bike racks, green space, benches, planters, lighting)
        - improving connectivity to walking trails
        - developing effective branding
        - attracting “anchor” business(es)
      - Increase parking capacity
    - Fayville
      - Improve sidewalk network
      - Improve connectivity to the Town’s trail network
      - Increase parking (e.g., by reconfiguring playground parking)
    - Cordaville/Southville
      - Improve sidewalk network
      - Improve connectivity to the Town’s trail network
      - Mitigate increased traffic from development in surrounding towns
      - Improve infrastructure related to the Train Station (Businesses? Housing?)
      - Connect rail station to office areas in Town (sidewalks, trails, MWRTA)
- Public Services (Facilities/Utilities) and Resiliency
  - The high-level goal for this area is to be able to deliver a wide range of public services to Southborough’s residents, and to have these services (and the related public infrastructure components) protected against the risks associated with natural disasters and climate change. [“Public Services” includes all aspects physical facilities, utilities and other community support activities (such as enabling technology)].
    - Public Services (physical facilities and public utilities)
      - Review the existing capital investment plan for each service
      - Identify investment gaps due to either population growth or risk mitigation requirements

- Determine if existing capital plans are sufficient or if additional investment is required
  - Evaluate funding options (e.g., public (Town or State), private, shared (with other towns or private sector partner))
  - Develop detailed plans and budgets, including phasing of development (based on population growth timeline and risk mitigation prioritization) and linkage to other plan objectives
  - Determine responsibilities for implementation (e.g., the Town, 3<sup>rd</sup> Party providers)
- Resiliency
  - Conduct a Water Supply Vulnerability Assessment and educate the public on water supply
  - Review/update/expand the existing Hazard Mitigation Plan(s) or Emergency Response Plan(s)
  - Develop a Hazard Transportation and Communication Plan
  - Encourage LID utilization
  - Assess and make repairs to dams that are high priority hazards
  - Decrease isolation of neighborhoods by updating bylaws to require multiple access points to new developments, in the event of road closures
  - Continue to maintain and improve the health of wetlands, streams, and water bodies
  - Increase resiliency and redundancy of the utility networks (water, electrical, gas, communications)
  - Improve water supply for firefighting
  - Improve/expand emergency shelters
  - Decrease tree damage sustained by ice/wind; leverage the Town's "Tree City" status with tree planting programs
  - Increase groundwater recharge throughout the Town
  - Encourage development of "off-grid" local energy sources (e.g. solar)
  - Enhance technology/information systems resiliency
- Continued Strengthening of Public and Private Schools
  - The high-level goal for this area is to build from Southborough's existing position of educational institution strengths to offer an increasingly strong and broad set of educational resources for Town residents—to operate education programs and services that set the Town's schools apart from other local education systems and maintain a "best in class" reputation.
    - Enhance the Town's "defensible/maintainable" sources of educational distinction/attraction? (e.g., a position based on increased funding is not likely maintainable, while a source based on "plan execution" or "management skill" may be more maintainable)
    - Continue to expanded teaching/learning/research resources
    - Place an enhanced focus on "precision" /"individualized" programs
    - Continue focus on special education programs
    - Consider expanding programs to (eventually) include daycare, pre-school, and continuing ed programs
    - Build strength from implementation of closer integration with student parents and families?
    - Enhance school program integration with Town activities and resources?
    - Enhance school "intern/extern" programs to strengthen the education value?
    - Leverage globalization opportunities to strengthen the education value?

- Leverage all local education assets (public schools, private schools, technical schools, others)
- Continue to look for opportunities for focus on particular functional areas in the schools, such as:
  - individual academic education programs
  - arts programs
  - athletics programs
  - job training programs
  - college admissions support
  - others
- Look for opportunities from shared services, regionalization, etc.
- Look for opportunities from coordination with other schools, colleges, universities, businesses
- Continue to look for external “program-specific” funding sources (grants?) to explore new areas?
- Longer term, because of the importance of the schools to the community and the scope and scale of the school activities, consider building an integrated structure of life-long learning, social engagement, recreation activities and other community activities with the schools as the centerpiece of this structure—not necessarily providing all services through the schools but with the schools serving as the planning/coordination/tracking integrator for a wide variety of community services; this “schools as integrator” approach could provide significant value in terms of the Town’s “sense of community”

- Population/Buildout
  - The high-level goal for this area is to plan for, and manage, population and development growth in a way that appropriately balances the commercial, residential and financial pressures associated with this growth.
    - Update existing growth models with current data as the basis for additional analysis of growth options and financial consequences
    - Consider zoning alternatives to direct growth incentives (e.g., density bonuses/penalties)
    - Enhance population demographic diversity
- Expanded Funding Mechanisms
  - The high-level goal for this area is to plan for, and manage, a balanced approach to the Town’s sources of revenue and the cost pressures associated with a growing demand for public services.
    - Continue to look for other/new sources of funding
    - Continue to look for ways to broaden the tax base by generating additional funds from non-Southborough residents
    - Continue to look for other mechanisms for additional funding? (e.g., public/private partnerships, taxes, user fees, philanthropy, etc.)
    - Continue to look for additional external funding sources (e.g., State, Federal, non-profit, PILOT, private) for Town services (e.g., Y&FS referrals to externally-funded programs; public safety; training programs)—particularly via grant opportunities
    - Continue to look at other cities and towns to find ideas for new funding sources
    - Continue to look for ways to leverage the Route 9 corridor for increased CIP tax revenue—e.g., changing zoning to allow taller buildings or other expansion of tax-producing growth along Route 9 (this would likely need additional infrastructure such as wastewater capacity)

- Continue to look for additional “project-specific” funding opportunities (e.g., use current funding for normal operations and look for project sponsors to build and/or endow new items such as a community center or recreation facilities)

## Housing Diversity

The housing goals are taken from the Housing Production Plan.

- Provide housing options that attract families and enable older adults to remain in Southborough as their needs change
- Reinforce Southborough’s economic goals by supporting local businesses through the provision of expanded housing choices that serves a diverse local workforce
- Encourage alternative housing styles to single- family homes, such as townhouses, duplexes, and small apartment buildings in contextually appropriate locations to provide residents with a wider range of housing options
- Maintain Southborough’s character by supporting the design of housing development that is compatible with and complementary to the Town’s architectural character and wooded landscapes.
- Minimize impacts of new development on priority areas for open space, conservation, and natural resource protection purposes
- Maintain and improve the condition of the Town’s housing stock and encourage high quality new construction

## Accessibility and Connectivity

- Vehicular Goals:
  - Develop infrastructure necessary to support vehicular movement
  - Provide support/incentives for use of fewer vehicles or fewer miles driven per vehicle
  - Support expanded electric vehicle usage
  - Keep through traffic on main streets
  - Limit speed/volume on residential streets
- Transportation/Transit Goals:
  - Work collaboratively with state and regional authorities to develop the local transit capability necessary to provide “in-town” transportation service and to provide leverage of external transit capability (e.g., MBTA) via “last mile” service
  - Develop transit plan/approach to take traffic off of local roads.
  - Improve the safety, accessibility and convenience of transportation/transit services for residents and commuters of all ages and abilities
- Individual Accessibility Goal:
  - Ensure all residents have access to all town resources, including:
    - Physical resources (such as buildings and recreation areas); and
    - Intellectual resources (such as information and social/educational programs and services)

## Open Space, Environment and Recreation

### 1. Protection of Open Space

**Goal #1: Develop a collaborative policy/approach for the strategic acquisition /protection of properties**

- Identify criteria / define goals for strategic acquisition and protection of open space
- Maintain diversity of land use within community
- Educate the community regarding why it is important to acquire high priority properties (the importance of open space and natural resources conservation)
- Deliver a map of open space, including both existing designated lands and potential spaces to be acquired
- Develop a more comprehensive and holistic governance structure
  - For example, SOLF, OSPC, Conservation Commission, Trails, SVT

**Goal #2: Expand access to existing open space without compromising public safety or causing adverse environmental impact**

- Build and maintain trails and parking; examples would include:
  - Paved walking track around Mooney Field (Visioning)
  - Walking trail around golf course (Visioning)
- Continue to establish connections to regional trails (also Visioning topic). Example would include:
  - Boston-Worcester Airline trail
- Increase awareness about passive recreation opportunities on trails and open space properties
- Educate the community about the appropriate land uses and guidelines
  - Educate community on the impact of dog poop left on the trails (visioning)
  - Educate community on the dangers of balloons to animals on open space
- Establish ADA compliant trails and parking
- Repair and upgrade existing sidewalks [Note this may be more appropriate to include in the Accessibility-Connectivity objective statement]
- Engage and educate the community through guided hikes, nature walks, and programs
- Expanded access for non-motorized boats for reservoirs
- Establish off road biking on appropriate trails, while protecting the surrounding environment (visioning)
- Assess and update which trails are appropriate for dogs (Visioning)

**Goal #3: Improve the connectivity of Open Space Access for wildlife and people**

- Develop a plan / strategy, in collaboration with all stakeholders e.g. land holders, conservation commission, to link individual open space areas
- Identify potential restrictions due to wildlife needs e.g. access corridor

**Goal #4: Manage open space resources in collaboration with stakeholders and the community**

- Involve residents in management of open spaces
- Engage the community to help maintain trails
- Explore options for the disposal of dog poop on open space e.g. providing bags or composting bins (Visioning)
- Clean up dump at Breakneck (visioning)
- Enforce the of conservation restrictions by the appropriate governing body

**2. Environment**

**Goal #1: Ensure the town's storm water by-laws reflect federal/state regulations and the projected impact of climate change**

- Review the federal, state and local laws for storm water permitting
- Document criteria and metrics around storm water management for now and the future
- Amend and upgrade local regulations to better meet community needs
- Educate community on regulations, impact and rationale

**Goal #2: Increase the volume and type of recycling by commercial and residential consumers**

- Identify profitable recycling materials and create single stream recycling for it
- Identify a way to recycle compostable material
- Create and review metrics with targets and annual report outs based (question about volume vs weight as the metric)
- Establish a town goal to eliminate single use plastics – i.e. plastic bags and straws within 10 years
- Educate community; examples would include:
  - On trash pick-up / recycling
  - Update signage at the transfer station regularly
  - Clothing / book recycling options
- Re-establish recycling committee (Visioning)

**Goal #3: Reduce the consumption of non-renewable natural resources by public and private users**

- Offer rain barrels, compost and recycling bins through the Town (cost plus administration fee)
- Reduce Southborough's town owned facilities use of coal/oil based by 50% within 10 years
- Install electric car charging stations around town

**Goal #4: Prioritize and reduce the existence and impact of invasive species in public and private properties**

- Develop education programs that cover:
  - Definition of terms e.g. native vs non-native, invasive vs non-invasive?
  - Local/regional plant and insect life
  - What to do if you find invasive species
- Metrics for open space vs. people's yards
- Identify top 5 invasive species to be focused on
- Develop a plan for the significant reduction / control across both town and private land
- Control poison ivy along roadways and trails (Visioning)

**Goal #5: Expand the use of native plants and pollinators across the community**

- Work with town facilities and departments to create and manage plan for all town owned properties to be landscaped with native plants vs non-native or cultivars
- Develop a policy and associated guidelines/conditions outlining the recommended native planting schemes that can be adopted by the Planning Board and Conservation Commission
- Pursue certification as a Wildlife Habitat Community through the National Wildlife Federation
- Increase the use of beautiful native plants in public town areas (visioning)

### 3. Recreation Goals

Goal #1: Build an indoor community center with facilities and programs available for all interest groups/ages

Goal #2: Improve and maintain quality and safety of all recreational facilities

Goal #3: Provide high quality recreation programs and activities that meet the needs of residents of diverse ages to build a stronger community

Goal #4: Seek opportunities to expand recreational facilities

Goal #5: Maintain strong partnerships with committees and organizations throughout the town

Goal #6: Fulfill responsibility to maintain a budget that supports programming and facilities

Goal #7: Provide ongoing communication and education to end users

## Sense of Community

- Manage Downtown Village Center - develop additional villages as centers of activity
  - Protect historic assets
  - Update zoning to permit additional parking/wastewater treatment
  - Consider adopting a Transfer of Development Rights to permit downtown development
  - Study and improve access to downtown for pedestrians (sidewalks and trails) and cyclists
  - Encourage development of services/businesses (e.g., casual restaurants) with appeal to residents
  - Consider/promote appropriate mixed-use building
- Manage historic assets
  - Recruit historical architect
  - Provide information and encourage use of historic tax credits
  - Complete process to designate National Register Historic District
  - ADA compliance
- Develop recreational opportunities
  - Theater, meeting rooms, sports facilities, recreational fields, open spaces
  - Single facility or linkage between multiple facilities
  - Continue improvements to and additional use of golf course
  - Continued improvements to golf course as outlined in the improvement provided in the Golf Course Committees report
- Preserve and promote unique qualities of town
  - Avoid over-development, traffic, noise
- Stay up to date with developing communication possibilities

## Next steps

- The Master Plan Committee should continue to meet on a regular basis
- Review survey results to determine whether and how they may influence the goals and objectives prepared for the five master plan themes
- Review goals and objectives statements and agree on a standard format so that the goals are presented in a consistent manner and that the objectives flow from the goals
  - Goals are designed to be general statements representing desired outcomes of the town

- Objectives are more specific than goals and should provide some strategic guidance (a number of the objectives listed read more like recommendations and actions, especially in the Open Space, Environment and Recreation theme)
- Update the demographic and land use data in the Master Plan using the information provided through this visioning process and other recent plans such as the Open Space and Recreation Plan
- After the goals and objectives have been revised and organized, the MPC should consider specific action items, starting with the recommendations from the 2008 Plan that were not implemented but still relevant
  - Develop consensus around priority recommendations and implementation actions based on work of the MPC and results from the public forum and survey
  - Priorities could include (in no particular order)
    - Developing a plan to identify streets where sidewalks and/or bike accommodations are needed or should be upgraded
    - Amending zoning to facilitate commercial development (including mixed-use) and revitalize Downtown and the other village centers
    - Look for opportunities for expanding cultural activities and events throughout town
    - Enhance trail network connections
    - Support recreational opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities
    - Begin planning for a community recreational center and a pool facility
    - Address the impacts of climate change and natural disasters to make Southborough a more resilient community
- Incorporate new implementation measures as identified by the MPC thus far
  - Identify responsible parties for implementing each recommendation
  - Assign time frame for implementing each recommendation over a ten year time horizon (short-, medium-, and long-term, and ongoing)
  - If relevant, identify potential funding source
- Establish Master Plan Implementation Committee or some other entity to oversee plan implementation. This could be the continued responsibility of the existing MPC.