Designing Dedham
DD 2030

This high level summary of public health provides an overview of the analysis, feedback, and draft goals to date as part of the Master Plan process. Additional details can be found on the following pages.

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Topic Summary
Public Health and Livability

Part 1: Public health in Dedham today

Current events and research underline the importance of taking public health into consideration when making planning decisions; the built environment of our neighborhoods impact individual health and well-being. [footnote or link to a definition of SDoH - don't think that is necessary to spell out in the summary.] Medical research indicates that planning decisions influence social, environmental, and behavioral factors within communities where residents live, work, and play account for 60% of health outcomes. COVID-19 has highlighted the importance and urgency to strengthen a high performing and coordinated municipal public health system to ensure Dedham is prepared for future emergencies.

PH1.1 Local public health capacity

The Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) tool provides an outline for public health services that should be present in any jurisdiction. FPHS include two areas: foundational areas (i.e. specific activities and services) and foundational capabilities (i.e. skills). A scan and an assessment was conducted by BME Strategies to evaluate Dedham's FPHS readiness. Although it is clear that certain capabilities and services are being offered by the Health Department, COVID-19, fragmented municipal structure, and internal communications pose significant barriers. Conversations with local public health stakeholders reveal that current challenges faced by Dedham's Health Departments include: capacity, leadership, and communication.

PH1.2 Aging population

The older adult population, residents aged 60+, is projected to grow by more than 60% by 2030. Housing affordability and options, walkability, and community programming are the biggest factors impacting the ability to age in place.

PH1.3 Youth population priorities

In Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital (BIDH) Needham and New England Baptist Hospital (NEBH) community health needs assessments (CHNA), youth were explicitly identified as a priority population. The CHNA's identified that the most common health issues youth are struggling with include: 1) Mental health: 22% of Dedham High School students report experiencing depressive symptoms in the last 12 months and 16% seriously considered suicide in the last 12 months; 2) Substance Use: 54% of Dedham High School students report alcohol use and 31% report e-cigarette use; and 3) Obesity: 19% of Dedham students (grades 1, 4, 7, 10) considered obese. This is higher than state average of 15.9%.

PH1.4 Rates of chronic diseases

Dedham is within the primary service area of three major health systems: BIDH Needham, NEBH, and Norwood Hospital (NH). Data from each hospital's most recent CHNA indicates Dedham residents experience moderate to higher rates of chronic diseases including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, respiratory disease, and asthma, when compared to regional and state levels.

Comparison of Chronic Disease Rates
Inpatient hospital discharge data (2018)

	Cardiovascular Disease	Diabetes	Respiratory Disease	Asthma
Dedham	2140	230	401	39
Dover	1189	93	93	N/A
Needham	1016	54	117	9
Westwood	2042	131	272	44

(Per 100,000 residents) *Data Source: BIDH Needham 2019 CHNA*

Key: Cardiovascular Disease, Diabetes, Respiratory Disease, Asthma

### PH1.5 Shared health priorities

Across all three of the most recent CHNAs, the top five most common community health priorities were: 1) Social determinants of health (SDoH), 2) Mental health, 3) Substance use, 4) Chronic and complex conditions, and 5) Access to care. SDoH became a prominent theme and priority across all three CHNAs. The assessments revealed determinants such as poverty, employment opportunities, housing, violence, transportation, racial segregation, social support, and community integration disproportionally impact older adults, low income individuals or families, racial/ethnic minorities, non-English speakers, and those with disabilities or with chronic and complex conditions.

PH1.6 Environmental justice concerns

Environmental justice is based on the principle that all individuals have a right to be protected from environmental pollutions and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthy environment. It also recognizes that specific racial and economic groups have disproportionally lived in areas where there are greater exposures to environmental hazards. 12.3% of Dedham residents live within 200 meters of a high-traffic road (more than 25,000 vehicles). This is higher than the State average of 8.1%. Residents who live near high-traffic roads are exposed to exhausts and other emissions that can increase risk of heart disease, respiratory disease, and neurological conditions. Noise pollutions can lead to chronic stress and disturbance of night sleep.

Part 2: Community input
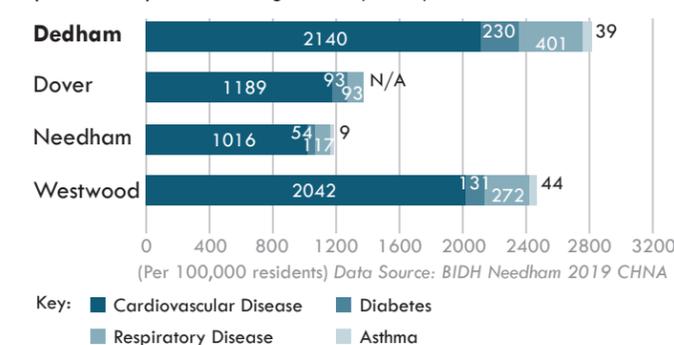
As part of the Master Plan process, a Community Survey was conducted in the spring of 2020 and received over 1,100 responses. A follow up Topic Area Survey received over 750 responses. Responses related to Public Health and Livability are summarized here.

PH2.1 Built environment is an important health concern

Survey participants indicated that the current built environment (the pattern of uses, buildings, roads infrastructure, and natural features) is a barrier for them to engage in health promoting activities. Walking and biking infrastructure that allow for residents to safely travel and access recreational areas and green space for exercise were rated as some of the top health concerns for residents. In addition to how the current built environment is a barrier, residents also specified that it is the most important factor to them for creating a livable Dedham. A livable Dedham for most residents meant creating compact neighborhoods in which they have convenient access to live, work, and play.

PH2.2 Planning for future pandemics

Survey participants also placed high importance on preparation for and control of pandemics and other multifaceted emergencies. This implies the need for building and supporting a strong local municipal public health system that allows for staff to work in a coordinated and effective manner.

PH2.3 Racial equity and inclusivity

A major theme that arose from comments in the open-ended survey questions highlighted the importance of advancing Dedham toward becoming a more inclusive community that serves and welcomes the diversity of residents from all races, ethnicities, and ages. These comments highlighted the importance of pursuing more representative leadership within Town governance and creating opportunities for residents of racial and ethnic minority groups and residents of all ages to engage in planning projects and to contribute more to Town decision making.

MAPC

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Neighborhood Proximity to Parks
- Town Boundary
- Parks and open space

Park Need
- High
- Moderate to High
- Moderate

Park need represents areas outside of a 10-minute walk to a park that are assigned a level of need based on a weighted calculation of population density, density of children, and density of low-income households.

Source: The Trust for Public Land ParkServe mapping tool

Topic Summary
Public Health and Livability

Part 3: Draft public health and livability goals

These draft goals have been developed based on the data about Dedham today, the community surveys, and input from the 16 member Master Plan Committee, and public. The final goals will frame the strategies and actions to be defined through this master plan process to guide Town policies and decision making over the next ten years. We are soliciting input on these goals, which will be amended and updated based on feedback.

PH3.1 Advance a high performing municipal public health system

Massachusetts' fragmented local public health system has presented significant barriers to local health departments' ability to efficiently and effectively meet their current state statutes as well as expand their capabilities and capacity. Barriers from a fragmented public health system are not unique to Dedham's Health Department and COVID-19 has highlighted shortcomings. Dedham should progress toward a high performing "Public Health 3.0" department that leads and advances preventative health initiatives, responds to health threats including threats from climate change, and works toward health equity.

PH3.2 Enhance livable neighborhoods and built environment

The pattern of uses, buildings, roads, infrastructure and natural features contribute to health outcomes. These patterns should be reconsidered to promote health, foster formal and informal connections among neighbors, and provide connected and convenient access to a high density of activities and services. This will result in more livable neighborhoods and a healthier community.

PH3.3 Link indoor and outdoor spaces with programming

Access to green and open space is linked to numerous health benefits including increased social interactions, perceptions of safety, improved mental health outcomes, and increased physical activity. Providing programming that caters to the needs of Dedham residents, especially older adults, can help prevent issues such as social isolation. Dedham should designate existing indoor and outdoor spaces for physical improvements (using universal design), and provide intergenerational programming for connectedness and physical activity.

PH3.4 Expand inclusive and diverse civic and social engagement

Advancing racial equity can only be achieved when the voices and lived experiences of Dedham residents are heard and factor in during planning and Town decision making. In order to ensure that all Dedham residents feel heard and included, Town decision making should involve residents from a variety of economic, racial, ethnic and age groups. Dedham should also continuously think about how to engage difficult to reach populations to ensure varied perspectives to inform Town decisions.

PH3.5 Prioritize safe walking and biking infrastructure

Walking and biking are not only desirable forms of transportation but also provide opportunities for residents to engage in physical activity. Dedham should prioritize active living, open space, and connectivity investments to reduce the risk of acute, chronic disease, injury and premature death and ensure that all residents have access to safe outdoor recreational areas.
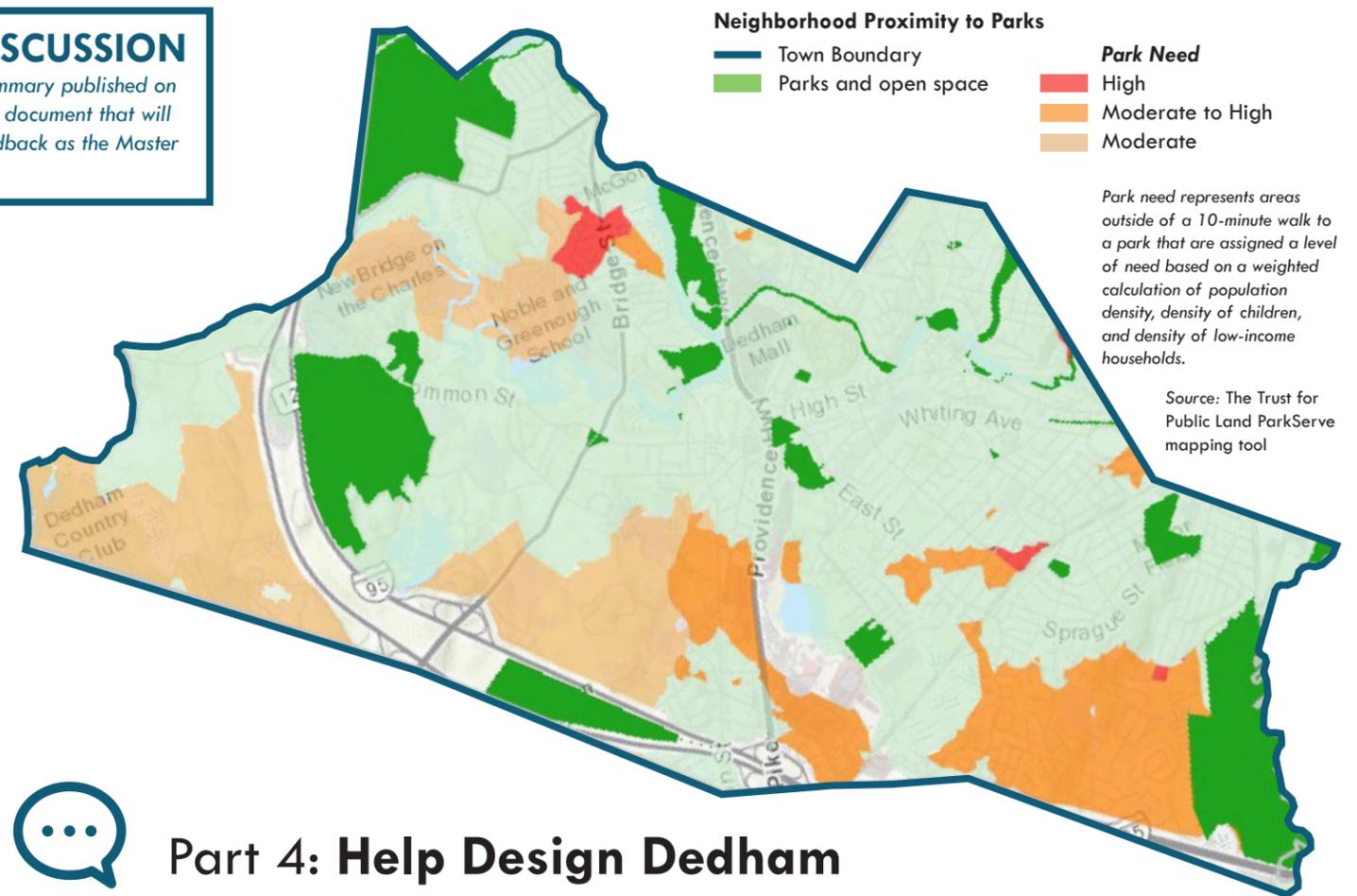
Part 4: Help Design Dedham

This topic summary and the set of draft topic goals has been prepared to share draft content that is developing through the Designing Dedham 2030 Master Plan process. The draft topic goals remain a work in progress and will benefit from your feedback. Are your public health and livability priorities for the town represented? Please send us your feedback, questions, or comments.

Comments
http://designingdedham2030.org

Or by sending an email to:

Jeremy Rosenberger, Dedham Planning Director at jrosenberger@dedham-ma.gov, or

Josh Fiala, MAPC Principal Planner at jfiala@mapc.org.

Additional Information
A video recording of a Master Plan Committee meeting focused on Public Health and Livability is available at:

https://bit.ly/DD2030-Committee-10-20-2020

Community Open Houses
Additionally, you are invited to attend a series of Community Open Houses that will present and discuss each of the topics.

>> An open house on **January 26th, 2021 at 6:30 pm** will focus on **Public Health and Livability**, Housing, and Natural, Cultural, Historic Resources.
Register for this event at:
http://bit.ly/DD2030-01-26-2021

An open house on **March 30, 2021 at 6:30 pm** will focus on Land Use, Municipal Facilities and Services, and Governance.

Visit http://designingdedham2030.org to see summaries of each topic area and join the mailing list for updates or other opportunities to be part of the process.

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