Welcome to Vision of Tomorrow: Wrentham 2030 Master Plan
Virtual Public Forum #2

As we wait for the forum to begin,
1. You are welcome to turn on your **video** so we can get to know each other (the icon to turn on your video is usually in the bottom left-hand corner of your screen)
2. Please stay **muted**. There will be time during the meeting for discussion in small groups at which point you'll be unmuted.
3. Test out the **chat box** by typing into the chat: *Your favorite springtime activity*. **Please feel free to add questions or comments into the chat at any time throughout the meeting.**
4. The meeting is being recorded and will be publicly accessible afterwards.
5. In the unlikely event of a security breach, we reserve the right to expel anyone should they disrupt the meeting with violent or inappropriate comments or visuals.

We'll start in a few minutes.

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

1

Notification of Recording

This meeting will be recorded and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) may choose to retain and distribute the video, still images, audio, and/or the chat transcript. By continuing with this virtual meeting, you are consenting to participate in a recorded event. The recordings and chat transcript will be considered a public record. If you do not feel comfortable being recorded, please turn off your camera and/or mute your microphone, or leave the meeting.

MAPC
METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

2

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

Virtual Public Forum #2
April 8, 2021

Photo source: Mary Mallgraf

3

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

AGENDA

1. Welcome & Introductions

2. What is a Master Plan?

3. Economic Development
   • Small group discussions

4. Housing
   • Small group discussions

5. Next Steps

4

Photo source: Mary Mallgraf

Introductions

5

Town staff

Kevin Sweet
Town Administrator

Rachel Benson
Town Planner

6

Steering Committee

Stephanie Duquette, Executive Assistant to Town Administrator/Resident

Chris Gallo, Board of Selectmen

Diane Glass, Landscape Committee

George Labonte, Deputy Police Chief/Resident

Laurence Johnson, Open Space Committee

Darryl Luce, Open Space Committee

Jerry McGovern, Resident at Large

Jeffrey Plante, Resident at Large

Steve Schwarm, Planning Board

Alan Selling, Open Space Committee

Everett Skinner, Jr., Planning Board

Jeffrey Spratt, Economic Development Committee

7

MAPC staff

Ralph Willmer, FAICP
Principal Planner
Project Role:
Principal-in-Charge

Ella Wise
Senior Land Use Planner
Project Role:
Project Manager

Carolina Prieto
Community Engagement Manager
Project Role:
Community Engagement

Christian Brandt
Planner and
Community Engagement Specialist
Project Role:
Community Engagement

8

Photo source: Mary Mallgraf

What is a Master Plan?

9

A master plan is a **strategic framework** that guides the future **physical and economic development** of a town or city based on the **community's vision and goals**.

The Master Plan provides the Town with:

- A vision for its future
- Goals and strategies to capitalize on opportunities

It does not:

- Stop development projects
- Increase taxes
- Analyze individual sites

10

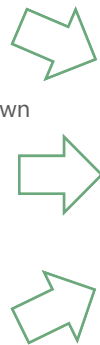# What is included in *Vision of Tomorrow*?

Full Master Plan ⟶

1. Community Vision
2. Land Use
3. Housing
4. Economic Development
5. Natural & Cultural Resources
6. Open Space and Recreation
7. Services & Facilities
8. Circulation
9. Optional: Climate Action, Public Health, Governance
10. Implementation

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

Community Vision

Housing

Economic Development

11

Existing plans and resources

2004 Master Plan
2005 Housing Production Plan
2009 Transportation Technical Analysis for Downtown
2017 Route 1A Corridor Study
2017 Town Center Zoning
2018 Route 1 Corridor Study & Rezoning
2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan
2018 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan
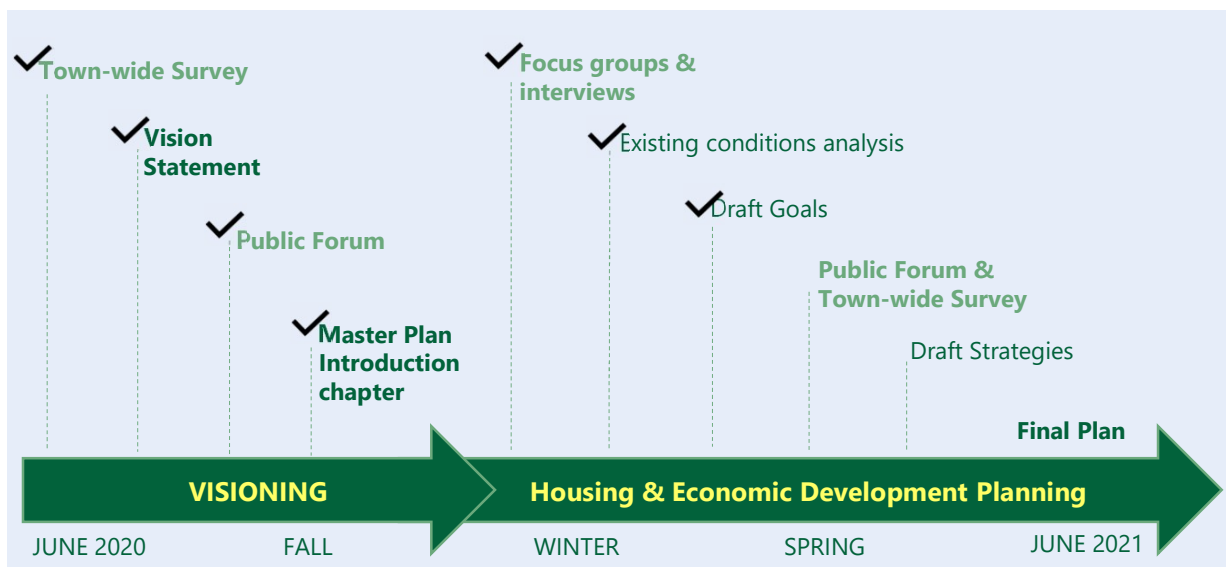2020 Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

12

How does the Master Plan relate to Town decisions?

MASTER PLAN

Community Vision

Housing
Goals

Economic Development
Goals

Strategies

Strategies

Department & Committee priorities

Zoning

Town Budget

Permitting/
Development Review

13

Project Timeline

✓ Town-wide Survey

✓ Focus groups & interviews

✓ Vision Statement

✓ Existing conditions analysis

✓ Public Forum

✓ Draft Goals

Public Forum & Town-wide Survey

✓ Master Plan Introduction chapter

Draft Strategies

Final Plan

VISIONING

Housing & Economic Development Planning

JUNE 2020   FALL   WINTER   SPRING   JUNE 2021

14

Project Timeline

At the end of the planning process, we will seek approval of the Master Plan from the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board

Final Plan

VISIONING

Housing & Economic Development Planning

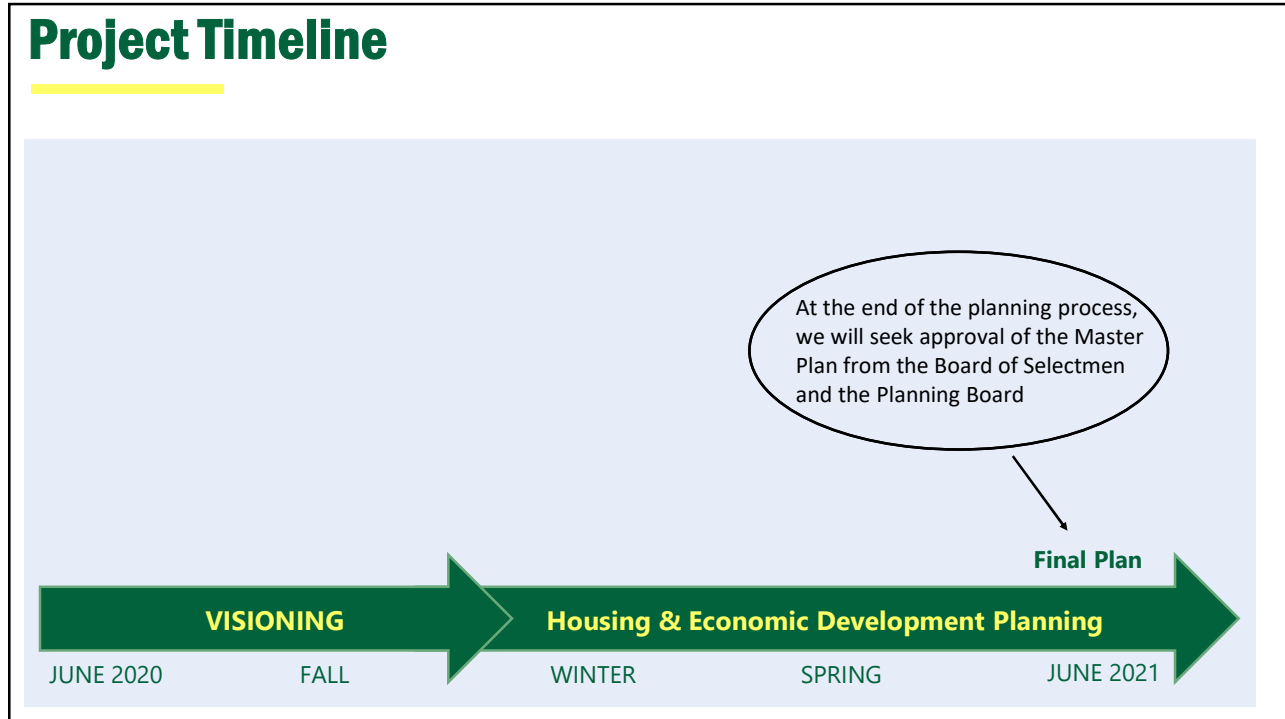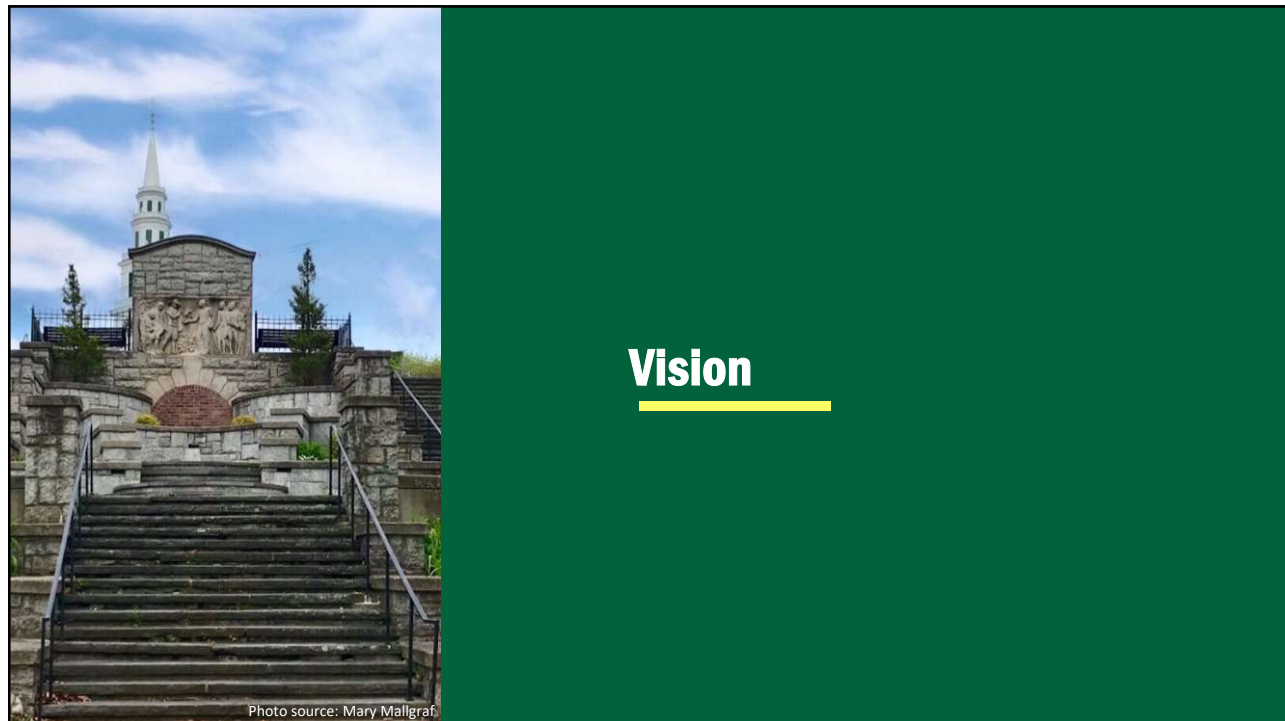JUNE 2020   FALL   WINTER   SPRING   JUNE 2021

15

Photo source: Mary Mallgraf

Vision

16

Vision Statement

Wrentham is a charming town, proud of its Downtown and open spaces and a great place to raise a family. More than 1,000 of us have come together through a public process to set a vision for the future.

By 2030, we aspire to:

➤ *Continue to cultivate a community-oriented and welcoming culture for all, regardless of race, religion, or age*

➤ *Protect more farmland and open space for cultural heritage, scenic beauty, habitat, and water quality*

➤ *Become more walkable and bikeable with sidewalks and trails*

➤ *Strengthen the Downtown with more 'Mom and Pop' shops, small businesses, homes, and places to gather*

➤ *Maintain the rural landscape by promoting sustainable land use patterns and shifting away from sprawl development*

➤ *Encourage diversity with a mix of housing options affordable to young adults, families, households with lower-incomes, and seniors*

➤ *Ensure fiscal responsibility while maintaining high-quality infrastructure and services*

To effectively pursue and strike a balance between these goals, we encourage transparent governance, strong civic engagement, and volunteerism.

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

17

Economic Development

- Key Issues
- Goals
- Example Strategies
- Small Group Discussion

Photo source: Mary Mallgraf

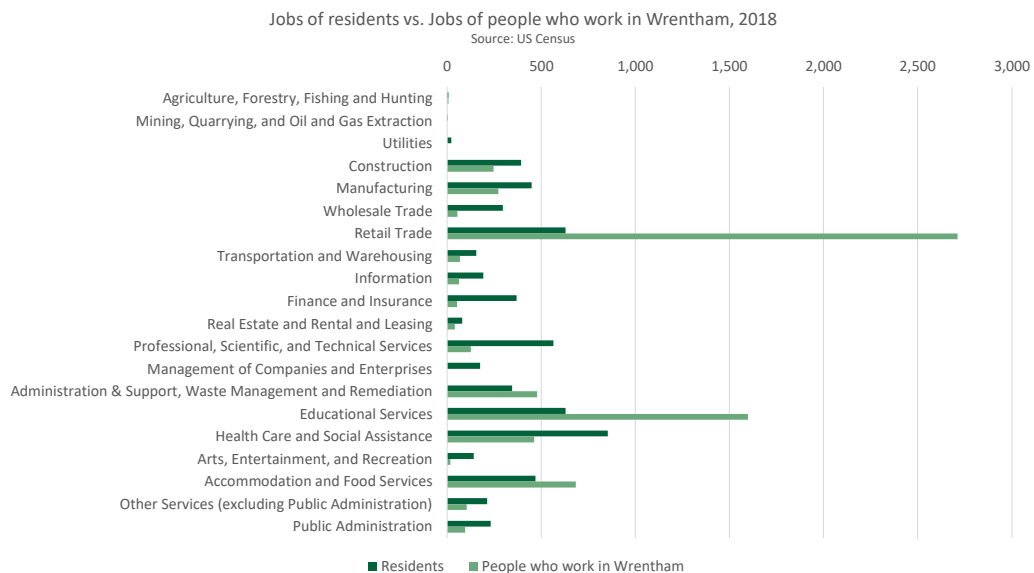18

Economic Development quick facts

- COVID-19 pandemic
  - 10% unemployed in Wrentham in September 2020, 20% renters
- Workforce
  - 60% have Bachelor's degree or higher
  - Residents work in a variety of sectors, mostly in Boston and in other locations northeast of Wrentham
- Businesses & Employees
  - Most jobs are in Retail (median annual wage of $21,000) and Education (median annual wage of $48,000)
  - Job growth over past decade has been almost all in Retail
  - About 1 in 3 jobs in Wrentham are at Clothing and clothing accessories stores
  - 50% of businesses employ 4 or fewer employees
  - Commercial districts and industrial quarries
  - 80% of taxes from residential property, 20% from commercial/industrial

Check out www.mapc.ma/WrenthamVision for the full analysis!

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

19

The pandemic has had devastating impacts. Wrentham's businesses and jobs are concentrated in the retail sector, which has been one of the hardest hit industries both in terms of jobs and sales.

Jobs of residents vs. Jobs of people who work in Wrentham, 2018
Source: US Census

■ Residents   ■ People who work in Wrentham

20

There are more jobs than workers in Wrentham, yet there's a mismatch between the workforce and jobs.
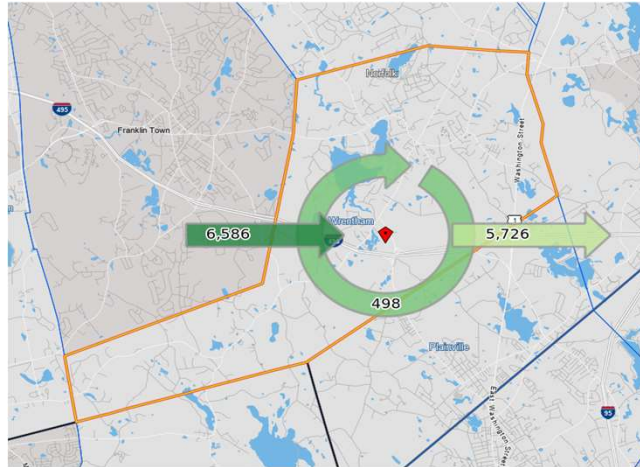
21

There are five main commercial districts: Downtown, Route 1, Wampum Corner, Premium Outlets, and western portion of Route 140, each with distinct characteristics that serve different clientele. Businesses and jobs are concentrated at the Outlets.
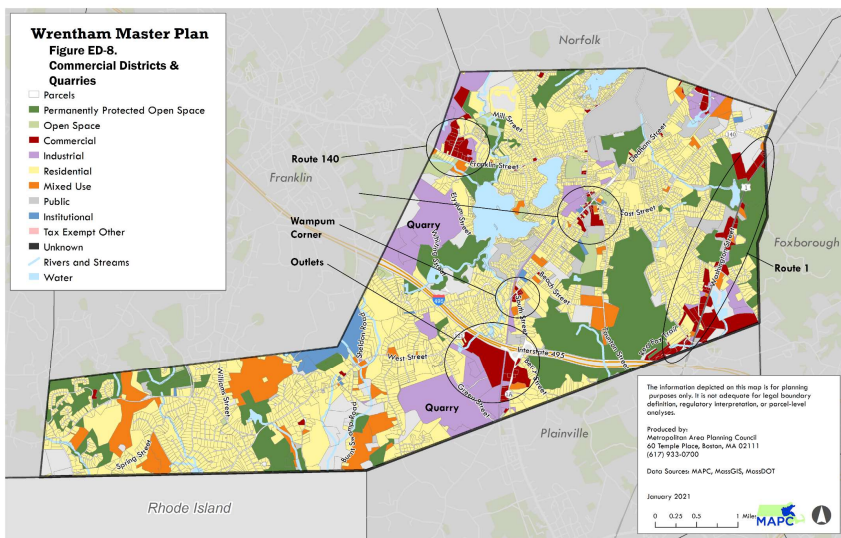
40% of Wrentham's jobs and 25% of Wrentham's businesses are located at the Outlets

22

Recent rezoning in Downtown Wrentham and along Route 1 provide unique opportunities for new commercial development. However, there are also unique challenges in both areas.

23

Wrentham has the lowest residential tax rate and the second to lowest commercial property tax rates out of all neighboring towns. However, almost 10% of Wrentham's property tax base relies on the Outlets.

Table: Largest taxpayers, FY 2020				
Name	Nature of business	Total assessed value	Amount of tax	% of Wrentham's total property tax value
Premium Outlet Partner LP	Outlet mall	$224,000,000	$4,000,000	9.7%
Massachusetts Electric	Utility	$20,000,000	$350,000	0.9%
DRI/Maple Ledgeview Wrentham	Retail	$19,000,000	$250,000	0.8%
The Shops at Wrentham, LLC	Retail	$10,000,000	$200,000	0.4%
Pond Home Community Inc	Assisted living	$9,000,000	$150,000	0.4%
Verizon new England Inc	Utility	$8,000,000	$150,000	0.3%
Bay State Gas Company	Utility	$8,000,000	$150,000	0.3%
Capstan Holdings I LLC	Manufacturing	$7,000,000	$150,000	0.3%
Maples Rehab & Nurs Ctr LLC	Nursing home	$7,000,000	$150,000	0.3%
Algonquin Gas Transmission	Utility	$6,000,000	$100,000	0.3%

Source: Town of Wrentham Annual Report, 2020

24

What surprised you?
Please add comments to the chat.

25

Economic Development Goals

1) Pursue strategic and innovative strategies to support a strong recovery from the impacts of the COVID pandemic, including leveraging Wrentham's major attractions such as the Outlets and Rice Complex.

2) Improve coordination, communication, and marketing of Wrentham's businesses.

3) Make Wrentham more business-friendly and attract commercial development that diversifies employment options and the tax base and adds value to the community.

4) Invest in the Downtown to support a walkable, attractive Village Center.

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

26

Example strategies

1) Pursue strategic and innovative strategies to support a strong recovery from the impacts of the COVID pandemic, including leveraging Wrentham's major attractions such as the Outlets and Rice Complex.

- **Create a walking/biking trail on old railroad bed**
- **Support local farmers in strengthening agrotourism**
- **Install wayfinding and signage from Outlets and Rice Complex to Village Center**

2) Improve coordination, communication, and marketing of Wrentham's businesses.

- **Support the Wrentham Business Collaborative**
- **Provide technical assistance to support strong COVID-19 recovery, ex. computer literacy, delivery services, etc.**

3) Make Wrentham more business-friendly and attract commercial development that diversifies employment options and the tax base and adds value to the community.

- **Review and update fee structure**
- **Leverage recent Route 1 rezoning with a targeted market profile and outreach to potential employers**
- **Coordinate the building and planning permitting processes**

4) Invest in the Downtown to support a walkable, attractive Village Center.

- **Support the Local Rapid Recovery Plan**
- **Install pedestrian and transportation improvements from the 2017 Route 1A Corridor Study**

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

27

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

Discussion question
- **What strategies would help Wrentham achieve its Economic Development goals?**

28

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

Discussion guidelines

- **- Take space, make space**
- **- Listen**
- **- Respect difference of opinion**

29

Housing

- **- Key Issues**
- **- Goals**
- **- Example Strategies**
- **- Small Group Discussion**

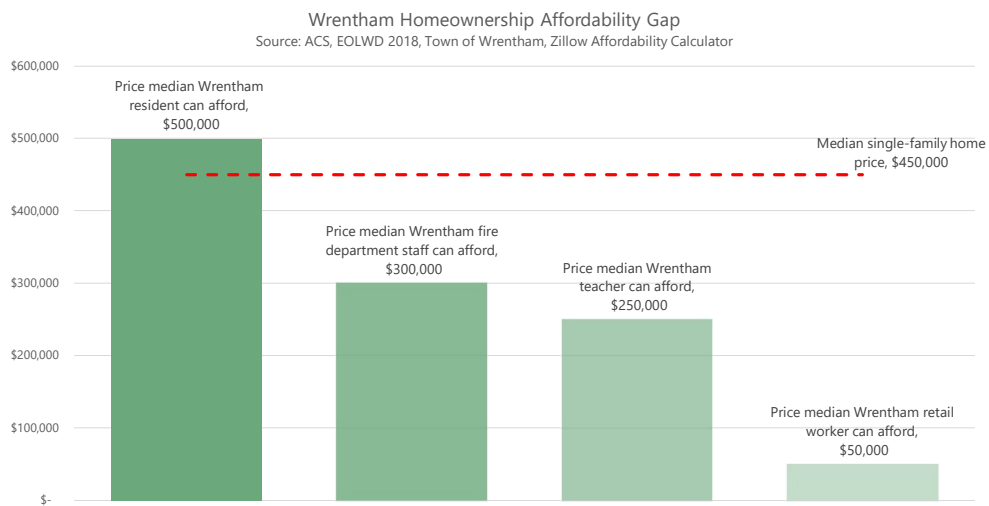Photo source: Mary Mallgraf

30

Housing quick facts

- Households
  - 4,162 households, 35% have children
  - 2.75 people per household
  - $113,000 median income
- Housing stock
  - 4,240 housing units, 86% are single-family, 17% renter-occupied
  - $489,250 median cost of buying a home
  - $2,207 monthly median cost of renting a home
  - 485 units on the Subsidized Housing Inventory
- Municipal tools
  - Wrentham Housing Authority
  - Community Preservation Act
  - Housing Choice Community designation
  - Zoning updates: Village Center District and Accessory Dwelling unit bylaw

Check out www.mapc.ma/WrenthamVision for the full analysis!

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

31

There is a mismatch between housing and jobs in Wrentham. People who work here can't afford to live here. People who live here have long commutes to their distant jobs.

Wrentham Homeownership Affordability Gap
Source: ACS, EOLWD 2018, Town of Wrentham, Zillow Affordability Calculator

Price median Wrentham resident can afford, $500,000

Median single-family home price, $450,000

Price median Wrentham fire department staff can afford, $300,000

Price median Wrentham teacher can afford, $250,000

Price median Wrentham retail worker can afford, $50,000

$600,000
$500,000
$400,000
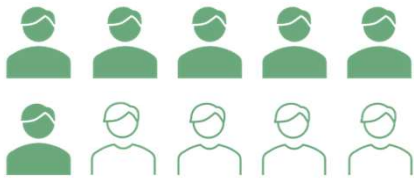$300,000
$200,000
$100,000
$-

32

Almost 1 in 5 Wrentham households rent their home, and they have unique housing challenges as the cost of rent has almost doubled in the past few years.
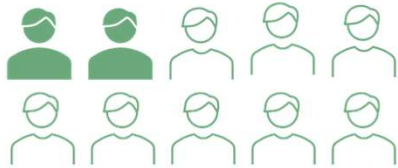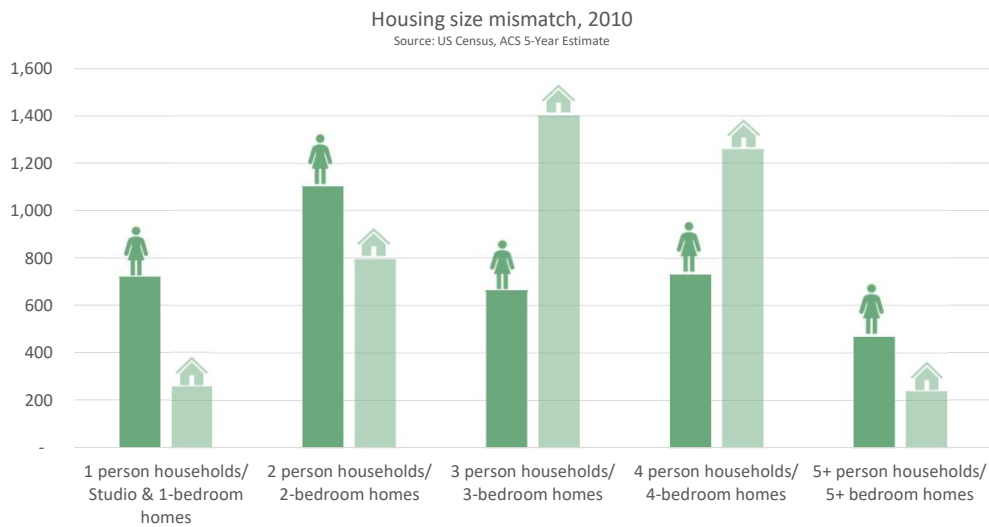
About 2 in 10 homeowners are cost-burdened (spend more than 30% of income on housing)

About 6 in 10 renters are cost-burdened

33

There is a shortage of smaller homes, and residents are frustrated with development of "McMansions". There is opportunity for Wrentham's zoning to make it easier to build smaller, less costly housing.

Housing size mismatch, 2010
Source: US Census, ACS 5-Year Estimate

	1 person households/ Studio & 1-bedroom homes	2 person households/ 2-bedroom homes	3 person households/ 3-bedroom homes	4 person households/ 4-bedroom homes	5+ person households/ 5+ bedroom homes

34

While Wrentham's median income is relatively high, Wrentham's middle class is shrinking. There is a large portion of low-income residents—almost 30% of households in Wrentham qualify for Affordable Housing based on income.
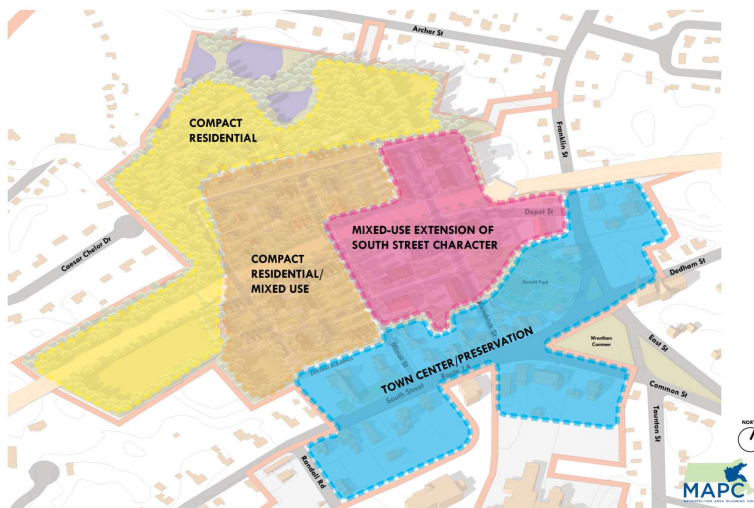
For every 1 Affordable Housing unit, there are 2.4 eligible households in Wrentham.

35

Recent Downtown rezoning provides opportunity for new housing, but no new development has been proposed.

36

What surprised you?
Please add comments to the chat.

37

Housing Goals

1) Encourage smaller and less expensive housing options to better serve a wider range of the community, for example seniors looking to downsize, Town employees, and first-time home-buyers.

2) Leverage recent re-zoning to guide housing development towards the Village Center and areas with existing infrastructure.

3) Protect open space and discourage development of forests and fields.

4) Promote deed-restricted Affordable Housing to meet the needs of current and future eligible residents and to promote diversity and access to the educational, cultural, and community opportunities in Wrentham.

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

38

Example Strategies

1) Encourage smaller and less expensive housing options to better serve a wider range of the community, for example seniors looking to downsize, Town employees, and first-time home-buyers.

   - **Make it easier to build Accessory Dwelling Units and allow them to serve more of the community**
   - **Make it easier to build two- and three-family homes that are designed to look like single-family homes**

2) Leverage recent re-zoning to guide housing development towards the Village Center and areas with existing infrastructure.

   - **Identify barriers to private investment in Village Center. If identified as a barrier, support private/public partnership to install sewer**
   - **Amend Village Center zoning to comply with State requirements for higher-density housing**

3) Protect open space and discourage development of forests and fields.

   - **Make it easier to build subdivisions that protect open space (aka Open Space Preservation Development)**
   - **Implement the 2020 Open Space and Recreation Plan**

4) Promote deed-restricted Affordable Housing to meet the needs of current and future eligible residents and to promote diversity and access to the educational, cultural, and community opportunities in Wrentham.

   - **Require a portion of units in certain developments to be reserved as Affordable Housing (i.e. Inclusionary Zoning)**
   - **Direct Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to support Affordable Housing**

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

39

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

Discussion question
- **What strategies would help Wrentham achieve its Housing goals?**

40

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

Discussion guidelines

- Take space, make space
- Listen
- Respect difference of opinion

41

Photo source: Mary Mallgraf

Next steps

42

WRENTHAM 2030
VISION OF TOMORROW
MASTER PLAN

1. Take the survey to provide feedback on potential strategies:
   www.mapc.ma/WrenthamVisionSurvey2

2. Tell your friends, family, and neighbors to take the survey!

3. Look out for the draft plan in late May.

Thank you

43