

Steering Committee meeting February 10, 2022









AGENDA

- 1. Introductions
- 2. Town-wide survey findings
- 3. Land use and zoning
- 4. Open Space and Recreation
- 5. Transportation
- 6. Next steps



Introductions

Steering Committee

Krista Andberg, Resident at Large
Debbie Exner, Resident at Large
Chris Gallo, Board of Selectmen
Julie Garland, Conservation Commission
John Jackson, Recreation Committee
George Labonte, Deputy Police
Chief/Resident
Jerry McGovern, Resident at Large

Jeffrey Plante, Resident at Large
Beatrice Schembri, Resident at Large
Steve Schwarm, Planning Board
Alan Selling, Open Space Committee
Everett Skinner, Jr., Planning Board
Lauren White, Resident at Large

MAPC staff



Josh Fiala, AICP AIA

Principal Planner

Project Role: Project Manager

Open Space & Recreation, Energy & Sustainability



Marah Holland
Transportation Planner II
Project Role: Transportation



Andrew Harris-Long, AICP
Senior Planner
Project Role: Historical & Cultural
Resources, Land Use



Adi NochurSneior Transportation Planner *Project Role: Transportation*



Courtney Lewis

Regional Land Use Planner II

Project Role: Public Facilities & Services



Travis Pollack, AICPSenior Transportation Planner *Project Role: Transportation*

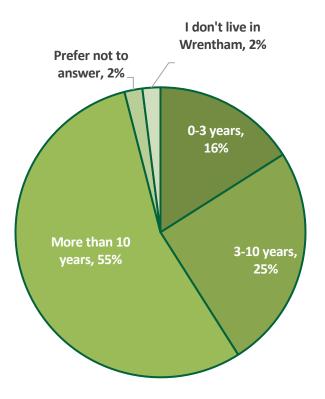


Phase II Town-wide Survey

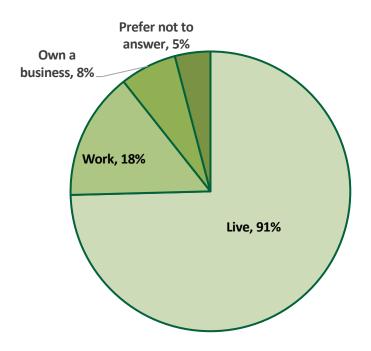
Survey Distribution

- 777 respondents
- Distribution strategies
 - Postcard mailed to every household
 - Emails to volunteers, Town staff, Town boards, and other interested parties
 - Fliers and emails to residents of The Point at Wrentham apartments
 - Fliers at the Thanksgiving 5K
 - Included in Wrentham Public Schools email
 - Social media
 - Hard copies at Town Hall
 - Posting on electronic sign outside of Town Hall
- Open November 17 to December 20

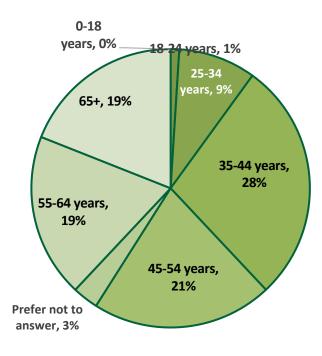
Who took the survey?



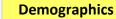
How long have you lived in Wrentham?



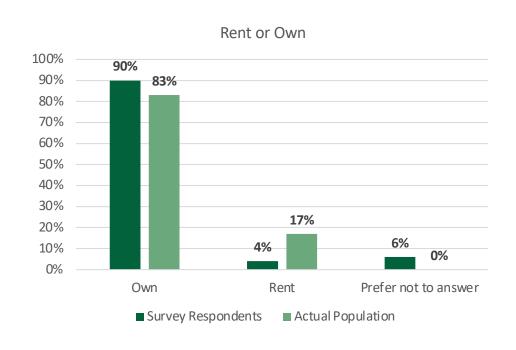
Do you live, work, and/or own a business in Wrentham?

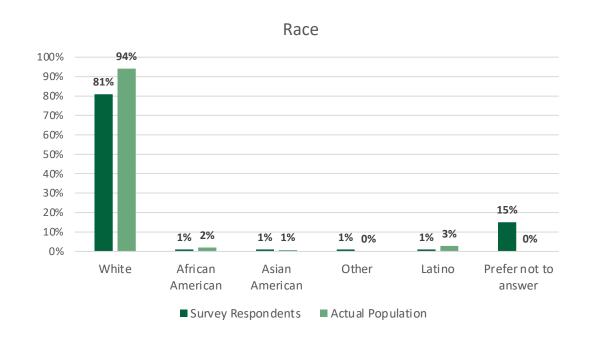


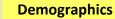
What is your age?



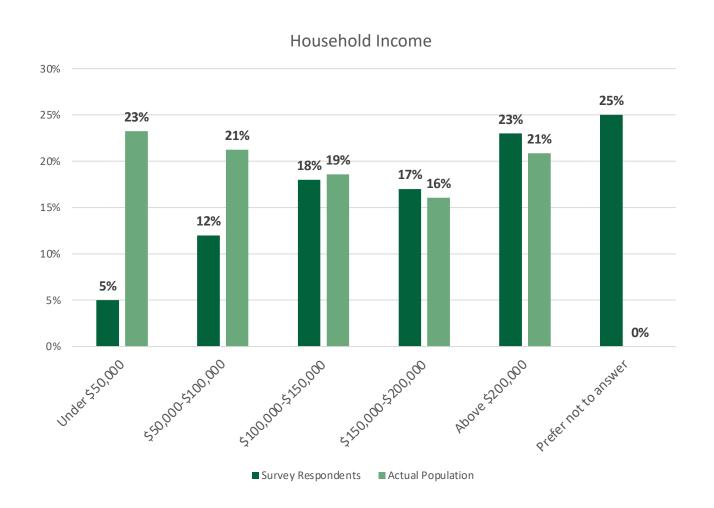
Who took the survey & how do they compare to the Wrentham population?



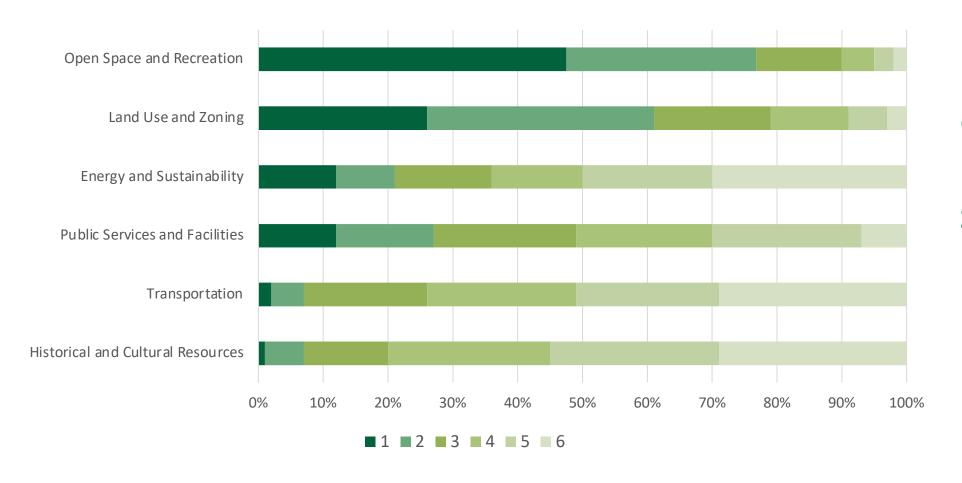




Who took the survey & how do they compare to the Wrentham population?



Rank the Master Plan topics most important to you.



Open Space & Recreation and Land Use & Zoning ranked highest

Final thoughts on the Master Planning Process

"Communication to town residents will be important. I also feel strongly that we need to act on the statement in our vision to be an inclusive community"

"Collaboration with other local towns (Norfolk, Franklin, Fox etc), hiking, biking connecting open spaces"

"Extremely interested in the **bike path development**"

"Provide an
affordable/low-income
senior housing
development near town
center"

"Create a usable space behind the town center area, for arts and small business, an outdoor market of a sort for local vendors and budding entrepreneurs"

Focus Group Meetings

- Small Group discussions to gather additional feedback
- Target audiences have included:
 - Aging and disability
 - Schools
 - Local businesses
 - DPW and recreation
 - Diversity, equity, and inclusion



QUESTIONS?



Land use and zoning

Land Use

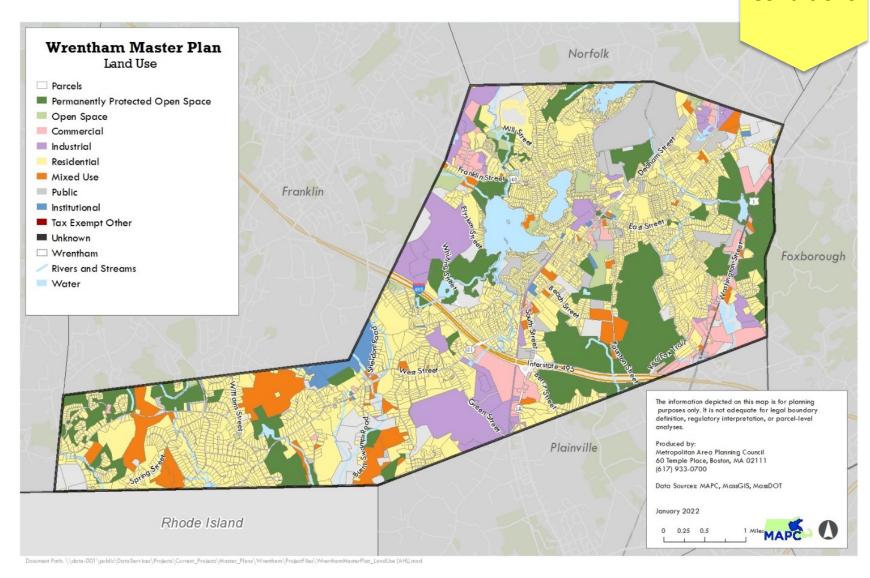
Existing Conditions

Quick Facts

- 43% residential
- 22% public land
- 12% commercial/industrial

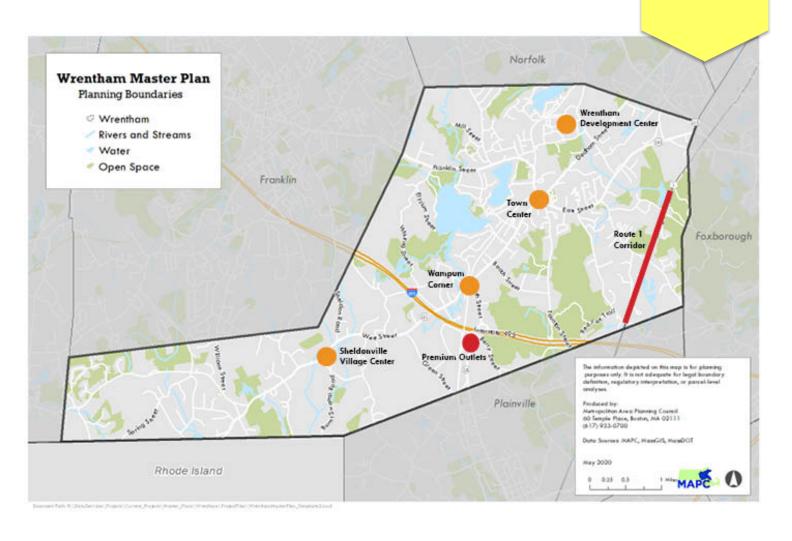
Key findings

- Growth should continue to be targeted to downtown and other existing centers to prevent sprawl
- Recent successful zoning reform projects (downtown & Route 1)
- Room for more zoning reform:
 - Open Space Residential Developments
 - Use regulations
 - Development regulations to promote walkable neighborhoods



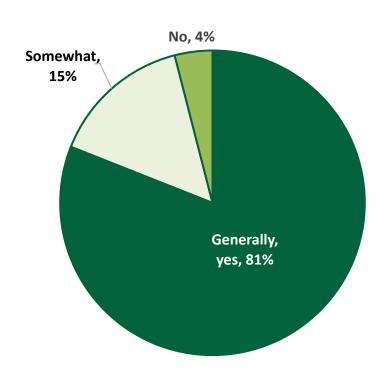
Key findings

- Lack of public sewer limits the type of development that can occur
- Continuing with targeted planning and zoning efforts can ensure:
 - New development happens where infrastructure already exists
 - Public investments are strategic
 - Growth achieves goals like:
 - Preserving open space and historic character
 - Making Wrentham more walkable and bike-friendly
 - Expanding housing options

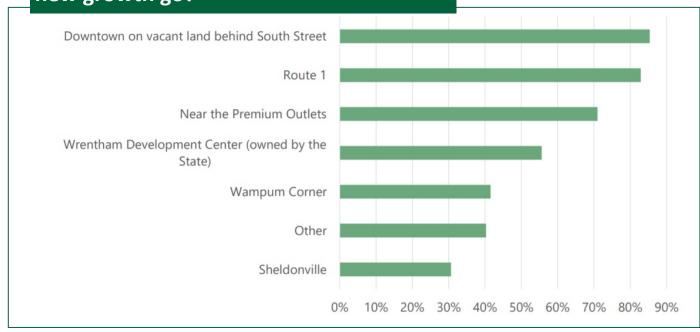


Survey Findings: Land Use

Do results from the Phase I Survey reflect your priorities?







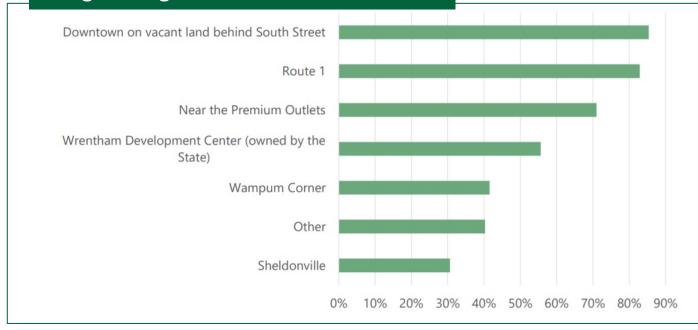
Comments about growth

"There is so much lost potential at the Wrentham Development[al] Center. Having this site developed could be a win-win for WDC and Wrentham residents. Every time I walk there, I envision the building being utilized for artists, housing, [and students]."

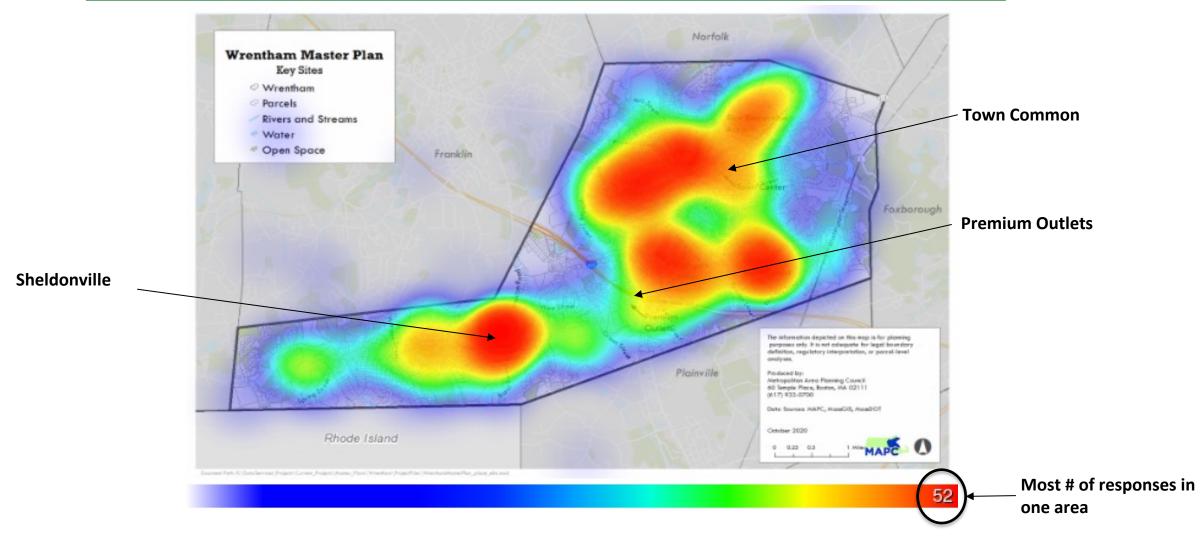
"My priority would be more [small business] development downtown and in Wampum Corner"

"Growth should respect historical nature of the town"

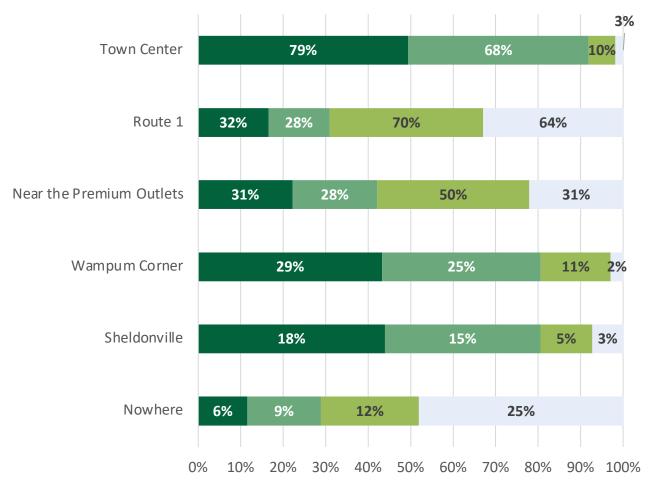
Phase I Survey Question: Where should new growth go?



Where do you want to see less growth?



Where do you want to see different development types?



■ Pedestrian-friendly retail, restaurant, or office

■ Pedestrian-friendly retail, restaurant, or office with housing above (mixeduse)

■ Smaller scale, auto-oriented retail, restaurant, or office

Larger scale, auto-oriented retail, restaurant, or office







Land Use

Potential draft goals (responding to existing condition and survey themes)

- 1. Promote walkable neighborhoods in existing village centers to avoid sprawl
- 2. Advance preservation of open space and rural landscapes
- 3. Continue strategic planning and zoning efforts to help shape how growth occurs
- 4. Leverage public and private investments to strengthen existing centers
- 5. Partner with the State to help shape the future of the Wrentham Developmental Center
- 6. Others?

Encourage sustainable development that maximizes existing infrastructure, promotes walkable, connected neighborhoods, and protects rural lands and open space.



DISCUSSION



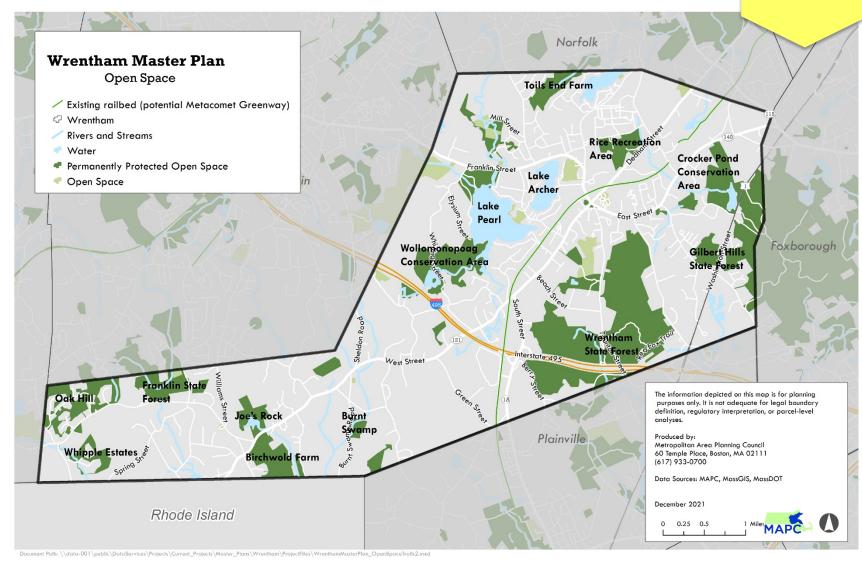
Existing Conditions

Quick Facts

- 3,200 acres (23%) of
 Wrentham land is permanently protected open space
- 1,740 acres is open space with limited protection while receiving tax benefits

Key findings

- Open space protection is of highest priority to the community
- Big Apple Farm and Cook's
 Valley Farm are unprotected
 and vulnerable to development
- Open Space Committee is actively working land protection
- Population growth has been correlated with loss of open space in Wrentham, but it could be different.



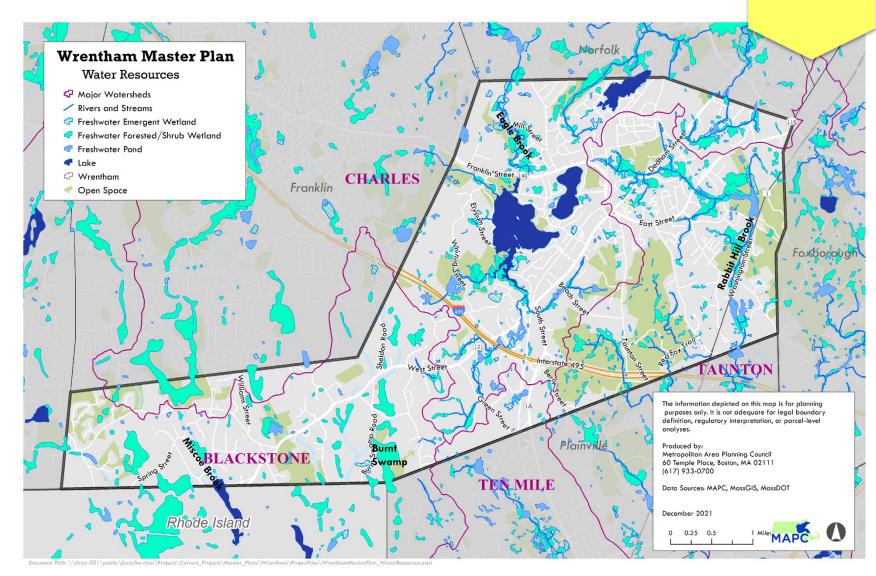
Existing Conditions

Quick Facts

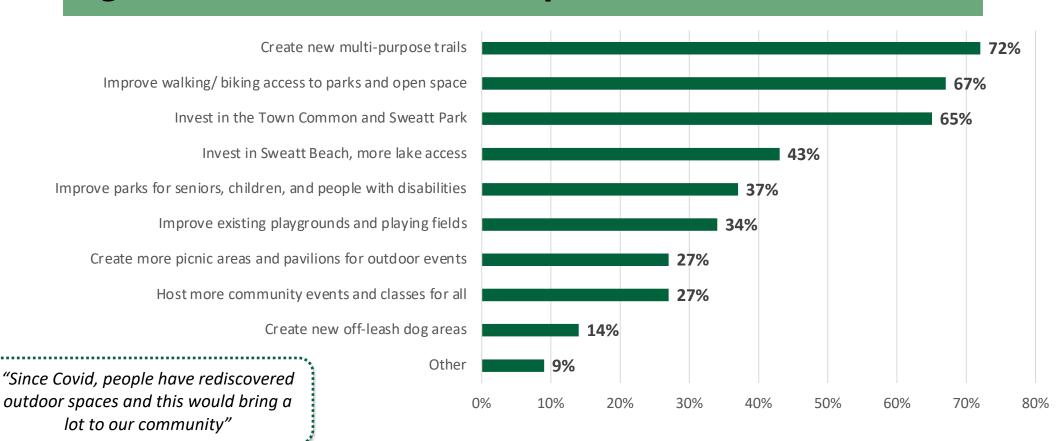
 The headwaters of four different watersheds are in Wrentham: Blackstone, Charles, Taunton, and Ten Mile Rivers

Key findings

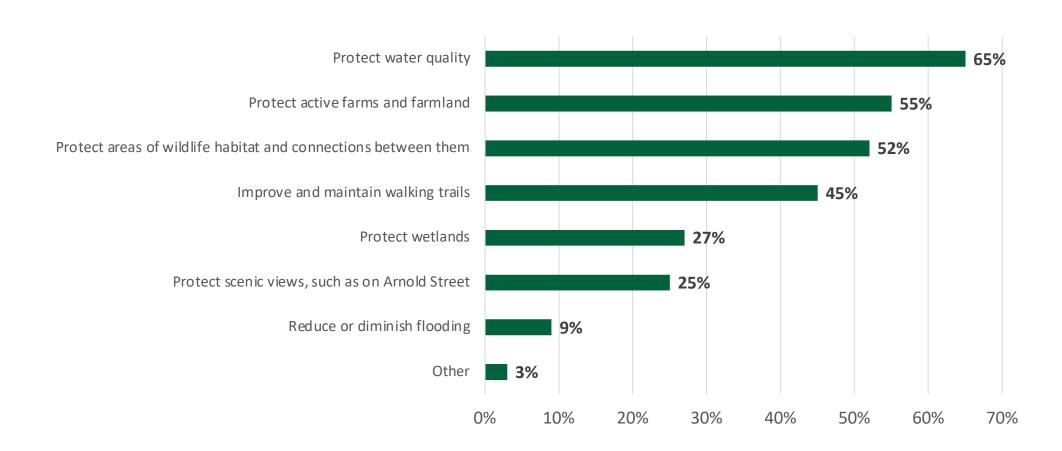
- Wetlands have enormous value for water quality by absorbing pollution, retaining water to replenish aquifers, and managing storms and flooding
- Regulations intended to protect water quality including the Watershed Protection District, require relatively large areas of land per home which prevents the development of more walkable neighborhoods.



Over the next 10 years, what are the most important goals for recreation? Choose up to 5.



Over the next 10 years, what are the most important goals for open space? Choose up to 3.



Potential draft goals (responding to existing condition and survey themes)

- 1. Protect watersheds and maintain water quality
- 2. Advance open space preservation and protection
- 3. Expand access to, and accessibility and inclusiveness of resources and programs
- 4. Invest in and improve existing resources and recreation facilities
- 5. Protect sensitive habitats and wildlife corridors
- 6. Others?

Protect the Town's natural resources while improving the open spaces and recreation amenities, facilities, and programs that support a high quality of life.



DISCUSSION



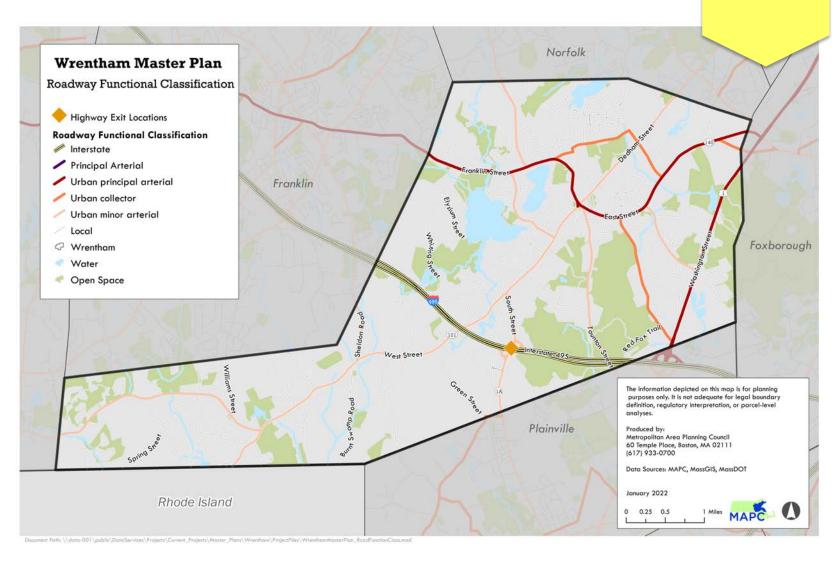
Transportation

Transportation

Existing Conditions

Quick Facts

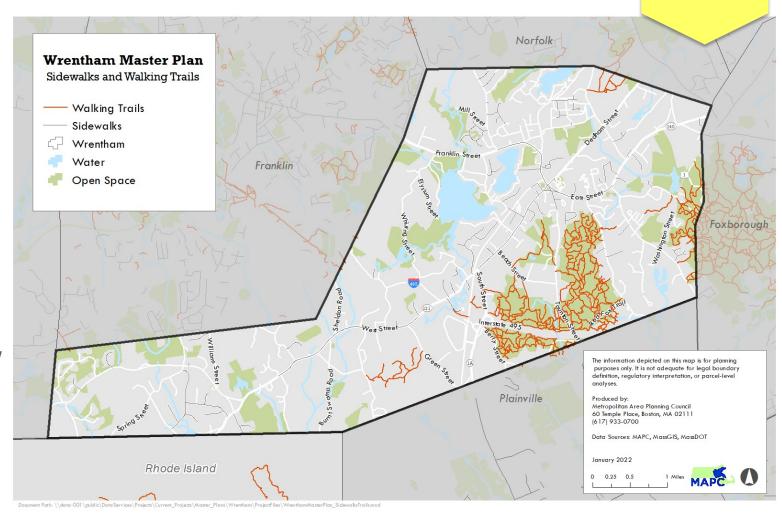
- 96 total miles of roadway, 26 miles are state roads
- Avg household drives 80 miles per day
- Only 25% of Wrentham's streets have sidewalks on at least one side, only 2% have sidewalks on both sides; No bicycle facilities
- More than \$15 million in funding is needed to repair existing roadways
- Vehicle crashes average about 350 crashes per year
- Pedestrian activity doubled over the past two years
- Bicycle activity more than doubled in 2020, but then fell below pre-pandemic levels in 2021



Existing Conditions

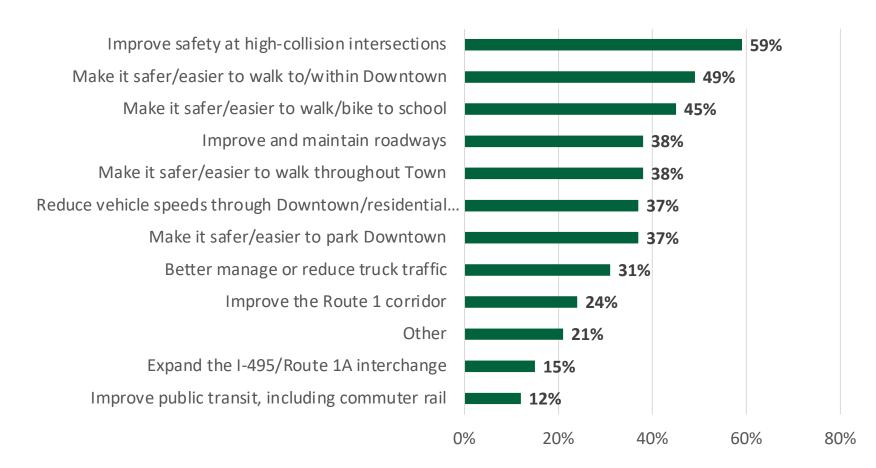
Key findings

- The car-centric nature of Wrentham limits the ability for residents to use other means of transportation, such as walking, rolling, biking, and public transit.
- Safe, accessible, and enjoyable walking infrastructure is lacking throughout town, but highly desired by residents.
- Opportunities for a greater range of mobility options exist in Wrentham, but additional program support is needed.
- Downtown parking is plentiful, but better management of existing spaces would allow for more efficient usage.
- Although nearly 70% of the town's street network is town-controlled, there are crucial streets in Wrentham's downtown that are state-owned.



Survey Findings: Transportation

What transportation improvements are most important?

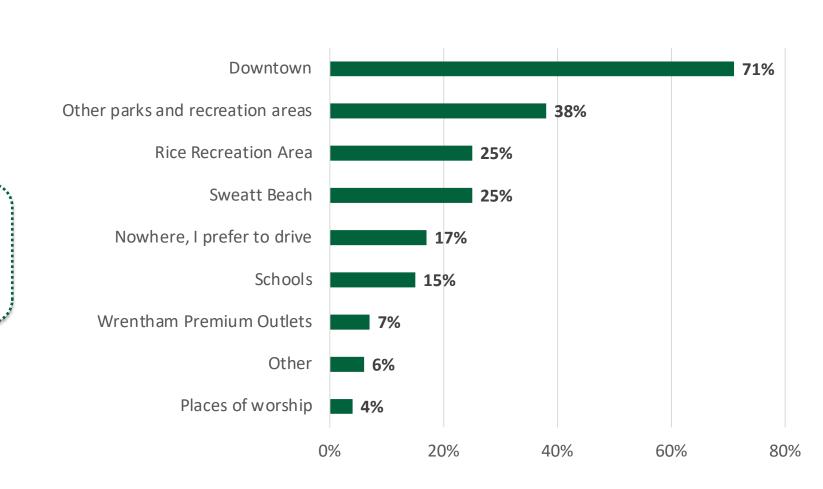


Where would you go more often if it were easier to get there via walking, biking, or transit? Choose up to 3.

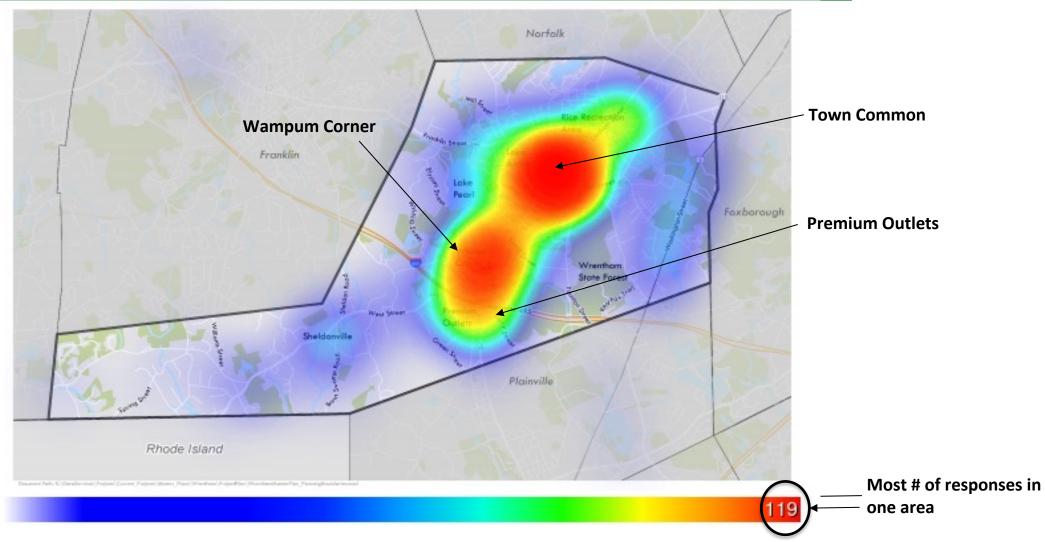
"Extremely interested in the **bike path development**"

"Sidewalks on busy streets would make running and biking from home possible in Sheldonville."

"More accessible transportation options for **people with disabilities**AND **seniors**"



Where should roadway improvements be prioritized?



Transportation

Potential draft goals (responding to existing condition and survey themes)

- 1. Support walking, biking, and rolling infrastructure, especially walking infrastructure within and connecting to the downtown.
- 2. Increase roadway safety and increase enjoyment and convenience for all types of travel.
- 3. Assess parking needs and implement parking management strategies in Wrentham's downtown.
- 4. Decrease dependance on single-occupancy, private vehicles and increase use of GATRA's transit options in Wrentham
- 5. Plan for electric and autonomous vehicles, as well as other potential future transportation technologies.
- 6. Others?

Encourage sustainable mobility that maximizes existing infrastructure, promotes walkable, connected neighborhoods, and contributes to environmental health.



DISCUSSION



Next steps

Next steps

- Next Steering Committee meeting
 - February 24th 3:00 4:30 pm
- Public Forums
 - March 22nd and March 29th at 7:00 pm
 - Zoom with in-person option
 - Overview of existing conditions, draft goals, discussion of goals
- Issues and Opportunities Report

Join us for two Master Plan Public Forums!

Please register for one or both events at:

https://mapc.ma/wrentham-forums

Come share your ideas at <u>two public forums</u> about the key issues and opportunities facing Wrentham and the goals that should be identified to address them.

The topics at the **first public forum** will include **land use**, **open space**, and **transportation**. The topics at the **second public forum** will include **historic and cultural resources**, **community facilities and services**, and **energy and sustainability**.

This pair of public forums is part of the Vision of Tomorrow: 2030 Master Plan process, which has included two town-wide surveys, focus groups, in-depth analysis, and more and will culminate in a Master Plan to guide the Town's priorities for the next 10 years.

To learn more please visit the project webpage:

Tuesday, March 22 7:00PM - 8:30PM Zoom Meeting

(with in-person option)

Topics: land use, open space, transportation

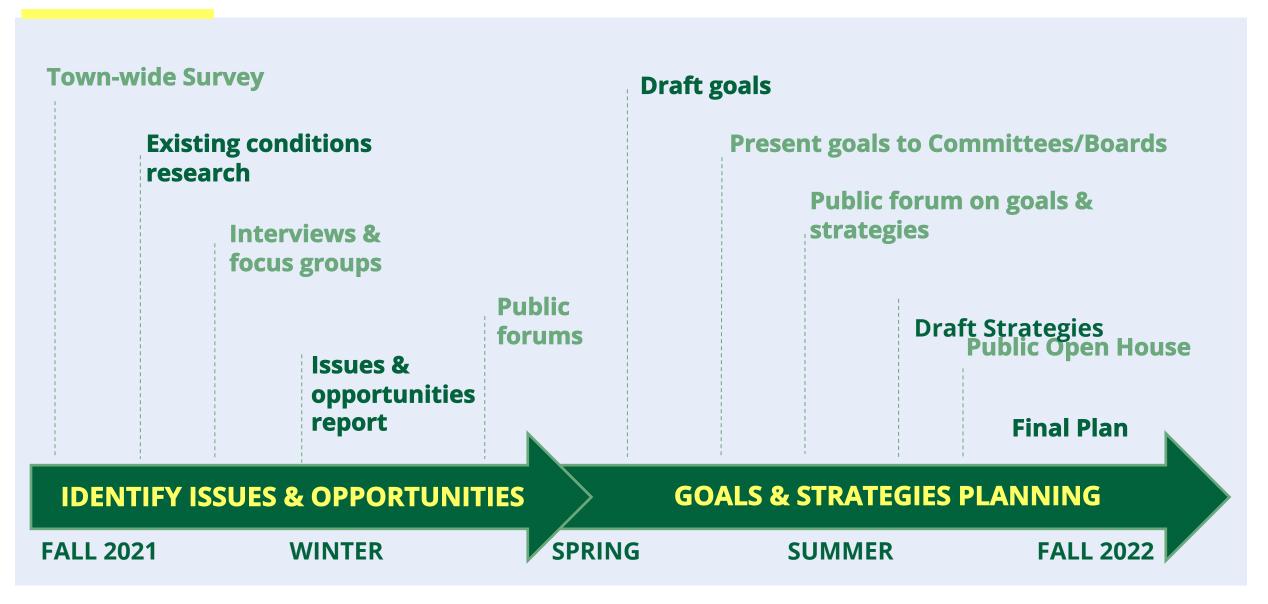
Tuesday, March 29 7:00PM - 8:30PM Zoom Meeting

(with in-person option)

Topics: historic and cultural resources, community facilities and services, energy and sustainability



Project Timeline



Wrentham 2030 Master Plan: Vision of Tomorrow

Steering Committee Meeting | February 10, 2022