

Transportation and Connectivity

Draft Existing Conditions

Quick Facts

Safe, reliable, equitable, and enjoyable mobility options influence the quality of life for Wrentham residents, workers, and visitors, including access to essential services and resources, places of recreation, jobs, and social opportunities. A transportation system that is flexible, sustainable, and safe helps provide a strong foundation for economic growth, public health, and overall well-being, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change. Streets that accommodate all ages, abilities, and travel modes (driving, walking, rolling, cycling, public transit) and thoughtful transportation strategies can contribute to creating the Vision for a vibrant Town Center, as well as a sustainable Town.

Mobility

- On an average workday, approximately 6,500 people come into Wrentham for work, while about 5,700 leave.
- The average household in Wrentham drives about 80 miles per day.

Infrastructure

- Wrentham has 96 miles of streets and roadways within its town limits, which includes 26 miles of state-maintained facilities.
- Around only 25% of Wrentham's streets have sidewalks on at least one side and only 2% have sidewalks on both sides of the street. There are no bicycle facilities in Wrentham, including none connecting to local schools.
- Many of the town's roads are in a serious state of disrepair due to a prolonged lack of funding. It is estimated that more than \$15 million in funding is needed to repair the Town's existing roadways.

Safety

- In Wrentham, the number of total traffic crashes remained fairly consistent from 2017 to 2019, averaging just over 350 crashes per year, or nearly one crash per day.

COVID-19 Pandemic

- The pandemic has led to a 19% reduction in traffic on state-owned roads in the Town in 2020, but for some months pedestrian activity doubled in Town over the past two years as more people spent time at home.
- Bicycle activity initially more than doubled in 2020, but then fell below pre-pandemic levels in 2021, likely due to the lack of bicycle infrastructure in the Town.

Key themes/findings

The Transportation Goals and Strategies are based on research, data analysis, best practices, and community engagement, as presented in the existing conditions assessment. This assessment provides new insight into the transportation landscape of the town, as well as connections to both near and far destinations. The information included here is intended to serve as a resource for town staff, committee members, and the general public to implement the plan and respond to new challenges and opportunities. The key themes of the assessment are summarized below.

- **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.** This is especially problematic for populations who cannot or do not drive for a variety of reasons, such as age, disability, income, etc.
- **Safe, accessible, and enjoyable walking infrastructure is lacking throughout town, but highly desired by residents.** Intersection crossings, mid-block crossings, pedestrian signals and sidewalks need improvements, and more sidewalks are needed both within the downtown and key connections into town.
- **Opportunities for a greater range of mobility options exist in Wrentham, but additional program support is needed.** The Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (MassDOT) Complete Streets program to support all roadway users, regardless of age, ability, or travel mode, can enable the Town to seek technical assistance and funding to improve local roadways and to provide safer and greater transportation choices for residents and visitors. Resources such as funding, outreach, and community champions would help move critical projects forward and help spread the word about existing services.
- **Downtown parking is plentiful, but better management of existing spaces would allow for more efficient usage.** There are multiple public parking lots that could be better utilized for long-term parking, and on-street spaces could be used for short-term trips.
- **Although nearly 70% of the town's street network is town-controlled, there are crucial streets in Wrentham's downtown that are state-owned.** Improvements to safety, mobility, and technology on these streets will require collaboration with the MassDOT.

Introduction

Wrentham's car-centric transportation network reflects mostly late 20th century and 21st century suburban and lower-density development, with regional automobile access via Route 1 and I-495 but a lack of sidewalks within the Town itself. (See the Historical and Cultural Resources Chapter to learn more about Wrentham's transportation history.) While Wrentham is not served by rail, it does have regional on-demand (microtransit) bus service provided by the Greater Attleboro and Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA). As such, residents and workers travel by car for a majority of their work and daily needs trips.

A successful transportation network plans for the efficient, enjoyable, and safe movement of people and goods and provides multiple travel mode options for people to get where they want to go. Transportation affects land use and development as well as the environment, including air

quality, noise, water quality, and climate change. Similarly, land use and housing development patterns affect transportation patterns. For example, when housing is near to jobs, then commutes are shorter. Furthermore, when houses are nearer to destinations, such as schools, parks, or shops, people can walk or bike to get where they are going, thus reducing traffic congestion.

The existing transportation network also affects the health and safety of all users, particularly those without access to an automobile who use transit, walking, and cycling to connect to their daily needs. As such, an equitable, well-designed and functional transportation network can have positive impacts on economic development and the quality of life for the entire community.

The majority of the data on commuting, automobile use and transit used for this Master Plan are from surveys and measurements conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which changed how many people travel to work, school, and other daily needs in 2020. Where possible, information on how the pandemic may alter travel patterns long-term is included in this chapter.

Commuting Characteristics

Vehicle Ownership

Wrentham residents own an average of 2.4 vehicles per household (2014 Massachusetts Vehicle Census), and the average household drives about 80 miles per day. These figures are higher than statewide averages and reflect the land use patterns and lack of non-driving mobility options available within the Town. The relative low-density residential neighborhoods, separation of housing from jobs and businesses, and lack of public transit coverage and opportunities to walk and bike to destinations safely can help explain the low rate of households with zero vehicles (3.5%), and the tendency for most households to rely on one or more vehicles. Nonetheless, the Town has approximately 150 households without an automobile who are impeded by the lack of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections.

Commutes

As noted in the Economic Development chapter from Phase I of Wrentham's Master Plan (2020), a majority of residents drive to work and most of those who work outside the home spent more than an hour commuting each day, based upon data collected prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. About 45% of Wrentham residents live within a 30-minute commute from their job, which is similar to other communities in the Greater Boston region (46%) but less than the average statewide (53%). Also noteworthy is that a larger percent of Wrentham residents have commute times of over an hour (21%) as compared to the region and Massachusetts as a whole (15% and 13% respectively). Between six and nine percent of Wrentham residents who work outside of the home take transit (2015-2019 ACS). These travel mode percentages for Wrentham have remained relatively stable over the last 10 years.

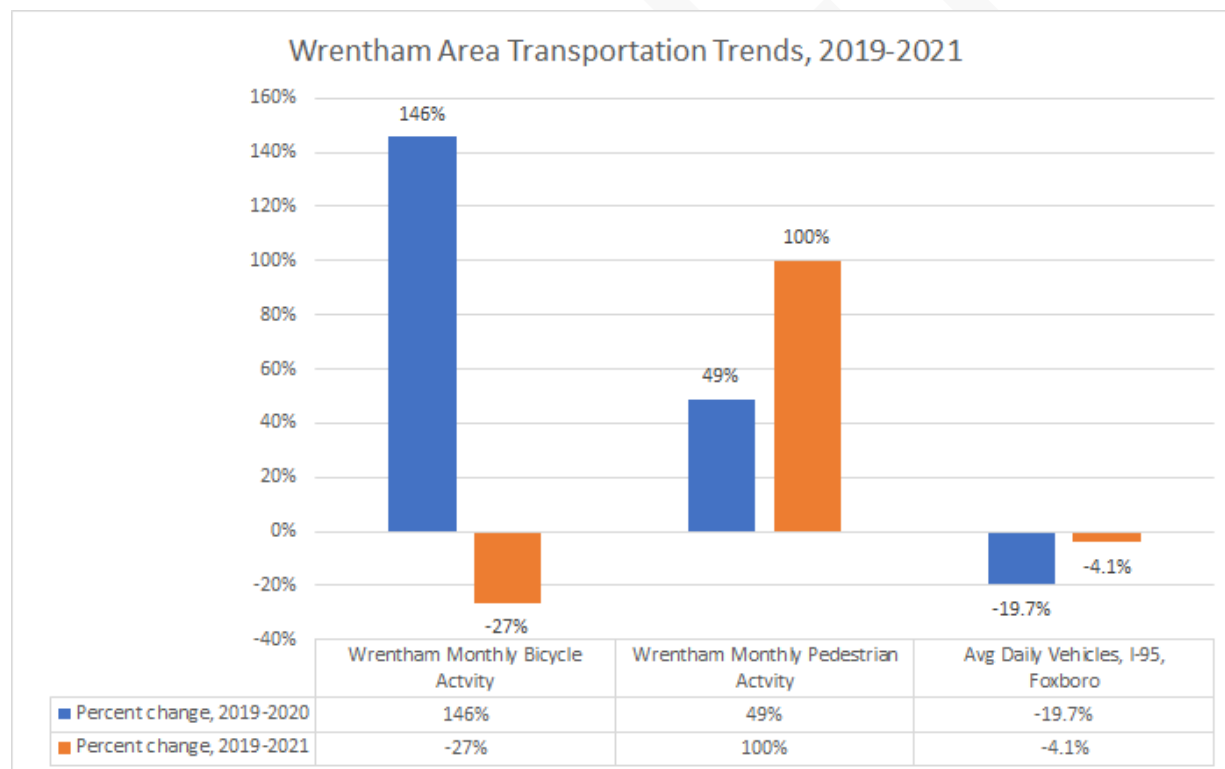
Transportation Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Travel patterns, particularly work-related trips, have changed for many during the pandemic. Most office workers in 2020 and into 2021 have been working from home remotely, and most schools and universities held remote learning as well in 2020. These changes have led to significant adaptations in auto, walking, biking, and transit trips in Greater Boston. For Wrentham, the pandemic has led to 19% reduction in traffic on state-owned roads in the town in 2020, but for some months pedestrian activity in Town more than doubled over the past two years as more

people spent time at home. Bicycle activity initially more than doubled in 2020, but then fell below pre-pandemic levels in 2021, likely due to the lack of bicycle infrastructure in the Town (see Figure T-1). This presents a significant opportunity to improve active transportation facilities to ensure these trips are safe and convenient. Finally, both parking activity at the nearby Norfolk commuter rail station and overall commuter rail ridership have decreased substantially, but traffic on I-95 is nearly back to 2019 levels. These data suggest that some residents in the area who previously rode transit are now driving to their destinations.

The longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on travel are unknown; however, recent data and surveys suggest that while some workers may choose to work remotely full time, many who can work from home will return to their work sites two to three days per week.¹ Those working in food services, education, and health care (many of whom have continued to work on site during the pandemic) will continue to commute to their jobs, but with changes in their work patterns. For example, retail and restaurants will evolve with workers interfacing less with customers and instead fulfilling and delivering online orders, creating shifts in traffic generation and parking needs.

Figure T-1: Wrentham Area Transportation Trends, 2019-2021



Employment Concentrations/Connections

As noted in the Economic Development chapter from Phase I of the Master Plan, most residents work northeast of Wrentham in locations such as Boston, Walpole, and Norwood. The top job categories for Wrentham residents include health care, retail, education, plus professional, scientific, and technical. For jobs in Wrentham, retail, education, and accommodation/food service

¹ MAPC 2021 survey of 1,200 residents and workers in the Neponset Valley region (including Wrentham); see chapter 2 of *Neponset Valley Route 1/1A Corridor Mobility Study* (December 2021) completed by MAPC.

are the top three, with concentrations at the Premium Outlet, downtown, and the Wrentham State School. This creates a workforce and jobs mismatch (as noted in the Economic Development chapter) that requires longer commutes for both Wrentham residents as well as those commuting into Town, mainly from the south.

There are only 530 employed Wrentham residents that also work in the town. In contrast, nearly 6,000 residents leave Wrentham for work. As noted in the "Commutes" section earlier in this report, only 6-9% of residents who work outside the home take transit, meaning the vast majority of residents leaving the town to work are driving. There are also nearly 7,000 people who live outside of Wrentham but commute into the town to work. This significant inflow and outflow of people to and from Wrentham leads to an increase in traffic on the town's main connector roads, especially at prime commute times.

Existing Networks

Roads and Streets

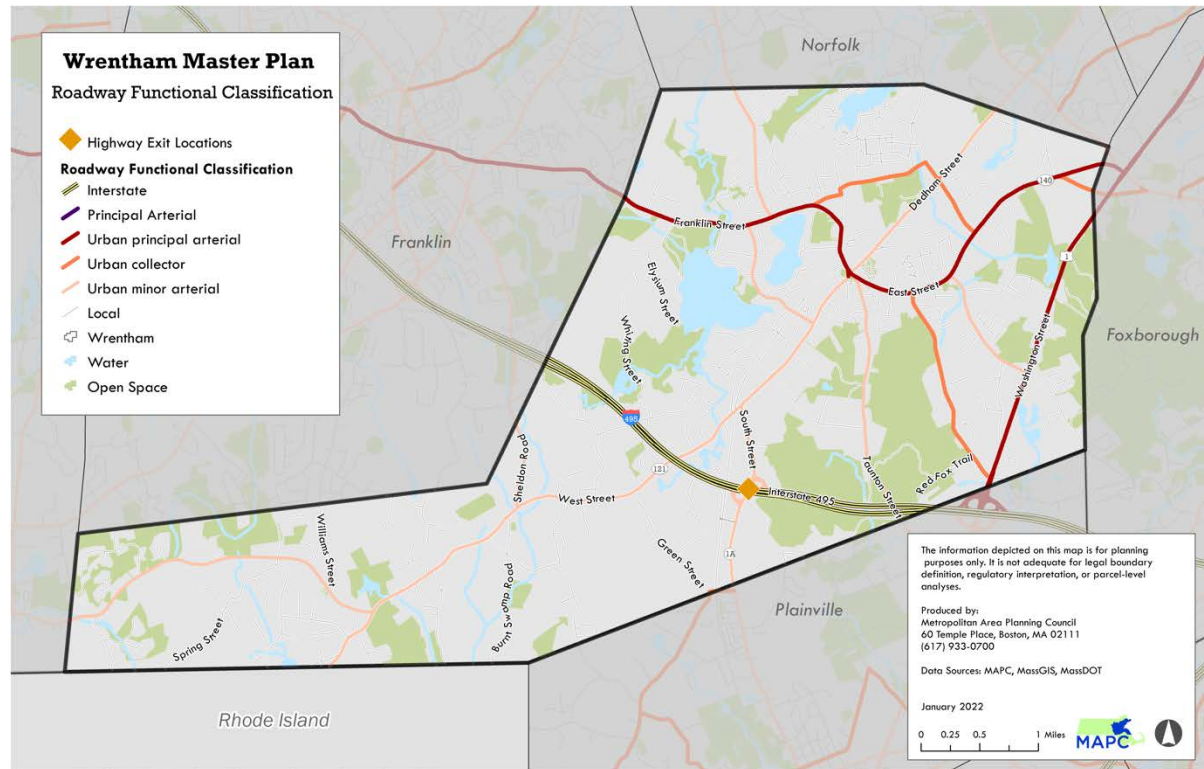
Roadways and streets provide critical connectivity in Wrentham, particularly along east-west routes that connect with the Providence Turnpike (Route 1), Route 1A, and Route 121, which are the main north-south roadways. The main east-west corridor is Route 140 (Franklin Street/East Street). I-495 plays a prominent role for Town traffic, particularly around the interchanges with Route 1A and Route 1. Town-maintained streets also provide important connections within Wrentham, particularly to schools, employment, and neighborhood centers. As noted in the Community Facilities and Services chapter, many of the town's roads need significant maintenance and repair due to a prolonged lack of funding. It is estimated that more than \$15 million in funding is needed to repair the Town's existing roadways.

Functional Classification of Roadways

Wrentham has 96 miles of streets and roadways within its town limits, which includes 26 miles of state-maintained facilities. Nearly 70 percent of the street network is town-controlled, with a vast majority of those classified as local streets.²

² <https://gis.massdot.state.ma.us/DataViewers/MunicipalDashboard/>

Figure T-2: Wrentham Roadway Functional Classification

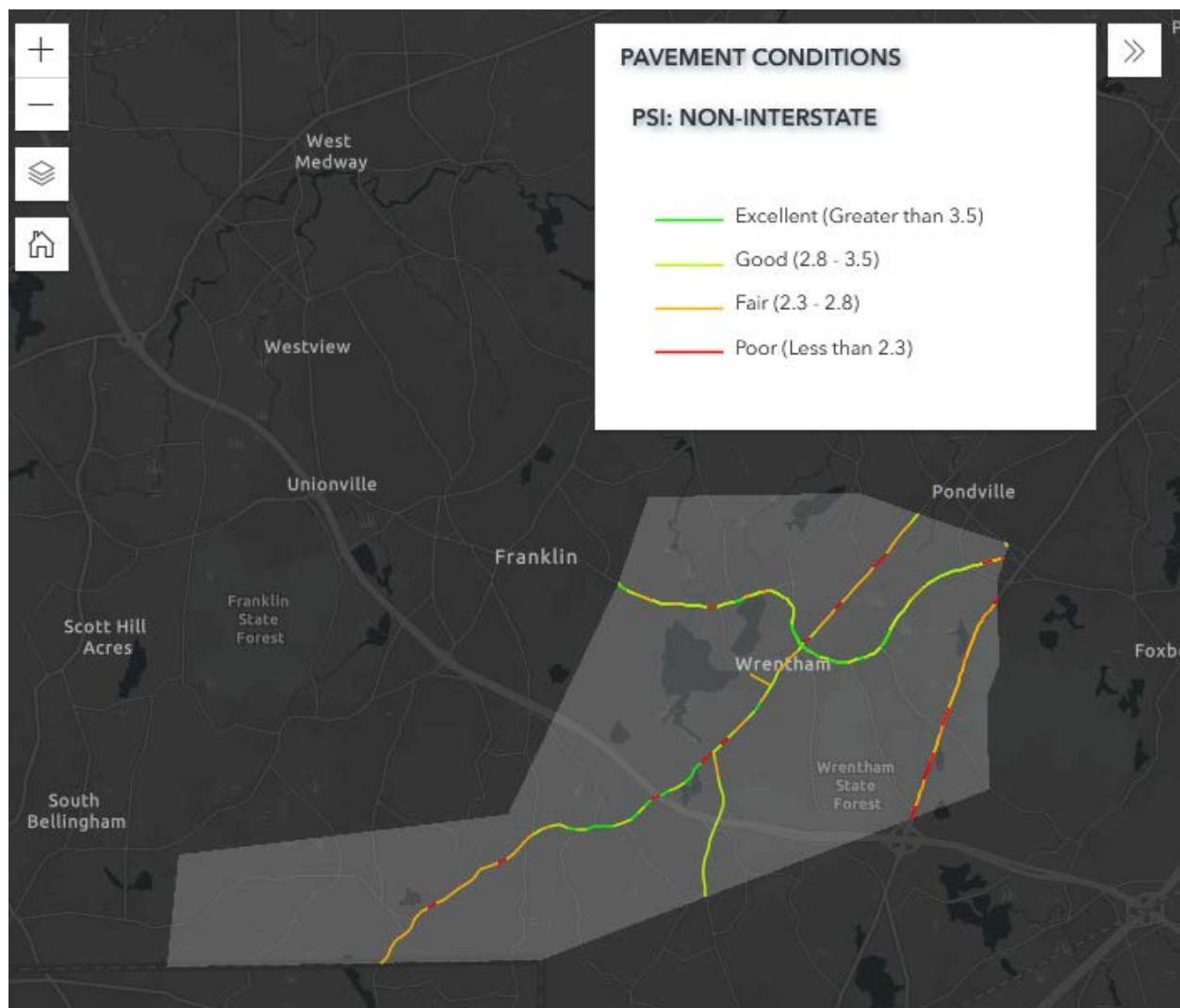


Source: MAPC, MassDOT

Pavement Management

Approximately half of Wrentham's non-interstate road miles are rated "excellent" or "good" by MassDOT. A vast majority of the interstate lane miles are also rated "excellent" or "good". Areas that have "fair" or "poor" ratings include nearly all of Route 1, as well as sections of Route 1A and Route 121, as seen in Figure T-3.

Figure T-3: Wrentham Pavement Conditions



Source: MassDOT pavement condition rankings as defined at

<https://gis.massdot.state.ma.us/DataViewers/MunicipalDashboard/mainView.html?town=Wrentham&dash=Investment>

Traffic Volumes

A review of MassDOT data shows that some streets in Wrentham have seen increasing vehicular traffic since the last Master Plan was completed in 2004. Key corridors that saw traffic increases include West Street, Washington Street/Route 1, and I-495. As noted earlier, the COVID-19 pandemic reduced overall vehicle traffic in 2020, with Wrentham overall experiencing a 19% decrease in traffic in 2020. Preliminary data in greater Boston suggest that 2021 traffic volumes are approaching 2019 levels, although morning and afternoon peak period traffic has not necessarily returned to pre-pandemic levels ([Boston Indicators](#)).

Figure T-4: Average Daily Vehicular Traffic Counts in Wrentham, Select Locations

Location	2004	2016	2020
West Street (Rt 121), south of I-495	7,200	10,100	7,100
Dedham St (Rt 1A), north of Rt. 140	N/A	8,400	7,000*
Washington St (Rt. 1) near Hawes St	25,000	33,639**	27,700*
Creek St, west of Rt 1A	5,500	5,100	5,300
I-495, north of Rt. 1	74,600	92,200	67,200
Rt 1A ramp to Northbound I-495	4,600	3,600*	3,600*

*MassDOT estimate. **2019 count.

Data taken from MassDOT and previous Wrentham planning studies

Traffic Safety

In Wrentham the number of total traffic crashes remained fairly consistent, averaging just over 350 crashes per year from 2017 to 2019. In contrast, the total crashes in Norfolk County have been steadily decreasing over the same time. The Town saw a nearly 60% decrease in crashes in 2020 while Norfolk County saw a 67% decrease, likely due to decreased travel as a result of the pandemic. There were four fatal crashes in the town from 2017-2020 (MassDOT Crash Data Portal).

The top 5% of crash clusters in the Town from 2016-2018 were located at the intersections of Route 1A/Winter St/North St, Route 1A/Interstate 495, and Route 1A/Premium Outlet Blvd.

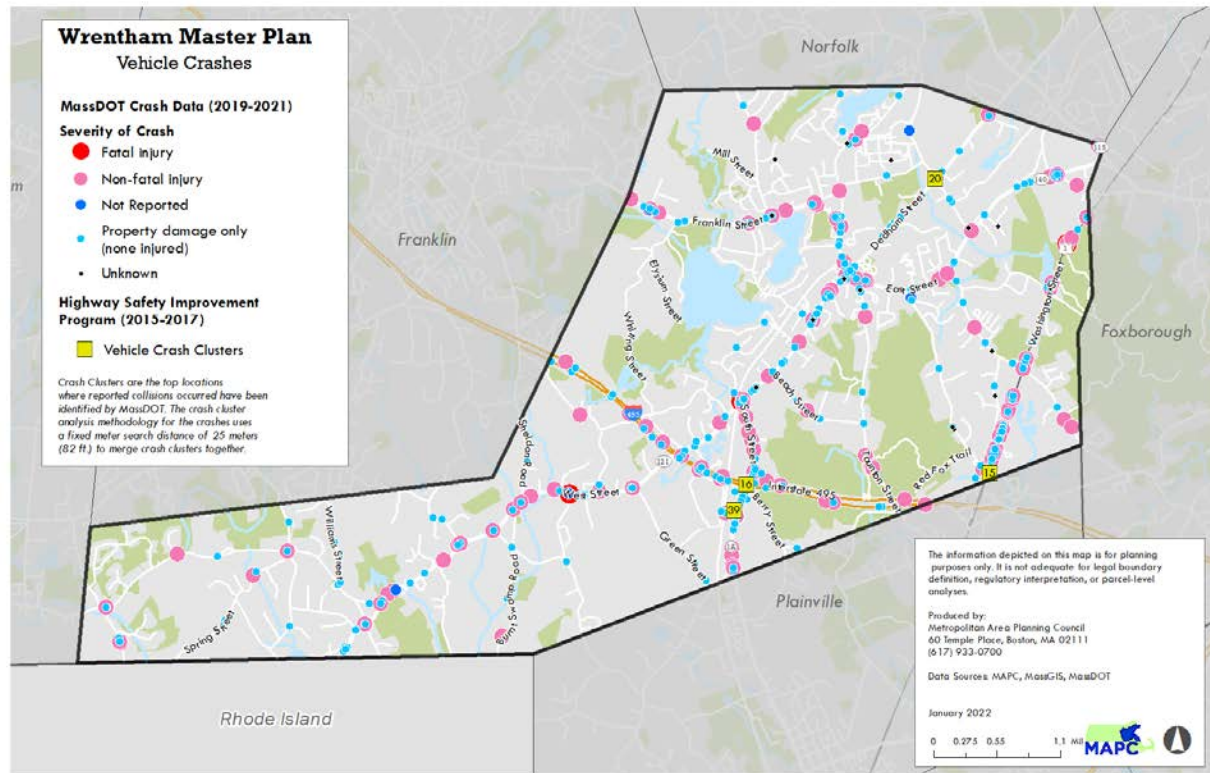
Figure T-5: Wrentham and Norfolk Vehicle Crash Comparison

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Vehicle Crashes in Wrentham	358	348	361	196
Vehicle Crashes in Norfolk County	15,014	14,139	14,086	9,500

Source: MassDOT Crash Data Portal

The majority of crashes over the last three years resulted in either a non-fatal injury or property damage in Wrentham. From 2015-2017, there were four locations in Wrentham that were included in MassDOT's top locations where reported collisions occurred. These locations include Route 1A/Winter St/North St, Route 1A/Interstate 495, Route 1A/Premium Outlet Blvd and Route 1/Madison St. Future traffic calming and safety improvements should be prioritized at these locations, as they are consistently high crash locations.

Figure T-6: Wrentham Vehicle Crashes 2019-2021



Source: MAPC, MassGIS, MassDOT

Traffic Operations and Prior Studies

Recommendations from Wrentham's previous Master Plan in 2004 included consideration of better transit access, better roadway safety to reduce crashes and congestion, better pedestrian (sidewalk) and bicycle infrastructure, better roadway standards, improved transit, and studies for improvements along Route 1 and Route 1A (including the Route 1A/I-495 interchange) and for circulation and parking improvements for Wampum Corner and downtown. Studies have been completed for Routes 1 and 1A and downtown (described below), and the town now has better transit service through GATRA. However, the Town still lacks in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and has areas of congestion and crash clusters.

The 2017 Route 1A study, which was conducted by the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) for the Boston Region Metropolitan Organization (MPO), included recommendations for traffic control (including signals and signage) at various intersections, including at I-495 and the Premium Outlets. The study also recommended adding 5-foot shoulders on both sides of Route 1A for bicycle lanes, a continuous sidewalk, and a parallel multiuse path along the utility corridor. The 2018 Route 1 study recommendations included better access management through consolidated driveways and better left-turn lane access. The study also recommended a multiuse path for rolling/walking/cycling parallel to Route 1.

Downtown Circulation

Downtown Wrentham presents the greatest transportation challenge in Town with the intersection of critical streets (Route 1A, Route 140), as well as the presence of key commercial establishments (stores, restaurants, etc.) and recreational nodes (Town Common, Sweatt Park). Issues in the area include morning and afternoon traffic congestion and safety problems with conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. 2017 counts showed that vehicular traffic on Route 1A in downtown averaged 13,000 to 16,000 vehicles per day; however, recent counts by MassDOT both prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic (2016-2020) suggest lower daily traffic volumes of 11,500 to 14,000 vehicles on Route 1A and 9,500 vehicles on Route 140 in downtown. Improving downtown circulation could support local businesses by increasing access to the downtown, and making it safer for people to walk, bike, and use mobility devices throughout the area.

A CTPS study of Wrentham Common in 2009 recommended changes to the downtown traffic flow, including the option of closing David Brown Way in the middle of the Common, realigning other streets, improving sidewalks and crosswalks, changing angled parking to parallel parking, and adding a small rotary at Common Street and Route 1A. The 2017 Route 1A study recommended similar changes in the area, including revising the parking to parallel and installing a traffic signal at Common Street. None of these recommendations have been implemented, and the area continues to have traffic and pedestrian safety challenges.

In 2021, Wrentham completed a COVID-19 Local Rapid Recovery Plan (LRRP), which included recommendations that brought together transportation and economic development. The three transportation-related recommendations were to develop a Complete Streets policy (recommendation #4), to conduct a pedestrian safety audit in downtown Wrentham Center (recommendation #5), and to develop a downtown walking loop feasibility study (recommendation #7). MAPC worked with Town staff and stakeholders from November – December 2021 to advance recommendations 4 and 5; the results of these activities are discussed briefly elsewhere in this chapter and comprehensively in a memo that MAPC provided to Town staff and stakeholders.

A significant challenge the Town faces with implementing safety improvements to the downtown is that both major roads running through this area (Routes 1A and 140) are state-owned. The Town currently has a project initiated in the Boston MPO Transportation Improvement Program process to receive federal funding to make changes more feasible.

Downtown Parking

Wrentham is a vehicle-oriented town with limited transit service and pedestrian or bike infrastructure. However, there is an abundance of parking at destinations of interest, including employment, commercial, and recreational centers. Not having proper management of parking, combined with the lack of non-driving alternatives, can lead to resident or visitor frustration, and can cause a perceived loss of business. However, oversupplying parking can lead to higher development costs and underutilized space and can encourage driving over alternative modes of transportation, which creates more wear and tear on roadways, increases congestion, creates conflicts with walkers, cyclists and other roadway users, and releases more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Significant on-street and off-street public parking is provided in Wrentham Center. Almost all the public parking is free and unrestricted, and some businesses provide their own off-street lots as well. The on-street parking spaces are mostly parallel to the curb, except for a cluster of angled spaces on the west side of Route 1A (South Street). A 2017 study of the Route 1A corridor in Wrentham conducted by the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization recommended that these angled spaces be converted to parallel parking. Drivers backing out of the angled spaces are often unable to see oncoming southbound traffic on Route 1A, and several of these spaces are located immediately adjacent to crosswalks, creating visibility challenges and safety hazards for pedestrians as well.

Off-street public parking in Wrentham Center is provided at Town Hall, as well as in a municipal parking lot with gravel surfacing on the northwest corner of the Route 1A/Route 140 intersection. The parking provided in this lot is abundant but mostly unutilized, likely due to a combination of the poor quality of the lot, the need to cross the heavily trafficked and poorly signalized Route 140 on foot to access local establishments from the lot, and a desire for drivers to park as close as possible to the establishments they patronize. The Town of Wrentham plans to pave and landscape the lot to make it a more attractive option for people driving to the Center.

On-street public parking spaces in Wrentham Center are clearly defined with pavement markings, but just south of the Center on Route 1A, no such markings exist along the wide roadway shoulders there. In the absence of any signage indicating whether parking is allowed, some drivers park along these roadway shoulders, with their parked vehicles sometimes intruding on the grassy verges that separate the pedestrian sidewalks from the roadway. In one instance, the former verge outside a small office building has been paved over to accommodate vehicular parking – even though the building has abundant off-street parking in the back and the existing roadway shoulder provides plenty of space to accommodate informally parked vehicles. A parking study in Wrentham Center would provide insight into how to better manage the overall on- and off-street parking supply, to define some areas where parking may be restricted, and to reconfigure some parking/roadway spaces to better accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

Freight

Wrentham does not have businesses that generate a significant amount of freight traffic. However, both observations by MAPC and comments at Wrentham transportation focus groups noted that a considerable amount of truck traffic from the local quarry and businesses along Franklin Street/Route 140 travel through the downtown area on a regular basis, creating conflicts with pedestrians and local school and neighborhood travel.

There is no mention of Wrentham or this section of I-495 in 2018 Massachusetts Freight Plan, and no critical freight corridors are identified in the 2019 Boston Region MPO Freight Planning Action Plan Update. MAPC's 2021 analysis of e-commerce in Greater Boston noted that the South West Advisory Planning (SWAP) Committee subregion (which includes Wrentham) has experienced growth in the number of Amazon facilities. The continued growth of online retail will likely result in the continued expansion of the number of e-commerce warehouse facilities in Greater Boston.

Current Transportation Improvement Projects

The Town, in partnership with adjacent municipalities and state agencies including MassDOT, has planned for recent transportation improvements. As noted in the Community Facilities and Services chapter, a significant portion of the town's roads are in a serious state of disrepair due to a prolonged lack of funding. It is estimated that more than \$15 million in funding is needed to repair the Town's existing roadways. Through State Aid, which ranges from approximately \$250,000 to \$450,000 each year, the Town can fund a handful of roadway improvement projects. It is estimated that an annual investment of 3 million dollars is needed to maintain the town's roads in their present state.³

- **Boston Region MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** – The TIP is the five-year rolling capital plan for the 97 cities and towns in the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) planning area. The TIP documents all transportation projects that will receive federal funding in the region over the next five years
 - Construction of Route I-495/Route 1A ramps ([TIP page 11](#))
- **MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Grants** – Established in June 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program assists municipalities in meeting their individual needs for more and safer outdoor recreation, commerce, community activities, and mobility.
 - October 2020 - **Wrentham was awarded \$53,797.20** to support outdoor dining and commerce within Wrentham Center, calm traffic, and improve connections to and between key local parks.
- **Wrentham Capital Improvement Plan** – A CIP provides a blueprint for planning a community's capital expenditures. It coordinates community planning, financial capacity, and physical development.
 - FY21 – DPW, Sidewalks Roadways, \$300,000
 - FY22 – Recreation-Rice Complex, Parking Lot Seal Stripe, \$100,000
 - FY22 – Recreation-Rice Complex, Walking Path, \$100,000
 - FY22 – DPW, Sidewalks Roadways, \$300,000

Public Transit

Around 97% of Wrentham households have at least one vehicle, and a vast majority of residents drive for work. Nonetheless, there are transit services in Wrentham that provide vital links for those who cannot drive, including older adults, persons with disabilities, and teenagers who do not yet drive. Moreover, good transit services can allow a household to forego having a vehicle for each worker or adult and can provide a more sustainable option for getting around for daily needs.

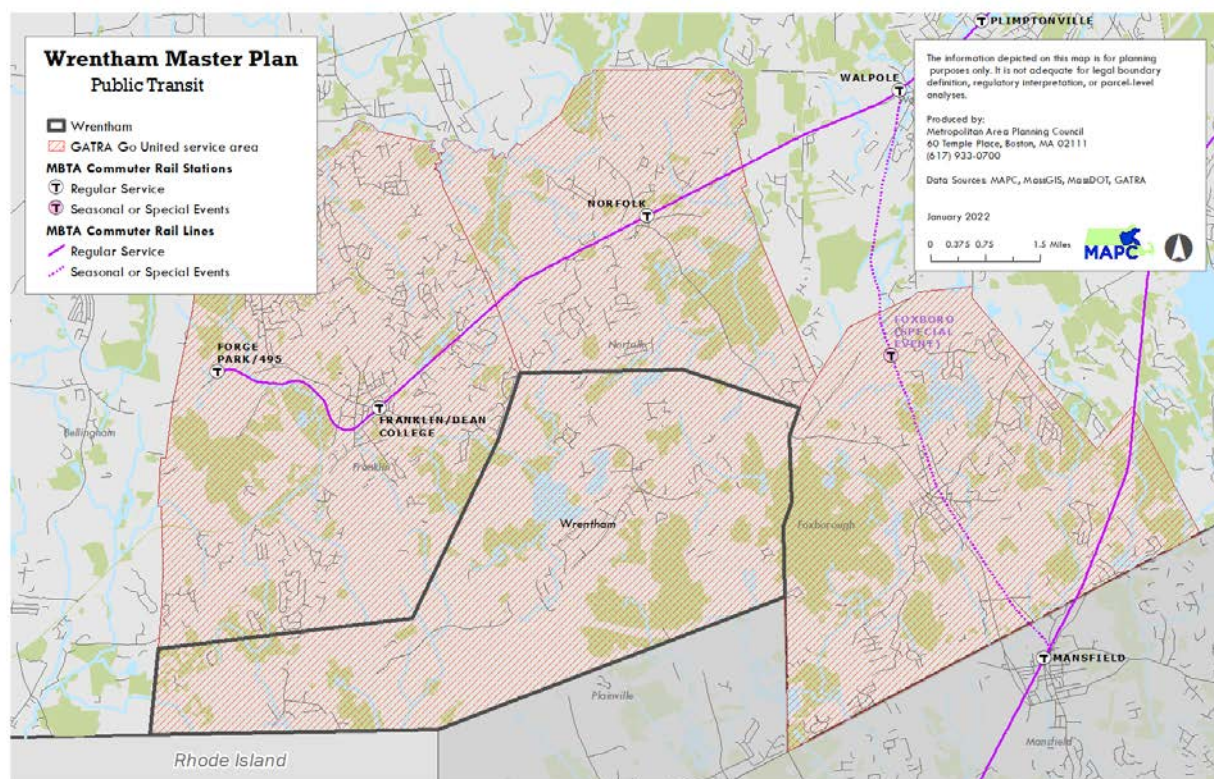
As noted in the Housing chapter from Phase I of the Master Plan, 86% of housing units in Wrentham are single-family. The Town has a small but noteworthy amount of multi-unit housing which includes housing for seniors, people with disabilities, people who have low-incomes, and families. Out of 3,821 housing units in Wrentham, 485 or 12.69% are counted in the Subsidized Housing Inventory. These multi-unit housing developments, as well as housing occupied by residents

³ Town of Wrentham, 2019 Annual Report

less likely to own or drive a vehicle should be a priority for the town to ensure access to transit opportunities, including GATRA's on-demand microtransit service and senior center shuttles, as discussed below.

During Wrentham transportation focus groups conducted in December 2021, there were multiple mentions of gaps in current transportation services. A focus group specific to the aging and disability experience noted the lack of information available to residents about existing services and how to access them. Another focus group specific to public school administration noted that there are numerous families without access to cars, so when services are provided outside of normal school hours, it is very challenging (or impossible) for those families to access those services.

Figure T-7: Wrentham Public Transit



Source: MAPC, MassGIS, MassDOT, GATRA

Bus, Paratransit, and Senior Transportation

Wrentham is served by the Greater Attleboro Transportation Regional Authority (GATRA). GATRA provides the GATRA Go United on-demand microtransit shuttle that services all of Wrentham, plus Franklin, Norfolk, and Foxborough. Residents can travel to and from any destination, with door-to-door service within the four towns in the service area. The service operates Monday-Friday 7 AM to 6 PM and Saturday 9 AM to 6 PM. Between the dates of December 15, 2020 and January 10, 2022, 2,264 Go United trips originated in Wrentham and 2,470 Go United trips ended in Wrentham.

With this service, residents can connect with the MBTA commuter rail in Norfolk and Franklin, as well as other GATRA services such as the Medway T Shuttle (connecting Medway and Norfolk) and the GATRA Go Connect (serving Mansfield, Foxborough and Norton). GATRA also provides dial-a-ride service to other destinations for residents who are seniors (60 and over) or persons with a disability who cannot access other public transportation. Wrentham does not operate its own senior or paratransit service.

The GATRA Go United service replaced GATRA's fixed-route Tri-Town Connector service, which ran from July 2014 to March 2020 before being suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Tri-Town Connector included stops in Wrentham at the Council on Aging, the Liberty Pines housing development, and the commuter parking lot downtown at the intersection of Route 1A/Route 140. While the Tri-Town Connector also provided connections to the MBTA commuter rail in Norfolk, the route suffered from low ridership from the beginning and was seen by GATRA as having too many stakeholders and objectives to serve any of them well. The new GATRA Go United service was thus seen as an opportunity to better meet the needs of the communities of Wrentham, Franklin, Norfolk, and Foxborough in a more flexible fashion.

Commuter Rail

The nearest commuter rail services are in Norfolk and Franklin on the MBTA Franklin Line and Mansfield on the MBTA Providence/Stoughton Line. All three stations are between five and seven miles from downtown Wrentham but have park and ride facilities. As of October 2021, the Franklin line provides weekday hourly service in the mornings and afternoon, with trains every two hours in the middle of the day, with less frequent service on the weekends. A trip between Norfolk and South Station in Boston is around 55 minutes. Mansfield station has hourly service weekdays and trains approximately every two to three hours on weekends, providing a 45-minute travel time to South Station.

TMA and Employee Shuttles

Currently there are no known employee sponsored shuttle, vanpool, or carpool operations in Wrentham. The Neponset Valley Transportation Management Association (TMA) is a partnership that operates employment shuttles, and vanpool/carpool services for members. However, neither the Town nor any Wrentham businesses are members of the TMA.

Walking and Cycling

Wrentham has limited dedicated pedestrian and bicycle facilities, but there are some walking/hiking trails in local forests and parks, including the Trout Pond Conservation Area and Wrentham State Forest. Pedestrian, bicycle and other "rolling" infrastructure provides a safer and more pleasant way for residents to connect with destinations in town, particularly schools, parks, nature preserves, and neighborhood shops and restaurants.

Improving walkability and bikeability throughout Wrentham was the top priority for respondents to the Town's Phase I Master Plan survey in 2020, with 14 percent of respondents listing it as the most important improvement to be made in the Town. Another 8 percent of Phase I respondents listed improving walkability and bikeability in the downtown as the most important improvement. This emphasis on walkability and bikeability was reinforced in the Town's Phase II Master Plan survey in 2022, with 49 percent of Phase II respondents indicating that making it safer to walk

to/within downtown is the one of the most important transportation improvements in Wrentham (second only to 59 percent of respondents highlighting improving safety at high-collision intersections as one of the most important transportation improvements). Making it safer/easier to walk/bike to school (selected by 45 percent of respondents) and making it safer/easier to walk throughout town (selected by 38 percent of respondents) also rated highly as important transportation improvements. Creating a walking loop from downtown and around the lakes was one of the recommendations in the Economic Development chapter from Phase I of the Master Plan. Furthermore, conducting a pedestrian safety audit in downtown Wrentham Center and conducting a feasibility study for a downtown walking loop that would connect businesses, schools and recreation facilities were recommended in Wrentham's 2021 Local Rapid Recovery Plan (LRRP) for COVID-19. In December 2021, MAPC worked with Town staff and other stakeholders to lay the groundwork for the pedestrian safety audit. Audit participants will build a shared understanding of the elements that comprise a walkable community, observe pedestrian safety conditions in Wrentham Center through an on-site walk, and recommend improvements to the built environment that improve pedestrian safety, accessibility, and comfort for all.

Pedestrian infrastructure improvements in Wrentham Center would advance the goals of the Village Center Overlay District passed by Town Meeting in 2018, which sought to create a more walkable and vibrant downtown. Pedestrian and bicycle issues in Wrentham Center and throughout Wrentham more broadly have been studied extensively in the past, with the Central Transportation Planning Staff of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization conducting a corridor study of Route 1A in Wrentham in 2017 and a Wrentham Common traffic safety report in 2009. Both documents recommended bicycle and pedestrian improvements to be implemented at various locations in the Town to enhance safety and accessibility. The forthcoming pedestrian safety audit presents an opportunity to mobilize the Wrentham community to support these and other changes.

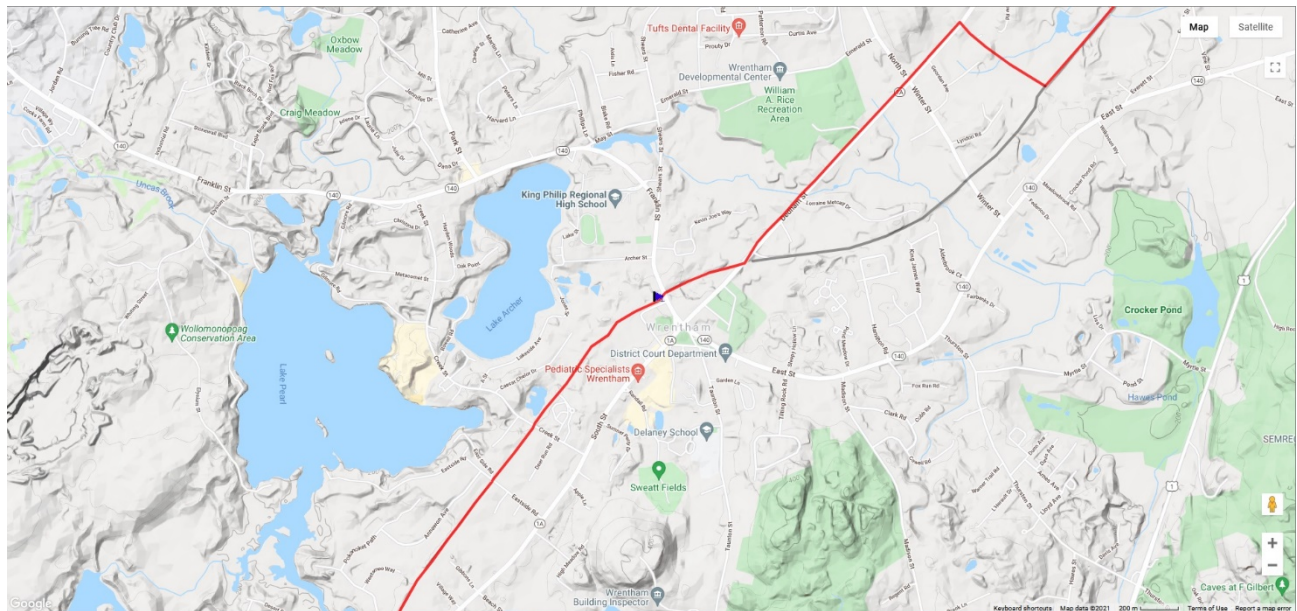
MassDOT's Complete Streets program (described later in this chapter) also provides a potential vehicle for the Town to advance multimodal transportation projects that support increased walking and biking, as well as transit. In December 2021, MAPC worked with Town staff and the Board of Selectmen to lay the groundwork for passing a local Complete Streets policy, as recommended in the 2021 LRRP. At the end of 2021, the Town executed a letter of intent to pass a Complete Streets policy within one year.

LandLine Greenway Network

The [LandLine Regional Greenway Network](#) is being developed by MAPC in partnership with each of the region's 101 communities. The greenway corridors identified as part of this regional network are planned to be prioritized for active transportation use and are separate from vehicular traffic to the greatest extent feasible, or traffic calmed to allow for sharing the road.

LandLine and local advocates envision a regional trail from Norwood to Plainville using the unused rail bed that once served Wrentham; this is sometimes known as the proposed [Metacomet Greenway](#) extending from Wrentham to North Attleboro. This trail would then connect with other trails in Walpole, Norfolk, Foxborough, and Plainville. LandLine would also connect foot paths in Wrentham State Forest with other trails to create a regional footpath to Foxborough and beyond. The Metacomet Greenway corridor is also noted in the Open Space, Recreation, and Natural Resources chapter of this Master Plan.

Figure T-8: Route of Proposed Metacomet Greenway through Wrentham



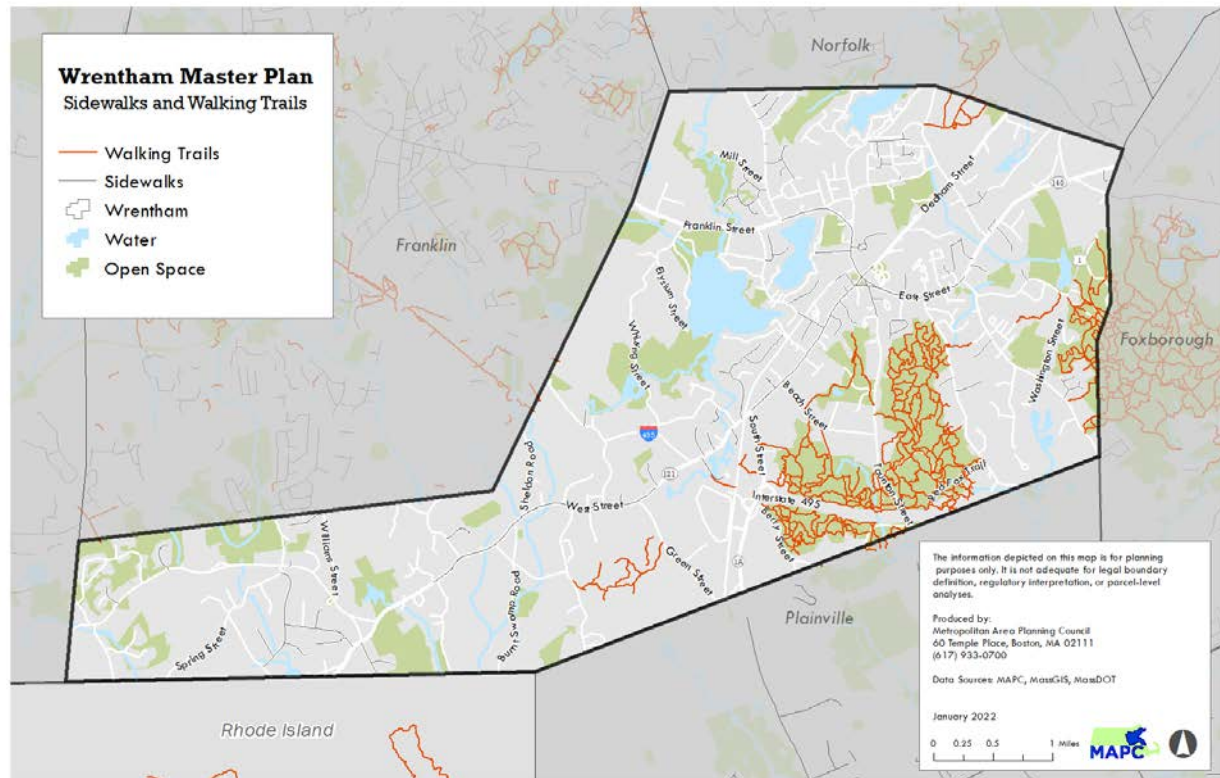
Screenshot taken from www.metacometgreenway.org

Sidewalks and Bicycle Facilities

Around only 25% of Wrentham's streets have sidewalks on at least one side and only 2% have sidewalks on both sides of the street. Most of the existing sidewalk network is centered around downtown and Route 1A south of downtown. Key crosstown streets (including large portions of Taunton Street, Route 140 and Sharon Street) lack sidewalks, as do many streets connecting with local destinations such as Sweatt Beach, the Wrentham Senior Center, and the Premium Outlets.

As noted above, there are foot trails in area recreation areas such as Wrentham State Forest. There are no bicycle facilities in Wrentham, including none connecting to local schools. Figure T-9 shows the existing sidewalk and trail network in Wrentham.

Figure T-9: Wrentham Sidewalks and Walking Trails



Source: MAPC, MassGIS, MassDOT

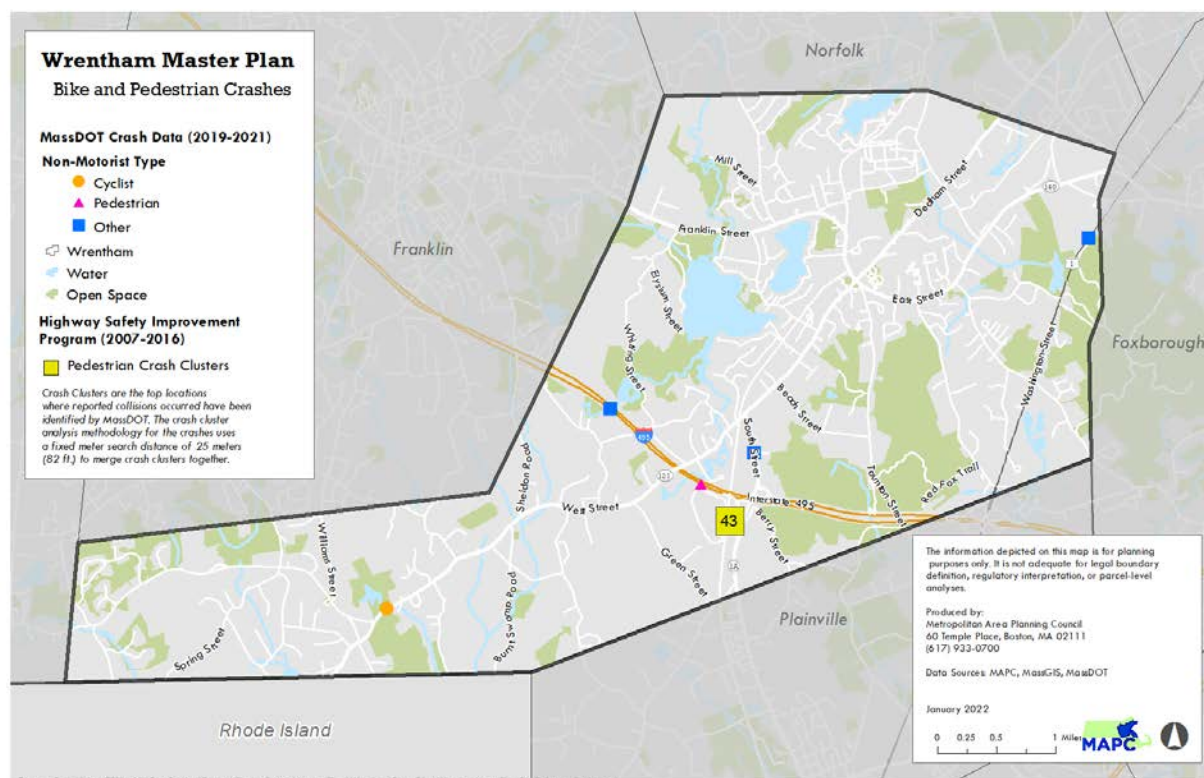
Complete Streets Program

Complete Streets are those that provide safe and accessible options for all travel modes (walking, biking, transit, and motorized vehicles) and for people of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets can improve safety, health, and neighborhood livability by reducing the severity and number of crashes and by promoting walking, running, and cycling. The MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program was created to reward municipalities that demonstrate a commitment to embedding Complete Streets in policy and practice. Communities that have a Complete Streets policy and prioritization plan are eligible for technical assistance and funding for projects through MassDOT's Complete Streets program.

Wrentham has not adopted a complete streets policy nor a prioritization plan. All the towns abutting Wrentham – Bellingham, Franklin, Norfolk, Foxborough, and Plainville – have both adopted a policy and prioritization plan and are thus eligible for technical assistance and project funding through MassDOT's Complete Streets program. Developing a Complete Streets policy was recommended in Wrentham's 2021 Local Rapid Recovery Plan for COVID-19. In December 2021, MAPC worked with Town staff and the Board of Selectmen to lay the groundwork for passing a local Complete Streets policy. At the end of 2021, the Town executed a letter of intent to pass a Complete Streets policy within one year. This will enable the Town to pursue technical assistance funding for a prioritization plan concurrent to the policy development.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Data

Figure T-10: Wrentham Bike and Pedestrian Crashes



Source: MAPC, MassGIS, MassDOT

Safe Routes to School

The Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program, a program under MassDOT, works to increase safe biking and walking among elementary and middle school students throughout the state. The program exists in approximately 65 percent of Massachusetts schools. SRTS utilizes the six E's to implement its program- Education, Encouragement, Engagement, Evaluation, Engineering, and Equity. The program can provide technical assistance with important school planning measures like arrival/dismissal plans, walk and bike audits, and developing safe walking and biking routes for students.

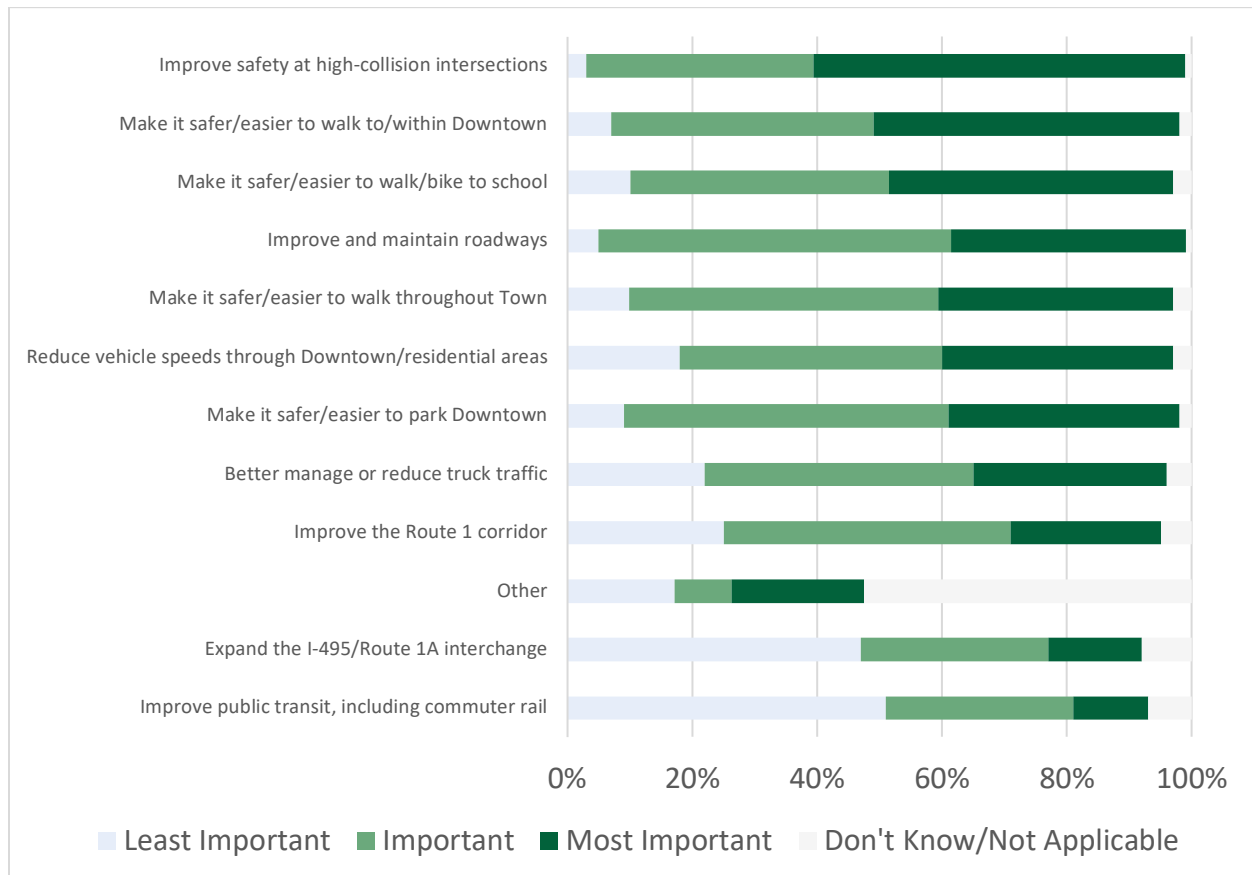
In Wrentham, 2 schools were partnered with SRTS in 2021. The schools partnering with SRTS include the Delaney School and the Roderick Elementary School, which are both located half a mile from Wrentham Center. SRTS programs at the Delaney and Roderick schools could improve arrival and dismissal traffic, as well as increase student physical activity before and after school.

In 2021, Wrentham submitted a project application to the Safe Routes to School Program for improvements at the intersection of Route 1A and Randall Road. This location is a critical pedestrian access point for children walking to and from the Roderick and Delaney Schools, yet the crosswalk at this location is deficient and in need of significant safety upgrades.

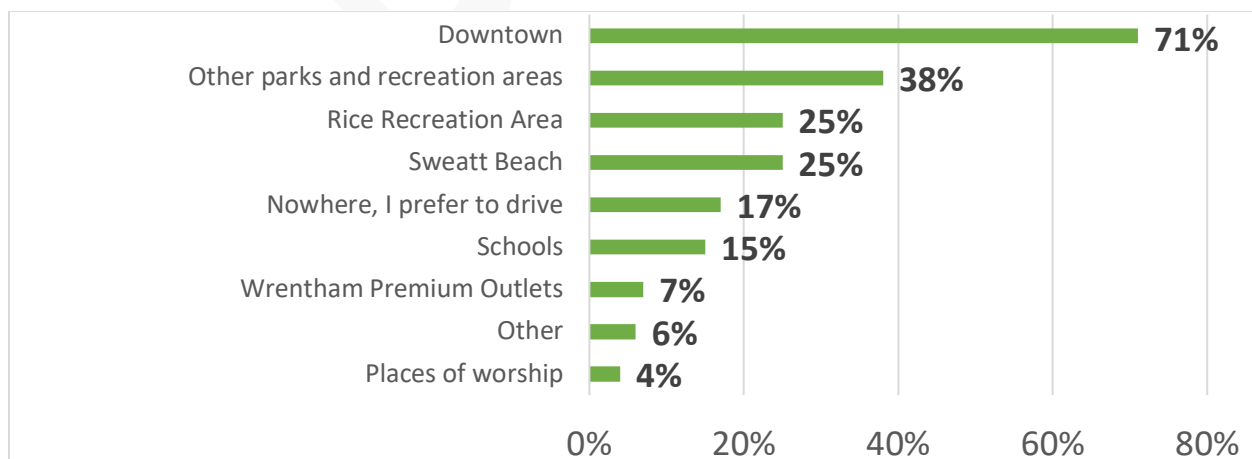
Community engagement

The Phase II Community Survey conducted in November-December 2021, included several questions focused on transportation.

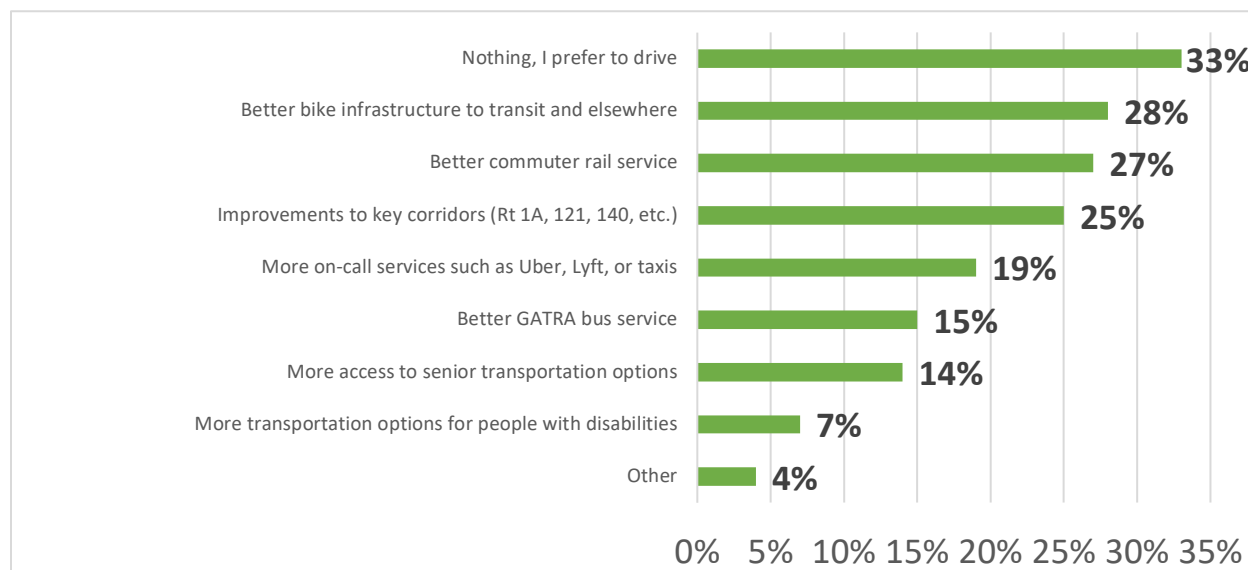
Survey respondents were asked to rank results below, answering: **What transportation improvements are most important?**



Survey respondents were asked to choose up to 3 responses with the results below, answering: **Where would you go more often if it were easier to get there via walking, biking, or transit?**



Survey respondents were asked to choose up to 3 responses with the results below, answering: **What would make it easier to make longer-distance trips from Wrentham to adjacent towns, Boston, and Providence?**



Survey respondents were asked to choose locations on a map below, answering: **Where should roadway improvements be prioritized?**

