

Master Plan Steering Committee

Meeting #5

August 8, 2023





Agenda

Survey findings

Forum wrap-up - small businesses

Key takeaways existing conditions

Refined vision statement

Looking ahead to fall

Next steps





Norfolk Master Plan Steering Committee

Joe Burke, Resident Eric Diamond, Planning Board Dan Feyock, Resident Erin Hunt, Resident Kevin Kalkut, Select Board Melissa Meo, Planning Board Chris Montfort, Planning Board Chad Peck, Planning Board Jen Pittore, Resident Gary Sullivan, Planning Board John Weddleton, Planning Board Master Plan Ambassadors will also be a part of the process:

Charles Iacono, Resident

Colby Fillippelli, Resident





Introduction MAPC Team



Principal in Charge

Josh Fiala AIA AICP LEED AP

Urban Design, Zoning



Project Manager

Andrea Harris-Long AICP

Land Use/Housing



Community Engagement Gloria Huangpu Demographics



Gurdeep Kaur AICP Economic Development



Travis Pollack AICP *Transportation*



Adi Nochur Transportation



Abbey JuddArts and Culture



Lindsay RandallHistoric Preservation



Courtney Lewis
Open Space, Sustainability



Alexa DeRose
Data Services



Brian LutherCommunity Facilities/Services



Sarai Zelada Public Health



Survey findings THE TUTE

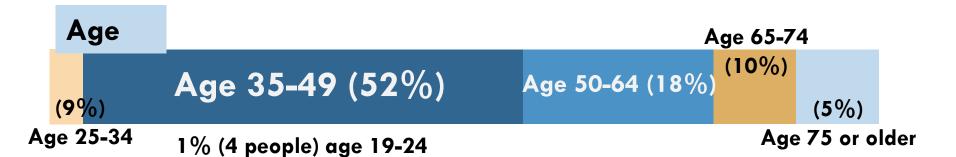
Survey Findings

Excellent response from the community

- 964 online
- 36 paper/scanned copies
- Total of 1,001 responses!
- As of 12/31/22 there are 7,788 registered voters in Norfolk. The survey reached about 1 out of every 8 registered voters!







Race/Ethnicity

- 83% of respondents identify as white.
- About 50 people of color participated.
- 10% preferred not to answer.

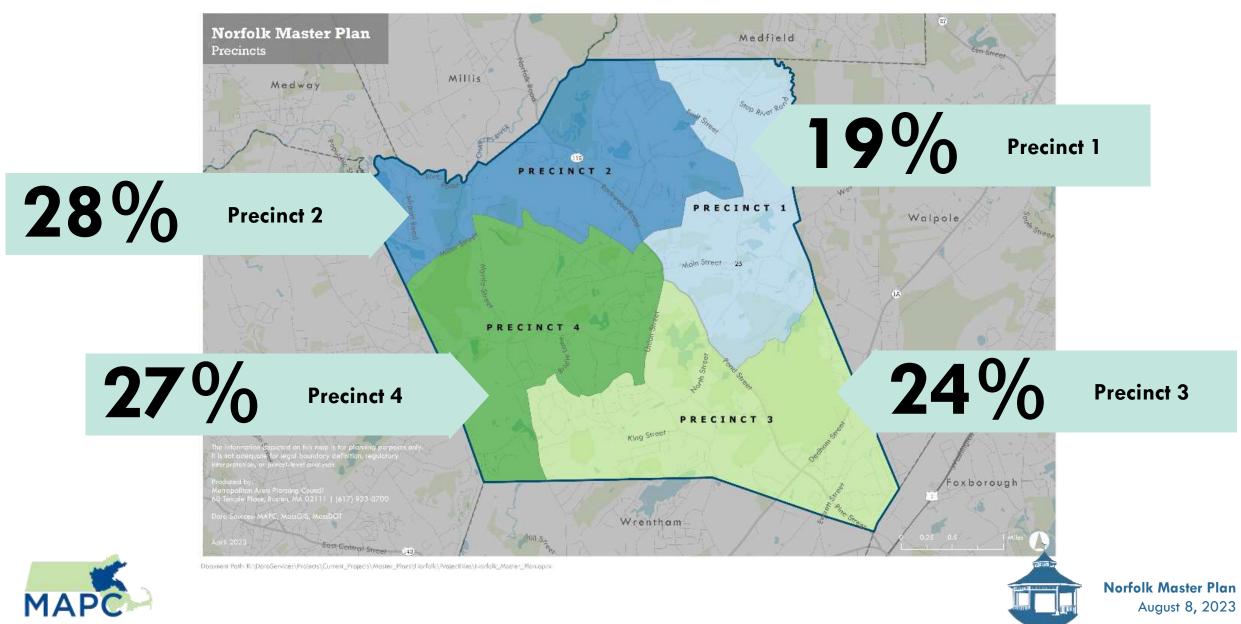


416 Households with children under 18

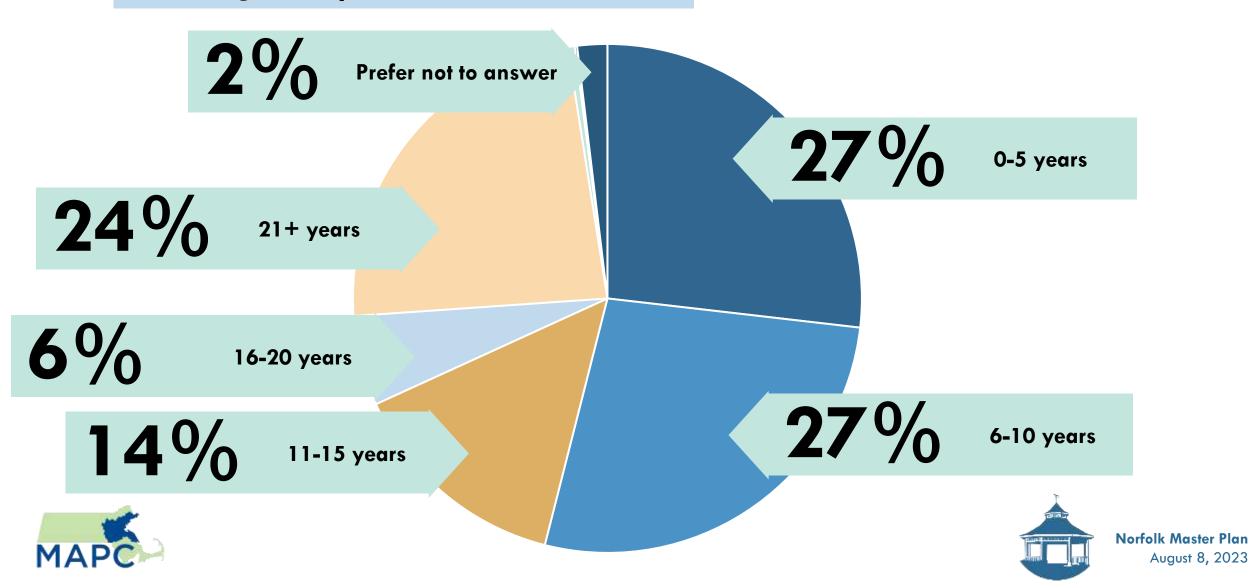
96% Homeowners







How long have you lived in Norfolk?



80% of respondents have not participated in any Master Plan events.

Virtual participation was most frequently mentioned by 41% of respondents to help attend meetings in Town



of respondents heard about the survey through Facebook.



Norfolk Community Survey: Top 3 Challenges

- 1. Managing growth and change 51% of responses (509 people)
- 2. Attracting new investment and development 41% of responses (411)
- 3. Expanding Town amenities 36% of responses (361)
- 4. Preserving/conserving natural resources/features 25% of responses (248)
- 5. Maintaining Town facilities, services, and amenities 22% of responses (221)

Write-in comments most frequently referenced taxes (33 comments), economic development (28 comments), and development (17 comments)



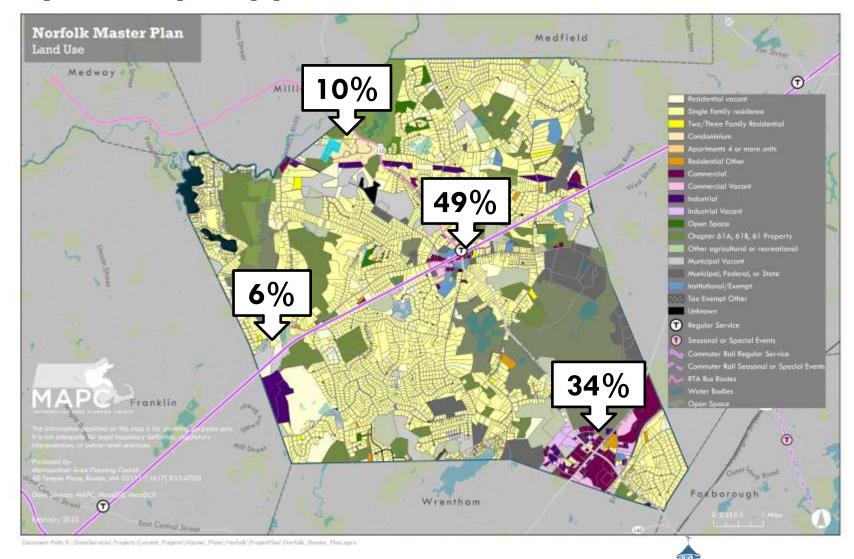


Norfolk Community Survey: Opportunities

"Single-family to two family conversions or ADUs"

> "Clean up some of the rundown strip malls in town center"

"Town center improvement will create a stronger community...better voter turnout, increased patronage of small businesses"

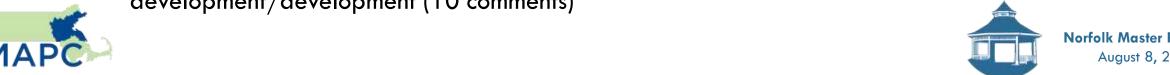




Norfolk Community Survey: Opportunities

- 1. Commercial investments to expand local services like restaurants, coffee shops, hair salons, etc. 69% of responses (692 people)
- 2. Community events like farmer's market, pop-up cultural events, food trucks, etc. 47% of responses (467)
- 3. Public amenities like parks, sidewalks, etc. 40% of responses (400)
- 4. Commercial investments to expand job opportunities 27% of responses (267)
- 5. Mixed-use developments (ground-floor commercial with apartments) 21% (211)

Write-in comments most frequently referenced grocery store (11 comments), and economic development/development (10 comments)



Norfolk Community Survey: What originally attracted you to live in Norfolk?

- Small town and semi-rural feel (51%)
- Quality schools and family-oriented (43%)
- Quality of housing and neighborhoods (36%)

Written comments noted that affordability is an issue and the proximity to Boston via the commuter rail was appealing.





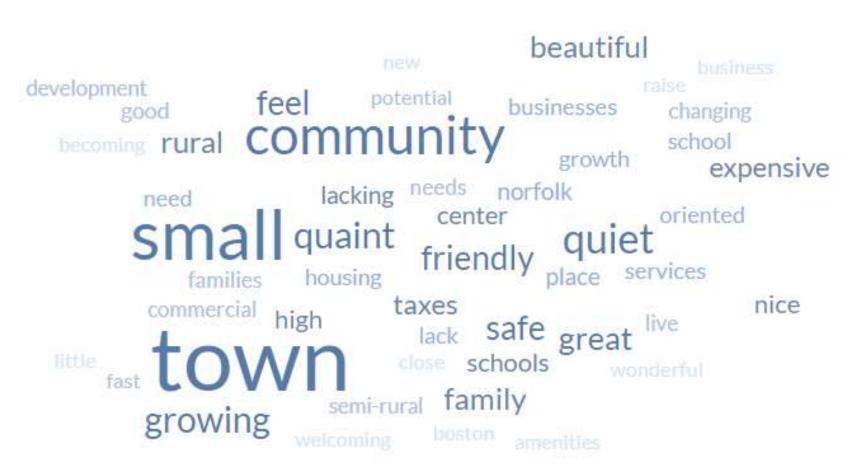
Norfolk Community Survey: Top 5 Assets

- 1. Homes and neighborhoods 44% of responses
- 2. Schools 40% of responses
- 3. Sense of community and neighbors 40% of responses
- 4. Proximity to Boston and Providence 36% of responses
- 5. Open spaces (Pond Street Athletic Complex, Stony Brook) 35% of responses





Norfolk Community Survey: What words describe Norfolk today?



Word	Count
Town	172
Small	124
Community	87
Quiet	56
Quaint	47
Growing	45
Safe	40
Friendly	40
Feel	38
Great	36
Family	34
Beautiful	33
Rural	32
Taxes	28
Expensive	27





Norfolk Community Survey: Top Challenge by Topic

- Transportation Options for walking, better sidewalks (76%)
- Land use, economic development, housing Attracting and supporting investment in Town Center (81%)
- Community facilities and services Continue to invest in schools to meet future needs (63%)
- Open space, recreation, and sustainability Need for more trails or amenities as conservation lands (58%)
- Historical and cultural resources Need for additional cultural events (42%)
- Community health Promoting an active lifestyle (51%)







Norfolk Small Business Association Meeting Monday, June 26th at 7:00 pm

- Nine business owners in attendance
- Themes from discussion
 - Many home-based businesses because it's hard to find commercial spaces that meet business needs and are affordable
 - Limits expansion opportunities
 - Opportunity for co-op / incubator business services
 - Like the small-town feel it's what attracted newer business owners
 - Noted challenges around promoting business to community-at-large
 - Opportunity to partner with Town to promote business community
 - Signage bylaw work
 - Small business association offers a great community benefit
 - Paralleled lack of starter homes in Norfolk to lack of starter space for businesses

Opportunities for continued engagement:

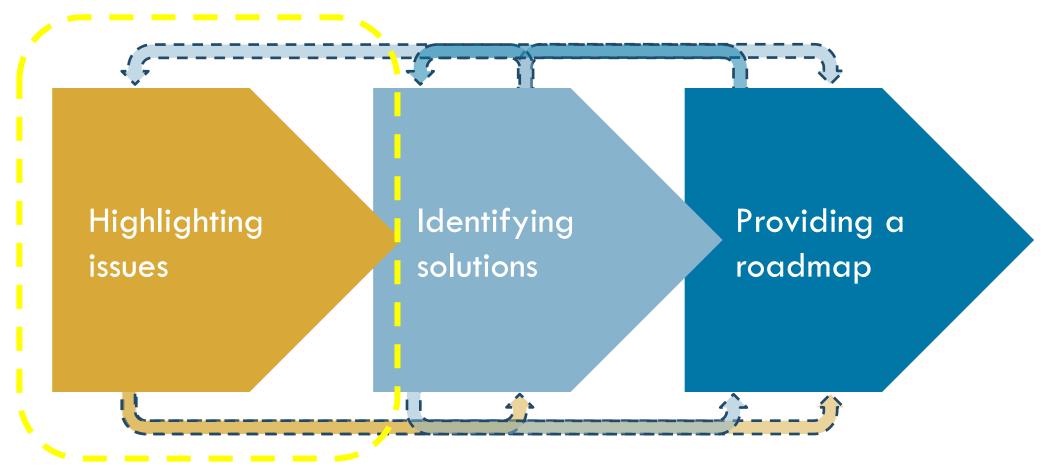
- September 9 Discovery Day at Town Hill (4-7 pm)
- Fall focus group to follow up with business owners







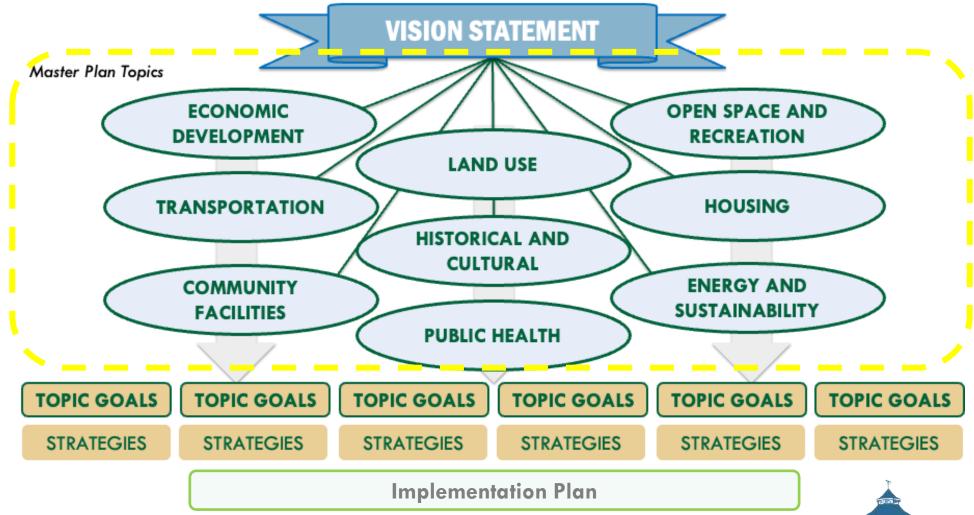
Norfolk Master Plan Emerging Themes







Norfolk Master Plan Topic Summaries



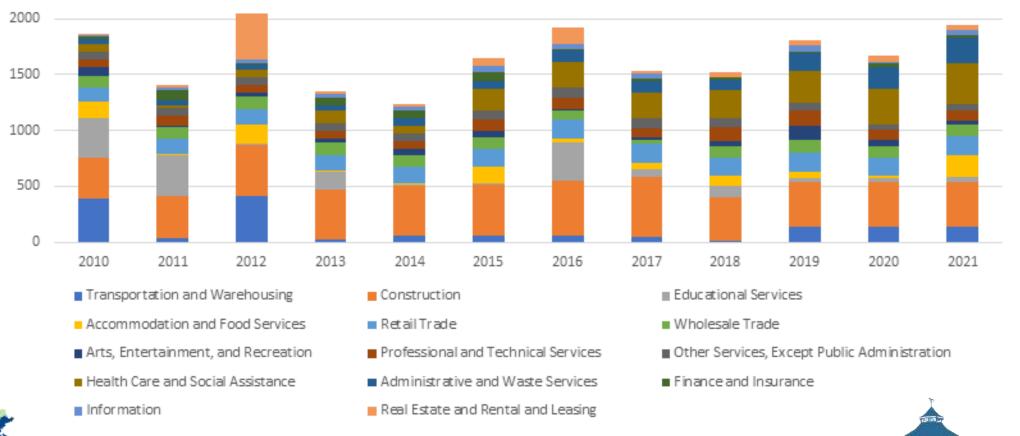


Economic Development

- Many residents are relatively affluent. 96% of residents are homeowners. The median home value of owner-occupied units is \$563,800. The median household income is \$168,281. The reported poverty rate is 1.8%. (2021 dollars, 2017-2021 American Community Survey, US Census)
- Few people both live and work in Norfolk. 1,519 workers come into Norfolk on a daily basis. 182 Norfolk residents stay in town for work. The majority (3,965 Norfolk workers) of Norfolk workers leave town for work. There is a general lack of well-paying jobs in the Town. Norfolk residents have higher commute times (38.7 minutes compared to 29.6 minutes statewide)
- Lack of local amenities and services as an economic driver and tax
 contributor. Few locally-owned storefronts contribute to a lack of diverse municipal revenue sources. Lack of public sewer is a barrier.

Economic Development

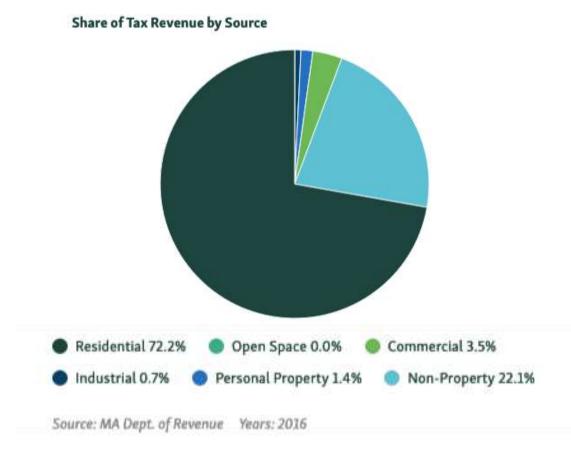
 Construction and Healthcare and Social Assistance have been consistently large industries in establishments and employment in Norfolk





Economic Development

Tax burden on residents is voiced as a frequent concern among residents



Average Single Family Tax Bill	
Average Tax Bill	
\$6,724	
\$7,121	
\$7,177	
\$7,458	
\$8,078	
\$8,551	
\$8,734	
\$9,750	
\$12,555	



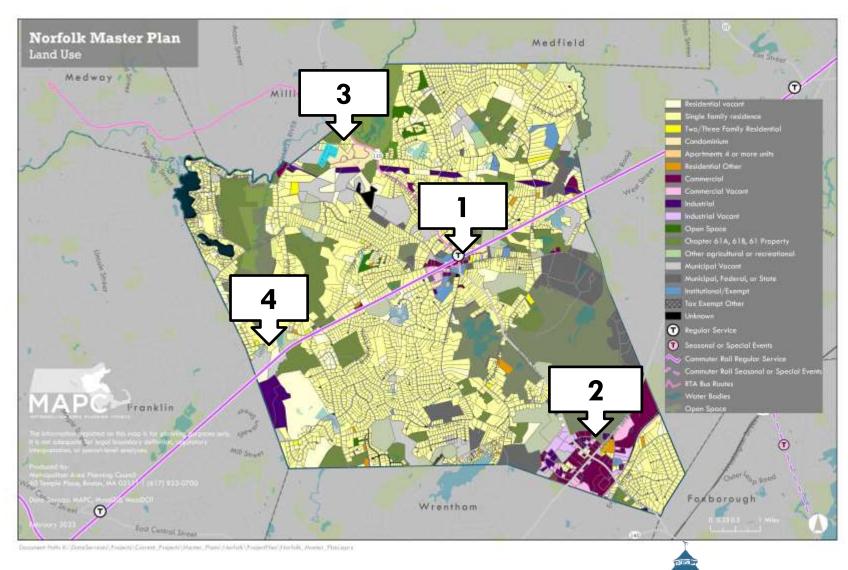
Source: MA Department of Revenue Division of Local Services FY2022



Economic Development – Community Feedback

Priority areas for economic development in Norfolk to:

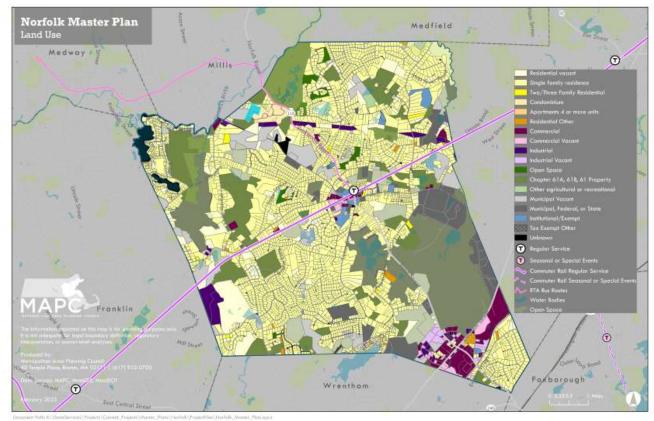
- Support small businesses
- Redevelop former industrial properties
- Increase predictability of development and growth





Land Use

- 42% of Norfolk's land area is residential, primarily zoned for single-family homes.
- The B-1 Zoning in Town Center promotes commercial uses and a mix of other uses including residential near Norfolk's Commuter Rail station.
- Route 115/1A serves as the Town's largest cluster of commercial properties and includes the former Southwood Hospital property.
- Many open space resources are compactly distributed throughout Town within a ½ radius of Town Center





Land Use

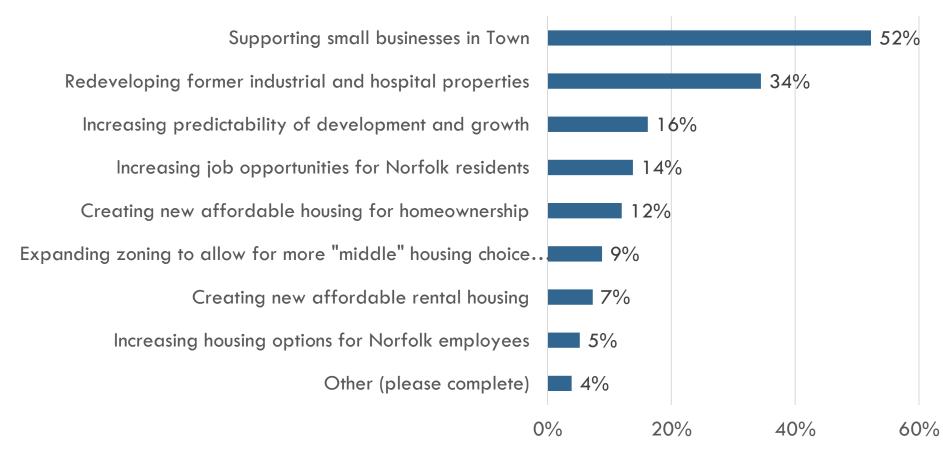
- Residents are concerned about the type, scale, and location of future growth and how public services will keep pace with it.
- Growth will continue to occur, but the largest and densest development will likely occur outside of the Town's control through 40B.
- Growth patterns with predominantly lower density residential will present long term challenges for maintenance of less efficient roadway, water, and other infrastructure systems.
- Non-residential or mixed-use growth opportunities face barriers with limited infrastructure and market support.





Land Use

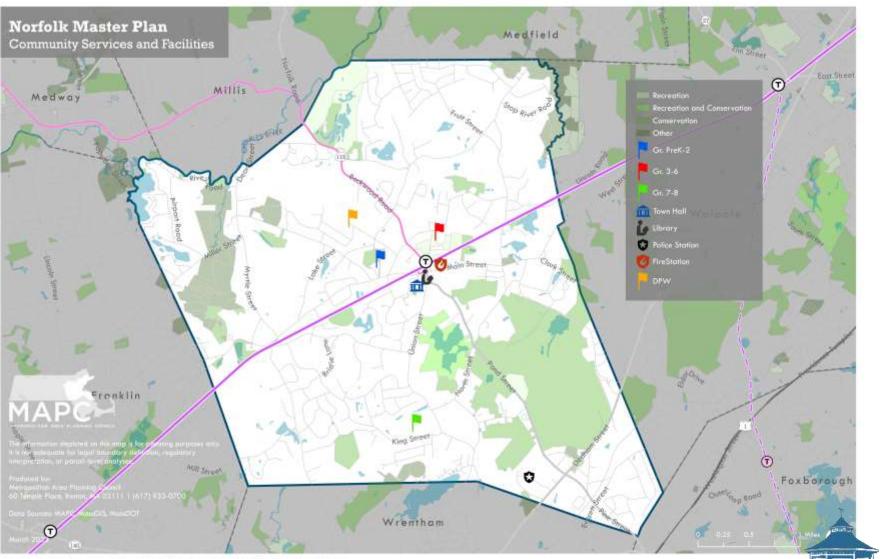
Survey Q: What are the primary challenges for land use, economic development, and housing?





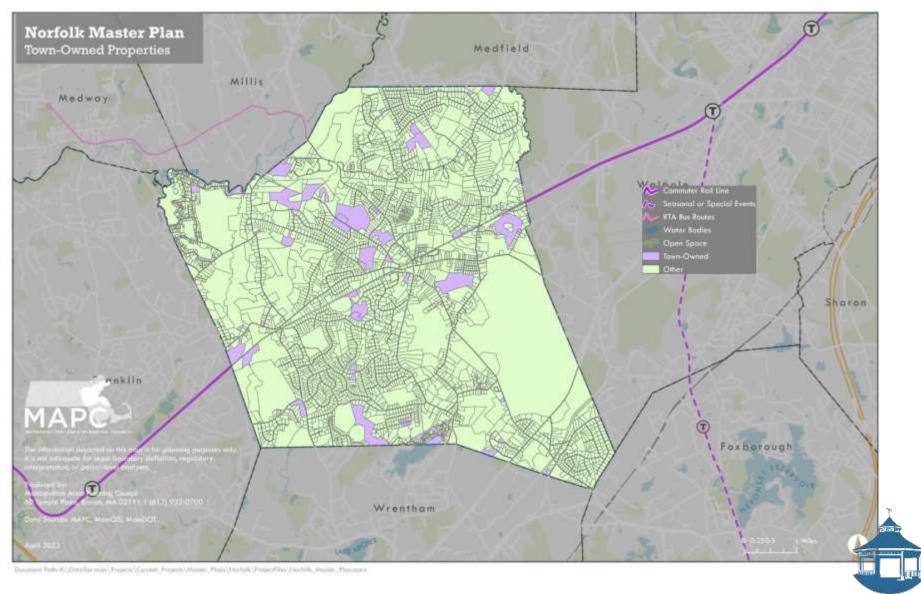


Open Space and Recreation





Open Space and Recreation





Open Space and Recreation

Survey Q: What are primary challenges?

- 38% (392 people) want more trails or amenities in conservation lands
- 25% (269 people) are concerned about loss of undeveloped land
- 24% (238 people) want more playgrounds and parks with amenities
- 10% (144 people) want improved accessibility for people with disabilities

"A brochure with maps of all existing open space, trails and recreation fields, with maps both in hard copy and online"

"Leverage state opportunities for conservation while also increasing trails and sidewalks. We know that when people are out of their cars, they patronize small businesses more often. We don't need to be a pass-through town."

Several suggestions for specific new recreation spaces (pool, splash pads, pickleball courts, etc.)



- Over 90% of Norfolk households have at least one vehicle; however, there are between 50 to 100 zero vehicle households.
- Approximately 69% of Norfolk residents drive to work, with 8% taking transit and 21% working from home. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, almost 80% of residents drove, 10% used transit, and 8% worked from home.
- Despite the increase in residents working from home, Norfolk has seen a 19% increase in vehicle miles traveled, likely due to more people driving locally for daily needs and rebounding numbers of residents driving to work. The Town has also experienced a moderate increase in vehicular crashes.
- Fewer than a third of the Town's streets have sidewalks, and many are unlinked and do not always connect to Town schools, parks, or other destinations.

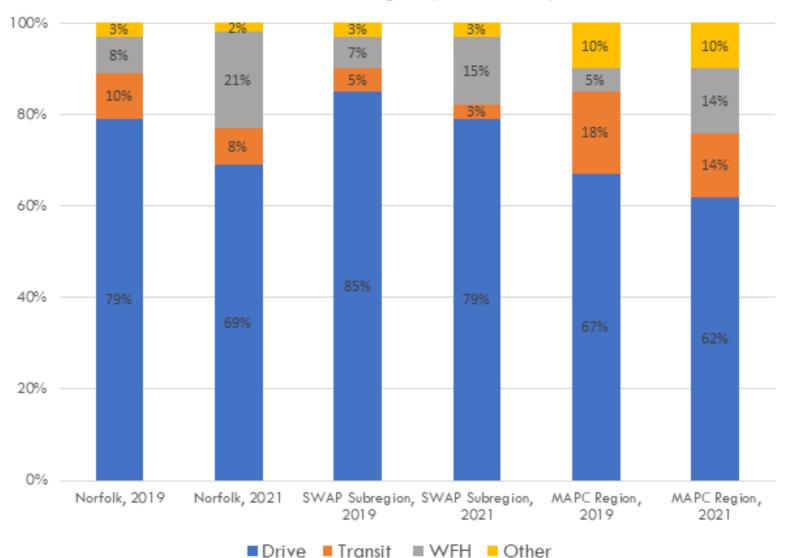
August 8, 2023

- Residents desire different ways to get around beyond driving in a personal vehicle. Expanding transportation options will have long-term effects on traffic, pollution, personal wealth, and public health.
- Norfolk adopted a Complete Streets policy, but there have been challenges to implementation
- Minimal access to public transportation (aside from the commuter rail)
 limits how young people, elderly, and people with lower incomes can meet
 their needs in Norfolk
- Opportunity to better connect land use decisions (like parking and smart growth zoning) to transportation infrastructure decisions



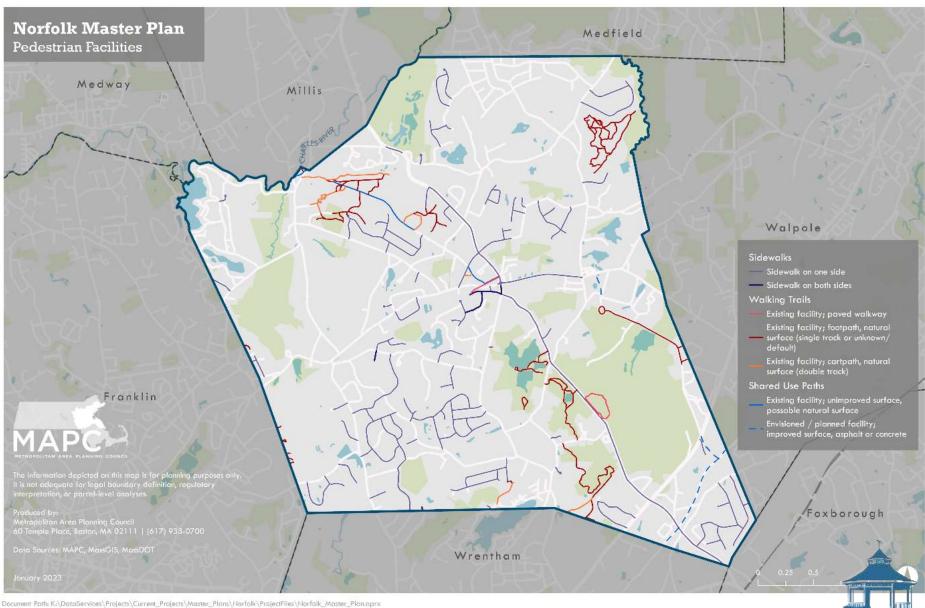


Changes in Work Commute Modes, Norfolk and Region (2019-2021)



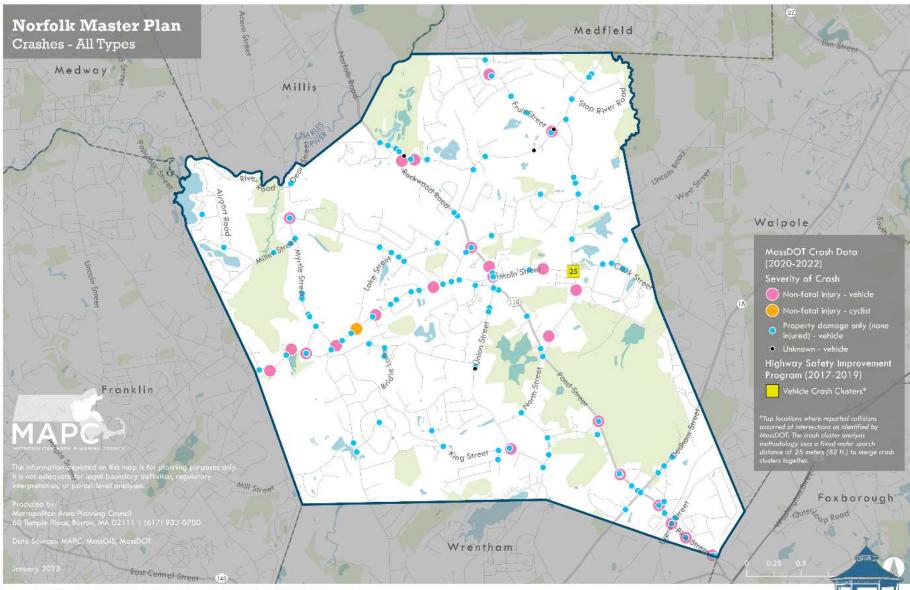








Transportation





Norfolk Master Plan August 8, 2023

Transportation

Survey Q: What are the primary challenges?

- 59% (591 people) want more options for walking, better sidewalks
- 39% (386 people) want more options for biking, better trails or bike lanes
- 29% (287 people) want improved roadway and infrastructure conditions
- 14% (140 people) want better regional connections to Boston (e.g., commuter rail)
- Traffic congestion and improved local bus service was less of a priority

"Commuter rail should have an earlier train"

"Need for traffic lights at some intersections (Seekonk/Needham and Main)"

"Bus service along Rt. 1 A to Wrentham Outlets and Walpole"

"Extend Rt. 115 sidewalk to River's Edge"

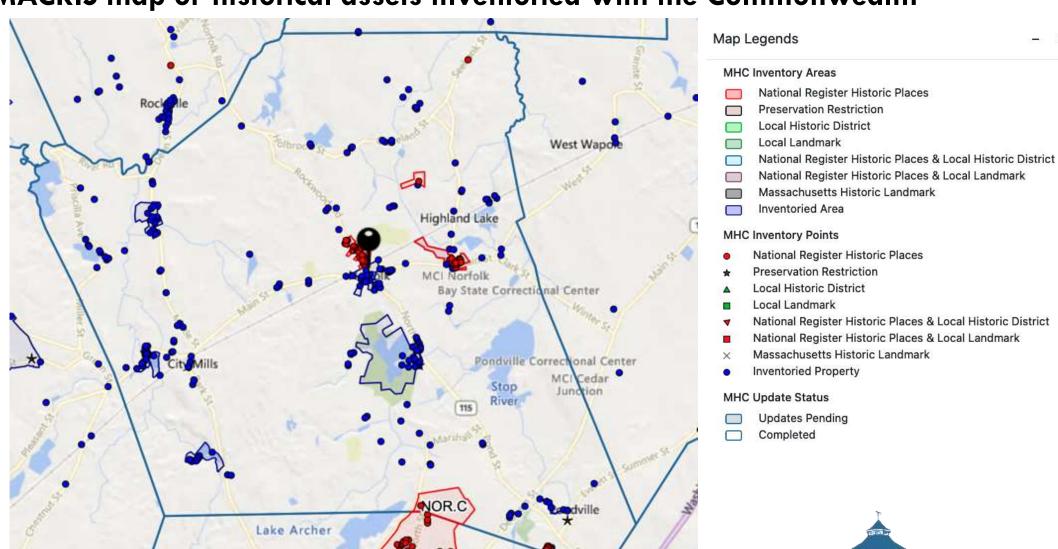


"The Ride" should come to Norfolk"



- 343 historic and cultural sites inventoried in the MA Historical Commission
- 3 National Register Districts (Wrentham State School, Rockwood Road, Sullivan's Corner)
- 3 properties with preservation restrictions
- Cultural Council distributed \$7,200 in grants in 2022
- 93 jobs in the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector
- The majority of Town funding set aside for culture and recreation goes to the library and recreation depts. Less than \$1,000 went to the Historical Commission.

MACRIS map of historical assets inventoried with the Commonwealth







- Norfolk could benefit from an interpretative framework that establishes a structure for documenting and sharing all facets of Norfolk's history, beginning pre-European colonization
- Applying a comprehensive approach to management of Norfolk's historic assets can help the Town prioritize what is most valued.
- While Norfolk has adopted Community Preservation Act, it has been challenging to use these funds for historic preservation.
- Lack of understanding how history and culture connect to economic development
- Cultural programming is highly valued by residents





Survey Q: What are primary challenges?

- Overall, lack of interest in this topic compared to other questions
- Combined 27% (273 people) see a lack of capacity or support for historic preservation projects and cultural programming
- 23% (228 people) want more cultural events
- 21% (210 people) note there's a lack of complete historical narrative
- 16% (156 people) was additional protection for historical resources





Housing

- Housing affordability and stability impacts a quarter of Norfolk households (based on those who are cost-burdened or paying more than 30% of income on housing)
- Norfolk's share of deed-restricted affordable housing is small and has shrunk
 - Subsidized housing inventory decreased from 6% to 4.21%; overall total number of units dropped from 187 to 151
- The Town has employed tools to expand housing options, including establishing an Affordable Housing Trust; adopting the Community Preservation Act; and adopting inclusionary zoning
- Very few rental options and smaller (studio or 1-bedroom) options





Housing

Survey Q: When asked about housing opportunities...

- 10% (211 people) prefer mixed-use developments
- 4% (97 people) want expanded "middle housing" options
- 1% (29 people) want higher-density options like larger apartment complexes

"Our children who we raised in Norfolk but can not afford, housing costs are outrageous! They have had to move to different towns, it is a shame."

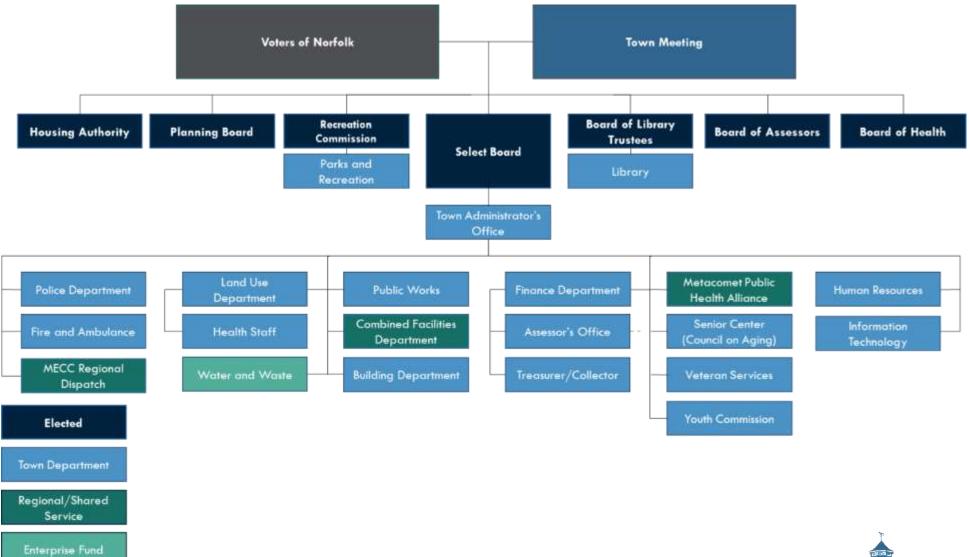




- Norfolk relies on residents to serve on its 22 Boards and Committees
- The Norfolk Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) listed over \$18 Million in project requests for FY23 and over \$89 Million over the next 5 years.
- The Town of Norfolk maintains an AA+ bond credit rating.
- Norfolk maintains 9 public buildings that total 292,013 square feet.
- Norfolk owns and maintains 82 vehicles with an average age of 10.7 years.
- Within the 15 square miles of Norfolk, there are over 90 miles of roadways, with 74.18 miles of town-owned roadways and 1.4 miles of state roadways managed by MassDOT, and 10.8 miles of privately owned roadways.
- The Norfolk IT department supports 150 users and maintains 200 email accounts.
- Norfolk maintains two enterprise funds for Water and Sewer services.
- Norfolk's Facilities Department is shared between the School District and the Municipality



- Over last ten Town Meetings average attendance is just over two percent of registered voters
- While the Town's financial management has been good, there's a lack of external facilities assessment work to inform capital investments. This can help ensure public assets are maintained over time to maximize investments.
- Accessibility of town information and physical access to facilities and public infrastructure could be improved
- Residents demand a variety of new and enhanced public services,
 which will be costly to achieve without considering alternative revenue
 sources





Survey Q: What are the primary challenges?

- 22% (459 people) want continued school investments
- 17% (358 people) want continued infrastructure investments
- 16% (345 people) want efficient use of current buildings, properties, and facilities

"...Transfer center and the library don't have hours suitable for people who work outside of town."

"Use the senior center on off hours for other purposes"

"We don't need more buildings...properly increase utilizing what we have"

"Use union contractors in Town buildings"

Equity considerations in written responses note service needs for seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, and special needs families

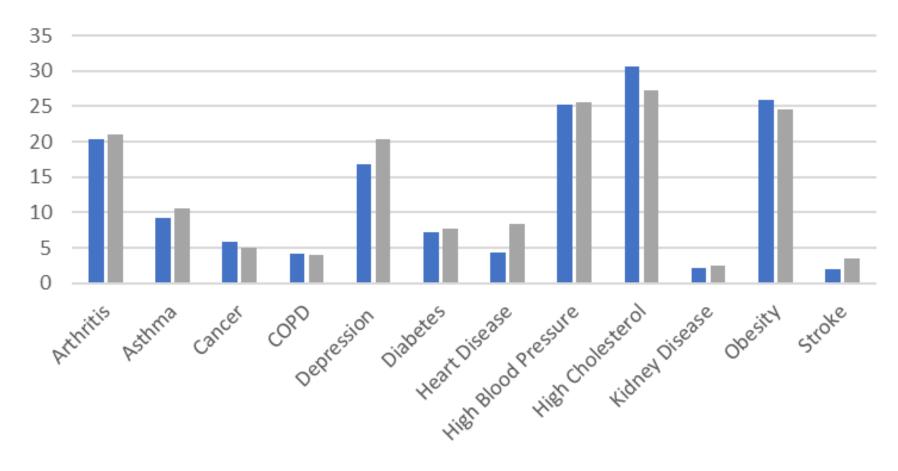


- Healthier outcomes compared to other communities in Massachusetts
 - Slightly higher participation in risky health behaviors
- Norfolk Board of Health and Metacomet Public Health Alliance are the primary entities addressing environmental and community health issues.
- Residents have noted limited access to medical facilities, which is a significant concern for overall community health access and outcomes.
- Youth and elderly populations are likely facing additional health challenges, but it hard to know exactly due to limited local level health data.





Norfolk Health Outcomes





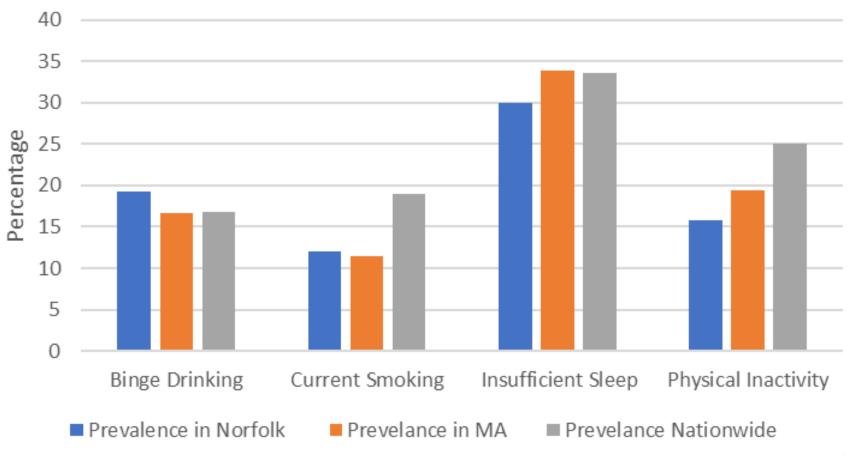
■ % Prevalence in Norfolk

■ % Prevelance MA

Source: Metacomet Public Health Alliance



Health Behaviors







Survey Q: What are primary challenges?

- 34% (343 people) said promoting an active lifestyle
- 28% (278 people) said youth-related health concerns (vaping, underage drinking, obesity)
- 27% (271 people) said issues with septic systems and wastewater

"We also need to be mindful of our collective carbon footprint, which affects the health of the planet. Norfolk is not a very walkable town and residents must drive to do most of their errands, dining out, etc. This is not only a missed opportunity for people to get out and walk, but creates carbon emissions. We must also be mindful of mental and physical health of our children and teens. Opportunities for expansion should be mindful of their needs, with a focus on family-friendliness and creating safe, engaging places to come together as a community."

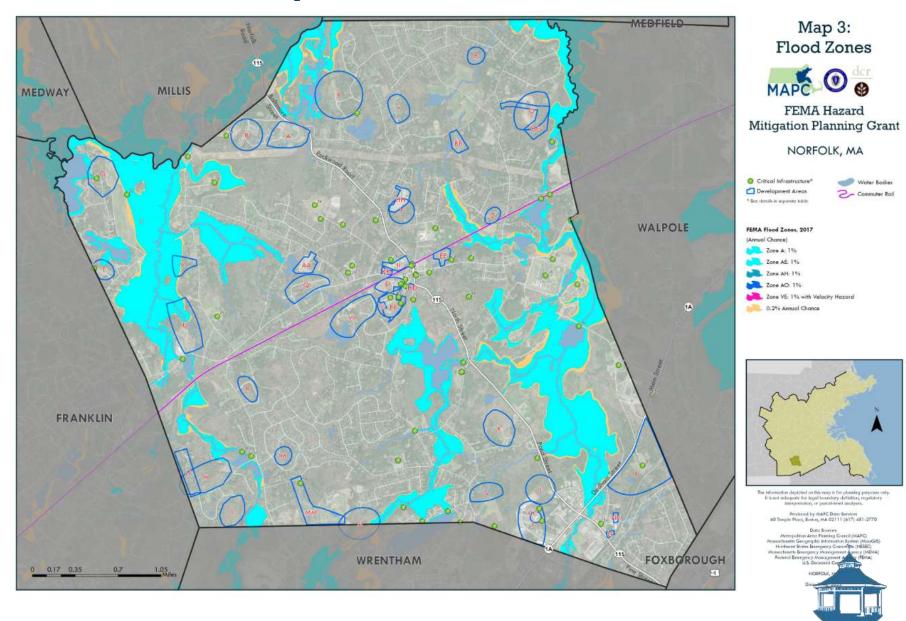


Energy and Sustainability

- Green Community Designation
- Hazard Mitigation Plan updated in 2023
- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Resilience Building Report completed in 2020
- Highest priority actions: stormwater system (culverts), dams, rural character, schools and community buildings (emergency centers), regional public communications center, Mass Audubon (open space), trees, flood control, roadway infrastructure, public water supply, electrical infrastructure, vector borne diseases and invasive species, streams/Charles River, soils and hazardous waste sites.



Energy and Sustainability







Norfolk Master Plan Vision Statement





Norfolk Master Plan Process to Define the Vision Statement

- 1 Start with 2007 Vision Statement
- 2 Add new feedback from Community Forums and Survey
- 3 Updated list of desired outcomes
- Translate into aspirational solutions to be vetted
- 5 Introduce principles to guide decisions
- 6 Compose updated narrative Vision Statement
- 7 Compose new Town-wide Vision Statement Concept Diagram





Norfolk Community Survey: What is your vision for Norfolk?



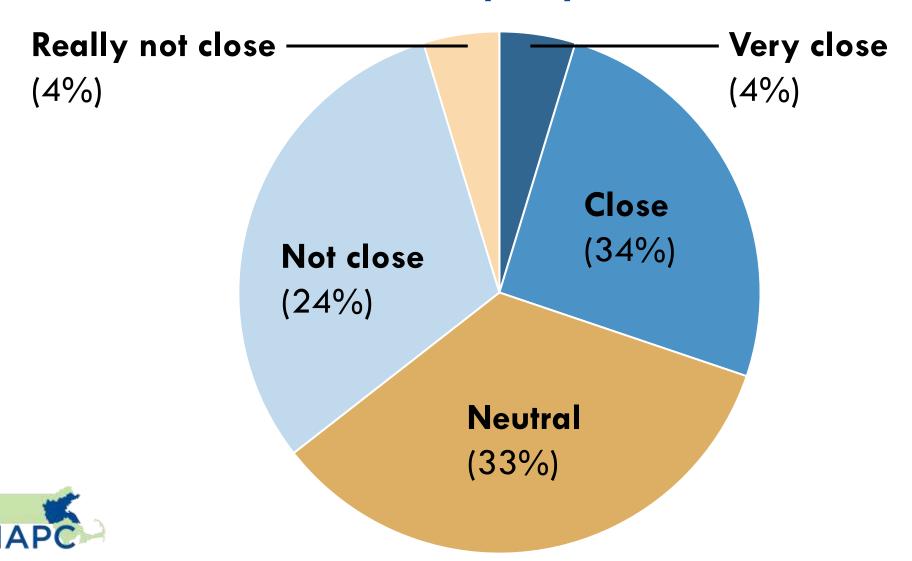
Word	Count
Town	332
More	179
Small	158
Businesses/Business	125
Community	98
Center	97
Feel	82
Norfolk	65
Like	64
Restaurants	53
Schools	46
Need	43
See	41
Кеер	41
Residents	35





Norfolk Community Survey:

How close is Norfolk today to your ideal vision for the Town?





Updating List of Desired Outcomes

Norfolk's citizens would like...

- Town Center developed into a traditional, pedestrian-oriented, New England village with retail, commercial services and mixed uses including housing that provides for social and cultural interaction for all age groups
- To preserve its residential, semi-rural, New England character with roadway images of farms, forests, ponds and streams.
- Attract investment in business/commercial districts such that Business-Commercial property values would provide a larger share of tax revenues allowing significantly less dependence on single family home tax revenues.
- Ensure that its resources are sufficient to sustain the future needs of residents and businesses.
- To manage growth so that changes thoughtfully respond to community needs.
- To approach community facilities and services with a focus on long term sustainability and fiscal responsibility.
- Quality of life to be enhanced by continuing to improve school facilities, recreation facilities, and natural resource and open space amenities.
- Safe and convenient options for getting around Town by walking, biking, and driving.
- To have housing options to be able to stay in Norfolk for all stages of life.
- To address environmental and infrastructure investments to leave a resilient Town and cleaner environment to future generations.
- To continue to support public safety and reliable emergency services.
 - To leverage the Commuter Rail service and strengthen accessibility to the Town Center.



Translating into aspirational solutions

	•
Norfolk's citizens would like	Norfolk's citizens would like
 Town Center developed 	Town Center as the center of town life
• To preserve character	Preserve the visual character and communal aspects of small-town life
Attract investment	 Define and attract the types of services and amenities desired
 Ensure that its resources are sufficient 	Place the Town in better position for the next generation
• To manage growth	Clearly define what is desired in each location and be patient
 Long term sustainability and fiscal responsibility 	Plan for the long term with Town investments
• Quality of life to be enhanced	• Plan and create a connected network of open space and town facilities
 Safe and convenient walking or biking 	Plan and create a secondary Town-wide walking and biking network
 To have housing options 	• Create housing options for all life stages to attract and keep residents
 Address environmental and infrastructure investments 	Develop plans to address legacy concerns
 Support public safety and reliable	 Build a community where all members contribute to safety and public health
 Leverage the Commuter Rail service and strengthen accessibility to the Town Center 	•



5 Introduce principles to guide decisions

Define principles to guide decision making – what 4 to 5 metrics would you want to reflect on with each decision?

- Quality of Life advancing decisions that will strengthen the well being of Norfolk residents and increase quality of life
- **Fiscal responsibility** balancing short term needs, quality long-term investments, and the tax burden of residents
- **Sustainability** the long-term ability to support a process over time with economic, environment, and social considerations
- Transparency sharing open and clear information for decision making processes with instructions for involvement
- **Equity** considering the perspectives of those who may not have a voice at the table or that will be most impacted by the decisions
- Municipal collaboration considering the most efficient and effective ways to share resources with neighboring towns

August 8, 2023



Future Engagement

Groups that have been underrepresented in the process to date:

- Renters
- Residents of color
- People who work in Norfolk
- Residents w/lower incomes
- People under the age of 35





Community Engagement Timeline

Dec 2022 - Feb 2023

Feb - June 2023

Aug 2023 - Jan 2024

- July - Dec 2023

Feb - April 2024
Jan - March 2024

Preparing Engagement

Activities and Deliverables:

- ✓ Town Tour
- ✓ Town Administrator's Monthly Dept Head Mtg
- ✓ Conduct Stakeholder Analysis
- ✓ Municipal Immersion Week#1

Awareness and Community Visioning

Activities and Deliverables:

- √ Awareness Campaign
- ✓ Community Forum: Vision
- √ + Follow-up Survey
- ✓ Deep-Dive Workshops (by Topic or Neighborhood)
- Engagement Reflection and Summary

Drafting Goals

Activities and Deliverables:

- Community Forum: Draft Goals
- Community AwarenessCampaign
- Community-wide Survey
- Municipal Immersion Week #2
- Engagement Reflection Summary

Defining Priorities

Activities and Deliverables:

- Final Community Forum
- Community Comments Period
- Final Engagement Reflection and Summary



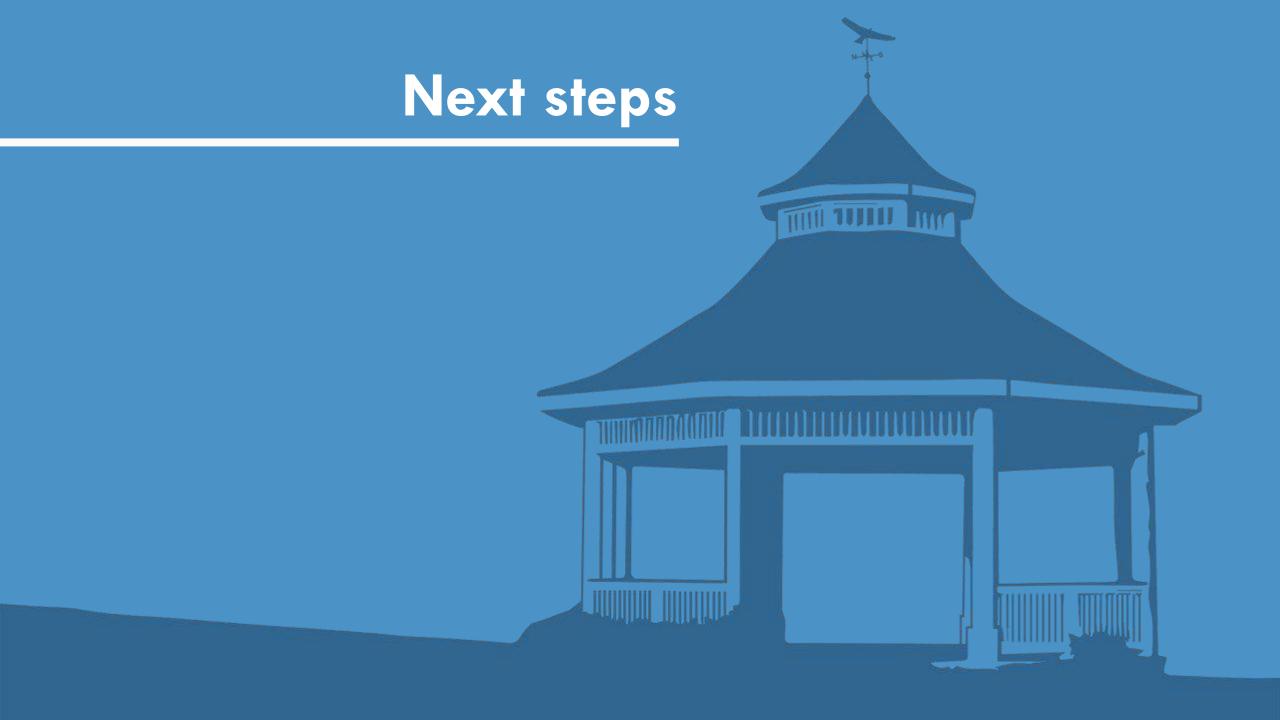


Future Engagement

- Discuss approach to committee discussion of drafting goals
- Discuss approach to community discussion of drafting goals
 - More than one meeting?
 - Rotate through all in one meeting?
 - Group goals thematically?







Next steps

September 9 Discovery Day, 4-7PM
 Question: Volunteers from MPSC?

Next Master Plan Steering Committee Meeting –
 September 12th, 7:00 pm
 Question: Two Committee Meetings in September?

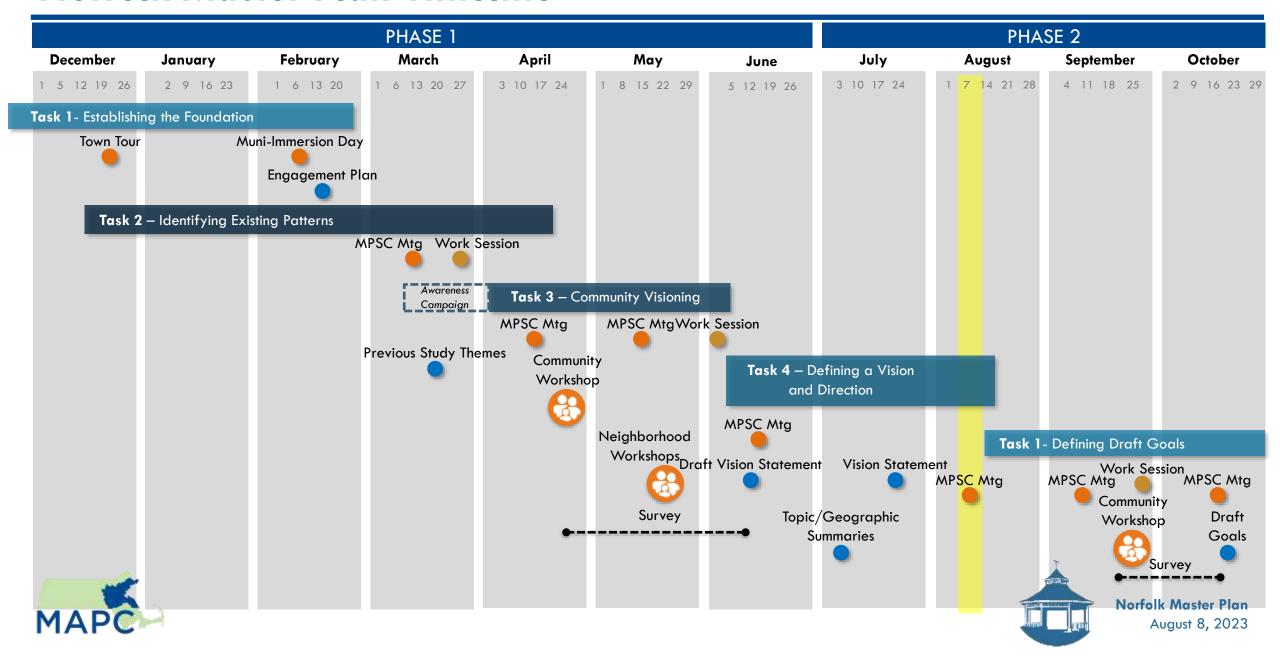
Topic and goal discussions

Detailing fall engagement program





Norfolk Master Plan Timeline



Norfolk Master Plan Project website

www.mapc.ma/norfolk2035



Sign up for updates!

Defining The Vision

MAPC is conducting background research and analysis to understand existing conditions for the different focus areas (like land use, transportation, community facilities, etc.). A series of engagement events will help MAPC understand local needs and challenges.

Workshops will build consensus around shared community values, to inform a Vision to guide future work. Over the course of the process, goals, strategies, and actions will be developed and refined with the community to ensure the master plan reflects the desired future of Norfolk.



