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CHAPTER 6

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

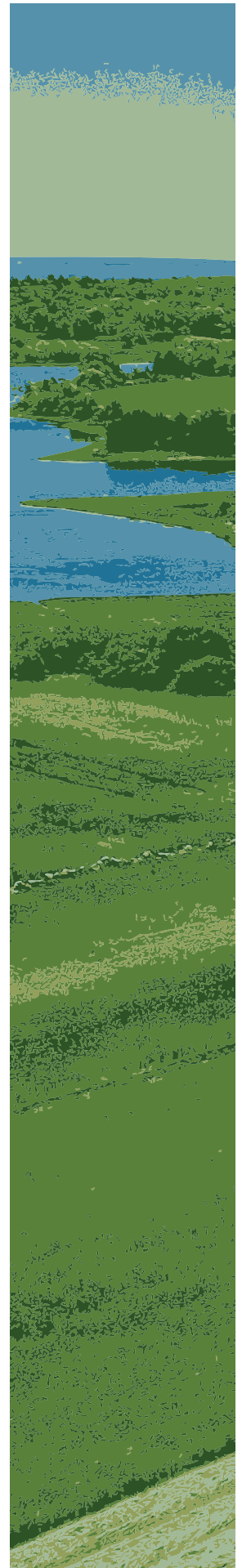
Municipal economic development planning is inherently tied to the well-being of the entire community. This type of planning gets at markers of well-being from a few angles. In planning to improve the economic life of Dartmouth's community, we might start by asking a few key questions, such as:

Are we as a community providing opportunity for economic enterprises to flourish in town? Zoning codes and other local regulatory measures stipulate the types of economic activity that can occur in certain locations. In fact, the very concept of zoning itself came out of a desire to ensure that uses with harmful spill-over effects, such as heavy industry, be separate from residents and community centers. In the time since, this separation between "economic life" and "home life" may have been taken to an extreme in zoning codes across the country. The Dartmouth community can begin by asking itself whether the zoning districts in town permit a full range of economic activities and opportunities.

Is it possible for residents to reasonably and conveniently access consumer goods that meet their daily needs? A legacy of strict separation of uses may have put barriers in place for the fullest expression of economic life and choice, such as long distances between residences and shopping centers and the implicit need for a personal automobile. Many are happy with this tradeoff, though these preferences can change throughout a lifetime. The Dartmouth community may ask if the development of mixed-use areas that provide for lifestyles where convenient access to goods and services is integrated with housing development might present an opportunity for expanding what is possible in the universe of town economic development and labor force attraction.

What is the shape of our local labor force, and are our residents able to access jobs? Beginning with a firm understanding of local economic indicators on the labor force, employment, local economic sectors, and journey to work data points to potentially under-supported industries and where residents are "exporting" their labor and expertise to other economic centers.

Are we leveraging economic development as a community to contribute to local municipal finances? Local economic development in the private sector is deeply connected to the functioning of local government, and the street goes both ways. Taxes from private industry help to support local municipal budgets while local governments, in turn, provide the key community infrastructure and services that make economic life feasible, such as interconnected roads, pipes, sewer systems, treatment plants, municipal parking areas, public transit to increase access to labor and consumer markets, and a public educational system for training the next generation of entrepreneurs and skilled employees in every industry. We can ask, for planning purposes, if as a community we are making these





connections between private industry and local government to maximize economic opportunity and municipal needs.

And finally, are we economically resilient? A resilient system in any context is principally characterized by an ability to rebound after shocks, and it is the presence of diversity that underlays resilience. In Dartmouth we can ask if we have a variety of industries so that we are less vulnerable to disruptions from shocks in one sector. Also related to resilience is the question of whether our residents are able to buy locally-produced goods and services. Are we shoring up industries, such as the local agricultural sector, that are fundamental to our survival should we be cut off from other supply chains and do we have makers that produce goods locally?

In short, we can gear economic development planning toward goals and objectives that answer the fundamental questions: *is our local economy sustaining our community, in all of the ways that it takes for residents to thrive, and are we as a community providing enough space and support for economic vitality and vibrancy?*

KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING DATA

The following data points combine with take-away messages from prior plans and Master Plan public outreach to inform the Goals and Strategies of this element.

Dartmouth’s Labor Force and Employment

Labor Force

Figure 6.1: Dartmouth’s Labor Force

Jurisdiction	Statistic	2000	2010	2019	2021
Dartmouth	Labor Force	15,191	18,109	19,040	18,298
	Employed	14,660	16,410	18,393	17,274
	Unemployed	531	1,699	647	1,024
	Unemployment Rate	3.50%	9.40%	3.4%	5.60%
Massachusetts	Labor Force	3,330,200	3,480,083	3,817,437	3,390,249
	Employed	3,240,200	3,190,818	3,706,556	3,535,478
	Unemployed	89,900	289,265	110,881	215,392
	Unemployment Rate	2.70%	8.30%	2.9%	5.70%

Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2021

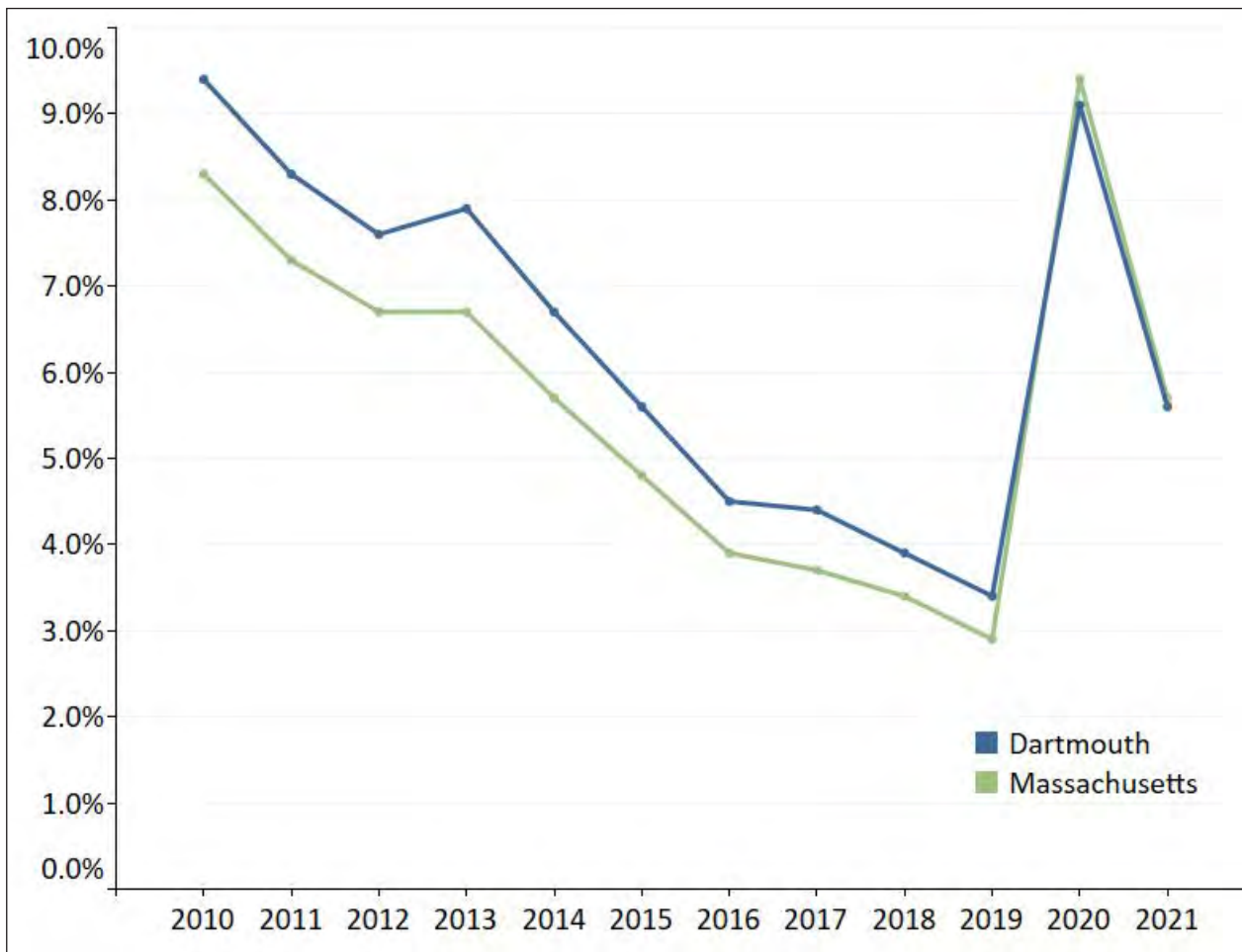
As shown in Figure 6.1, Dartmouth had an unemployment rate of 3.4% in 2019, down from 9.4% in 2010. Dartmouth has a higher unemployment rate than the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for all three years. Dartmouth’s labor force grew 25.3% between 2000 and 2017, while the State’s labor force only grew 14.6% during that same time period. The majority of Dartmouth’s labor force grew between 2000 and 2010 while the majority of the State’s labor force grew between 2010 and 2019.

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Employment Rates

From 2010 – 2019 Dartmouth’s unemployment rate averaged just over 1.0% higher than the statewide average. In 2010, Dartmouth’s unemployment rate was 9.4% and it decreased over the last 10 years to 3.4% in 2019. The average unemployment rate for Dartmouth between 2010 and 2019 was 5.6%.

Figure 6.2: Unemployment Rates in Dartmouth and Massachusetts (2010 – 2021)



Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2021

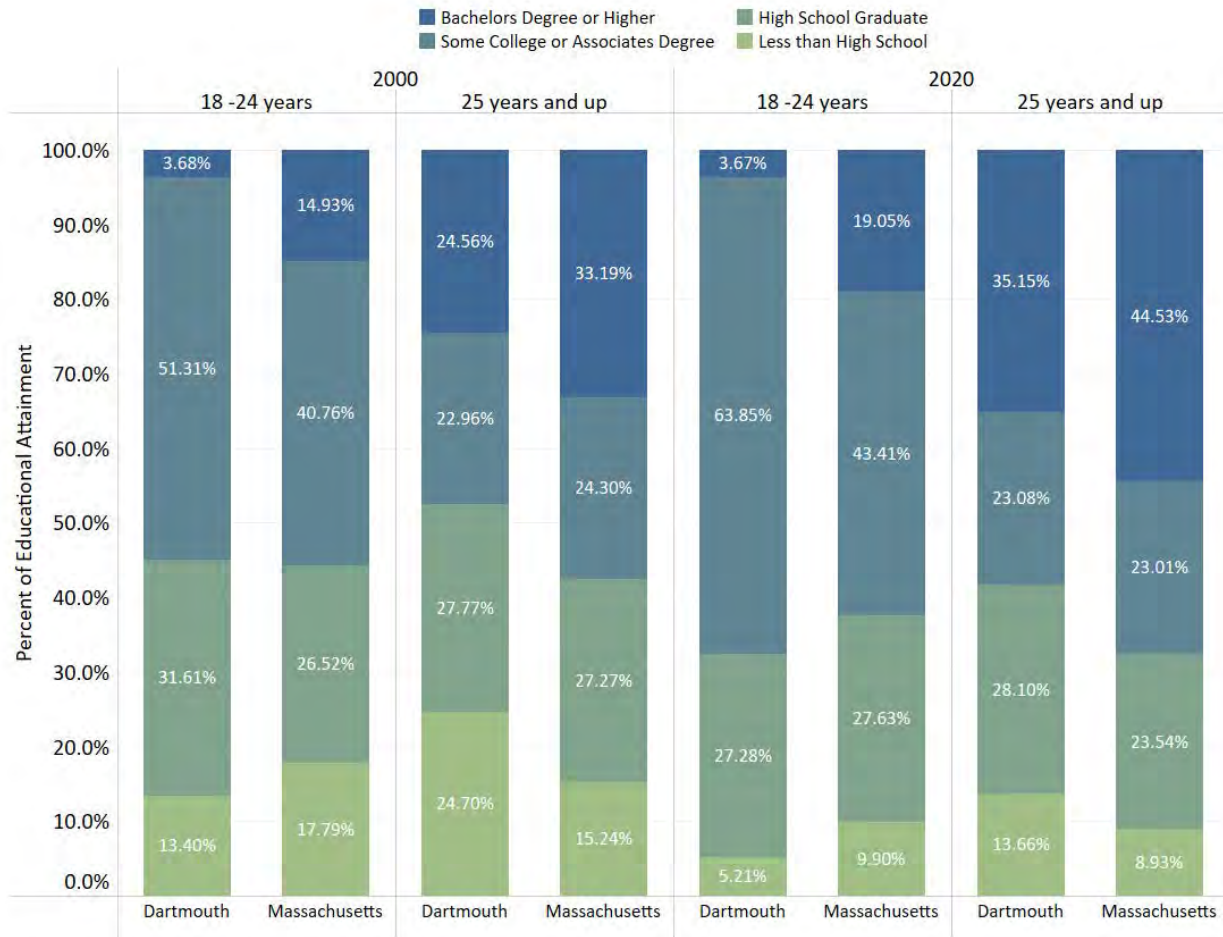
In terms of a regional perspective, in 2019, Dartmouth’s unemployment was just higher than the average 3.2% rate for the SRPEDD region and lower than the 3.7% rate for Bristol County.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the unemployment rate rose to 9.10% in Dartmouth in 2020 but decreased to 5.40% in 2021.



Educational Attainment

Figure 6.3: Dartmouth's Educational Attainment



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census and U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2016-2020

Educational attainment is the highest level of education a person has completed while earning a degree. Data for educational attainment is broken down into two age groups, 18-24 years old and 25 years and up.

The Town of Dartmouth is home to the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. This factor impacts data for the 18 to 24-year-old age group, resulting in a high percentage of 18 to 24-year-olds in Dartmouth classified as having Some College or Associates Degree (over 50% in both years).

In 2000, Dartmouth's 25 years and up population had an even distribution over the four educational levels but in 2020, Bachelor's Degree or Higher increased by 10% and the less than high school population dropped about 10%. This chart does not include people who have completed a program and earned an educational certifications, certificates, and licenses.

Local Industry

Overall Dispersion Across Economic Sectors

Figure 6.4: Dartmouth Jobs by Industry

Industry Sector	2001 Jobs	2001% of Workforce	2010 Jobs	2010 % of Workforce	2021 Jobs	2021 % of Workforce
Education & Health Services	3,286	23.6%	5,049	32.7%	5,926	35.5%
Trade, Utilities, Transportation	4,639	33.3%	4,417	28.6%	4,311	25.9%
Leisure & Hospitality	2,104	15.1%	2,324	15.0%	2,080	12.5%
Public Administration (includes local, county, state, and federal government, as well as police, fire and courts)	755	4.5%	694	4.5%	878	5.3%
Professional & Business Services	492	3.5%	572	3.7%	911	5.5%
Manufacturing	1,098	7.9%	866	5.6%	1,006	6.0%
Construction	617	4.4%	466	3.0%	656	3.9%
Other Services	481	3.5%	645	4.2%	435	2.6%
Financial Activities	303	2.2%	291	1.9%	326	2.0%
Information	115	0.8%	88	0.6%	99	0.6%
Natural Resources & Mining	22	0.2%	0	0.0%	43	0.3%
Total, All Industries	13,912	100.0%	15,447	100.0%	16,671	100.00%

Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2021

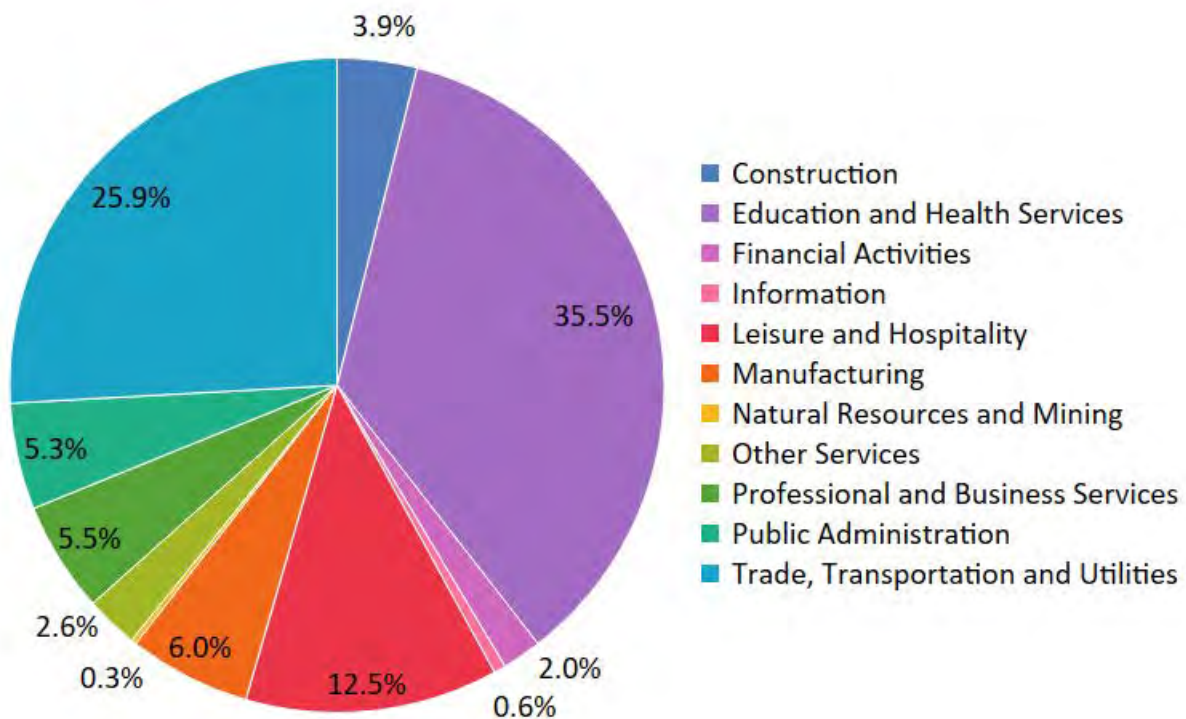
Figure 6.4 displays a table that provides employment by industry data for the years 2001, 2010, and 2021. The Town of Dartmouth's top industry sector is education and health services. The town has a public- school district and the UMass Dartmouth



University campus as well as a number of health care offices. This industry sector in 2021 included 35.5% of the employment in the town.

Dartmouth saw an increase in three industries, a decrease in three industries, and a slight fluctuation in five industries between the three time periods. The education and health care industry sector grew the most adding 2,640 jobs between 2001 and 2021, while the manufacturing industry had the greatest loss with 92 jobs between that same time period.

Figure 6.5: Employment by Industry in Dartmouth, 2021



Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2021

Figure 6.5 displays Employment by Industry for 2021. This chart represents the 2021 Percent of Workforce column from Figure 6.4. As you can see the Education and Health Services sector makes up more than one-third of the towns workforce. Followed by the Trade, Transportation, and Utilities sector making up one-quarter of the workforce.

Figure 6.6 displays the industry sectors for Massachusetts in 2021. Just over one-quarter of the Massachusetts population is in the education and health services industry. This sector represents just over one-third in the Town of Dartmouth. Massachusetts has similar top four industries as Dartmouth.

Figure 6.6: Massachusetts Industry Sectors

Industry Sectors	2021 Jobs	2021 % of Workforce
Education and Health Services	984,513	28.5%
Professional and Business Services	613,895	17.8%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	577,664	16.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	302,924	8.8%
Manufacturing	232,791	6.7%
Financial Activities	213,903	6.2%
Construction	175,650	5.1%
Public Administration	138,629	4.0%
Other Services	106,496	3.1%
Information	98,908	2.9%
Natural Resources and Mining	13,091	0.4%
Total, All Industries	3,458,465	100.0%

Figure 6.7: Wages in Dartmouth

Industry Sectors	Avg. Monthly Employment	Avg. Weekly Wages	Avg. Annual Wage
Financial Activities	326	\$1,445	\$75,140
Education and Health Services	5,926	\$1,389	\$72,228
Manufacturing	1006	\$1,315	\$68,380
Public Administration	878	\$1,308	\$68,016
Professional and Business Services	911	\$1,255	\$65,260
Construction	656	\$1,221	\$63,492
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	4,311	\$839	\$43,628
Information	99	\$805	\$41,860
Other Services	435	\$668	\$34,736
Natural Resources and Mining	43	\$656	\$34,112
Leisure and Hospitality	2,080	\$480	\$24,960

Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2021

This table shows the average monthly employment, average weekly wage, and the average annual wage for employment in Dartmouth filtered by the highest average annual wage. The Financial Activities sector has the highest average annual wage at \$75,140 while the Leisure and Hospitality industry has the lowest average annual wage at \$24,960.



Largest Employers

Figure 6.8: Dartmouth's Largest Employers

Company Name	Number of Employees
Bristol County Field Svc Div	250-499
Bristol County Sheriff's Ofc	250-499
Harvey Building Products	250-499
Home Depot	250-499
Shaw's Supermarket	250-499
Walmart Supercenter	250-499
Best Buy	100-249
Better Community Living Inc	100-249
BJ'S Wholesale Club	100-249
Boston Children's At North	100-249
Brandon Woods of Dartmouth Inc	100-249
Chartwells	100-249
Colonial Wholesale Beverage	100-249
Country Club of New Bedford	100-249
Dartmouth High School	100-249
Dartmouth Middle School	100-249
Hawthorn Medical Urgent Care	100-249
JC Penney	100-249
Lowe's Home Improvement	100-249
Macy's	100-249
Personal Touch Hm Health Care	100-249
Quinn Elementary School	100-249
Southeastern Ma Educational	100-249
Super Stop & Shop	100-249
Target	100-249
Tegra Medical LLC	100-249

Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2022

The Town of Dartmouth has a mix of business types on their top employers list. The top employer is the Hawthorn Medical Associates that is located off of Faunce Corner Road. Many of the other top employers include retail services along Route 6 and Faunce Corner Mall Road.

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Leading Industry Profiles

Top Industry Sectors

The top three industry sectors in the Town of Dartmouth make 74% of the town's workforce, demonstrating their importance and concentration in town. The next four industry sectors make up about 20.7% of the towns workforce.

Education and Health Services

The Education and Health Services industry sector employed 5,926 employees in 2021. This sector includes elementary and secondary school employees, physician and dental offices, and nursing and residential care facilities. This sector average annual wage is \$72,228. Employment at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth makes up a significant portion of the activity in the education sector. Universities and the "college towns" in which they are situated can experience many mutual benefits. University facilities can be made readily available to residents, including athletic facilities and continuing educational opportunities like senior learning. Meanwhile, the University contains a population of students and staff whose shopping benefits the local economy, and whose energies can often be channeled into volunteer and other similar service learning, capstone projects, or internship initiatives that help the town. These mutual benefits and goals for future collaboration are often captured in so-called "town-gown" agreements. The town and UMass Dartmouth have such an agreement in place.

Trade, Transportation, and Utilities

The Trade, Transportation, and Utility industry is the second highest industry sector in Dartmouth. It employed 4,311 employees in 2021. Their average annual wage is \$43,628. This industry includes jobs in the wholesale and retail trades and trucking.

Leisure and Hospitality

Leisure and Hospitality made up 12.5% of the jobs in Dartmouth in 2021. It employs 2,080 employees in jobs that include restaurants, accommodations, and recreation. This industrial is also the lowest paid in Dartmouth with an average annual wage of \$24,960.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing had lost jobs since 2000. In 2021, there was 1,006 people working in the manufacturing industry in jobs such as food, nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing, furniture, and miscellaneous manufacturing. Manufacturing jobs have the second highest average annual wage at \$68,380.

Professional and Business Services

Professional and Business Services includes jobs like legal services, architectural and engineering, administrative and support services, and management and technical consulting services. This industry makes up 5.5% or 911 employees in 2021. Their average annual wage is \$65,260.

Public Administration

Public Administration employs 878 jobs, about 5.3% of the total jobs in Dartmouth. Even though they only make up a small percentage of the employment in town they have the highest average annual wage, \$68,016. This industry sector includes jobs in the justice, public order, and safety activities fields.



Construction

The Construction industry has 656 employees making up about 3.9% of the town's workforce. The construction industry has jobs such as constructing residential buildings, contractors, and heavy and civil engineering construction. This industry makes an average annual wage of \$63,492.

Regional Position

Labor to Jobs Ratio

Figure 6.9: Labor to Jobs Ratio in Dartmouth Over Time

	2000	2010	2021
Dartmouth Jobs	14,660	16,410	16,671
Dartmouth Resident Labor Force	15,191	18,109	19,040
Jobs/Labor Force Ratio	531	1,699	2,369

Source: MA Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, 2021

The Town of Dartmouth has a smaller number of jobs than they have workers in their resident labor force. The resident labor force is the employment status of the town's population who are 16 years old or older. The labor to jobs ratio helps to determine if a town is a net importer or exporter for employment. Dartmouth is a net exporter for employment for the past 21 years. They have come a long way since 2010 in increasing the number of jobs they have in town. If this trend continues, Dartmouth could switch and become a net importer for jobs.

Journey to Work

Figure 6.10: Travel Time to Work for Dartmouth Residents

Travel Time to Work	Total	Percent
Less than 10 minutes	1,792	12.1%
10 to 14 minutes	2,045	13.8%
15 to 19 minutes	3,041	20.6%
20 to 24 minutes	1,972	13.4%
25 to 29 minutes	712	4.8%
30 to 34 minutes	1,556	10.6%
35 to 44 minutes	795	5.4%
45 to 59 minutes	1,042	7.1%
60 or more minutes	1,812	12.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2016-2020

Just under two-thirds (60%) of Dartmouth residents live within a 24-minute commute of where they work. People who drive 60 minutes or more for their commute make up 12.3% of Dartmouth’s population. The mean travel time to work for Dartmouth residents was 27 minutes in 2020. This table does not include those who work from home.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a tremendous shift in the means and location of employment. A December 2021 survey conducted by the Massachusetts Business Roundtable, which represents large employers throughout the state, found that 77% of members are using ‘either a hybrid or fully remote work schedule,’¹ while only 15% of members were working fully in person at the time. More specific town-level estimates of the percentage of remote workers are not yet available, and it will take time to understand the relative permanence of the switch to work-from-home arrangements.

Return-to-work policies are established by each individual employer and will vary greatly across economic sectors. Some jobs can be done at home, while others are tied to a specific store, location, or site. On a state-wide level a McKinsey & Co. report titled ‘Preparing for the Future of Work in The Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ found that “around a third of Massachusetts residents can work remotely – a higher percentage than in most other US states,” owing to the fact that a significant portion of employment in Massachusetts is in “remote work, such as technology and professional services.”² However, as the supporting infrastructure for remote work (namely fast and reliable internet access) varies by town, this number too will be dependent on each town’s unique situation.

Figure 6.11: Means of Transportation

Means of Transportation to Work	Total	Percent
Car, truck, or van	13,787	85.1%
Drove Alone	12,491	77.1%
Carpooled	1,296	8.0%
Bicycle	0	0.0%
Public transportation (not taxi)	114	0.7%
Taxi, motorcycle, or other means	114	0.7%
Walked	746	4.6%
Worked at home	1,426	8.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2016-2020

Dartmouth’s primary means of transportation to work is by car. About 85.1% of residents use a car to commute to work, with 8.0% of those people carpooling. The second highest means of transportation is people who work from home followed by walking to work. Dartmouth does not have a significant public transportation network so utilizing public transportation is rarely a viable option.

1. WBZ Radio, <https://wbznewsradio.heart.com/content/survey-shows-remote-work-still-widespread-in-massachusetts/>

2. https://www.massworkforce.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/future20of20Work20in20Massachusetts20Report_optimized.pdf



Regional Role - Location Quotient

Location Quotient (LQ) Analysis is a way to understand how Dartmouth's employment patterns compare to those of a larger region - in this case, the state of Massachusetts. LQ is basically a ratio, where, if an industry's LQ is greater than one (>1), Dartmouth has a higher share of jobs in that industry than its surrounding region. For example, Dartmouth's LQ with Massachusetts in "Retail Trade" is 2.33 (or 22.37 % divided by 9.62%). This indicates that Retail as an industry is roughly two-and-a-quarter times more concentrated in Dartmouth than it is in the surrounding region.

Figure 6.12: LQ Table

NAICS Code and Industry	Dartmouth	2021 (%)	State of Mass.	2021 (%)	Location Quotient
11 - Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	43	0.26%	12,219	0.35%	0.73
21 - Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.00%	872	0.03%	0.00
23 - Construction	656	3.93%	175,650	5.08%	0.77
31-33 - Manufacturing	1,006	6.03%	232,791	6.73%	0.90
22 - Utilities	0	0.00%	15,985	0.46%	0.00
42 - Wholesale Trade	252	1.51%	118,799	3.44%	0.44
44-45 - Retail Trade	3,729	22.37%	332,722	9.62%	2.33
48-49 - Transportation and Warehousing	319	1.91%	110,158	3.19%	0.60
51 - Information	99	0.59%	98,908	2.86%	0.21
52 - Finance and Insurance	219	1.31%	168,360	4.87%	0.27
53 - Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	107	0.64%	45,543	1.32%	0.49
54 - Professional and Technical Services	474	2.84%	364,095	10.53%	0.27
55 - Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0.00%	68,790	1.99%	0.00
56 - Administrative and Waste Services	426	2.56%	181,009	5.23%	0.49
61 - Educational Services	1,805	10.83%	347,107	10.04%	1.08
62 - Health Care and Social Assistance	4,121	24.72%	637,406	18.43%	1.34
71 - Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	288	1.73%	53,137	1.54%	1.12
72 - Accommodation and Food Services	1,792	10.75%	249,788	7.22%	1.49
81 - Other Services, Except Public Administration	435	2.61%	106,496	3.08%	0.85
92 - Public Administration	878	5.27%	138,629	4.01%	1.31
Total, All Industries	16,671	100.00%	3,458,465	100.00%	

Dartmouth has a higher concentration of jobs in the retail trade, educational services, health care and social assistance, arts, entertainment, and recreation, public administration, and accommodation and food services than the state. These "high-LQ" industries also correspond closely with those represented by the largest employers in town. Dartmouth has a lower concentration of jobs in the information, professional and

technical services, finance and insurance, wholesale trade, administrative and waste services, and real estate and leasing than Massachusetts.

Partnerships with UMass Dartmouth

Currently housed at the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, the Ocean Corridor Economic Alliance Northeast (OCEAN) is a partnership between the university and the SouthCoast Development Partnership. The US Economic Development Agency is funding the regional effort to grow marine science and technology along the I-195 corridor from the Narragansett Bay to the Cape Cod Canal. Within the corridor there are currently 115 marine science and technology focused companies and 21 public and non-profit institutions focused in five economy sectors: Marine Renewable Energy, Robotics & Naval Tech, Living Resources, Data & Instrumentation, and Maritime.

Currently, OCEAN is in year two of the project and they are working on developing a 10-year strategic plan and are planning on launching workforce development, business incubation, and regional marketing initiatives. The town is well positioned to build on its relationship with UMass-Dartmouth to monitor, influence, and otherwise build upon this emerging industry cluster.

The Town also signed a formal Town-Gown agreement with UMass Dartmouth in 2019. This established commitments from both the Town and the University to be an asset to one another. UMass Dartmouth is vital to the Town’s economic success. Going forward, there is a goal to collaborate on projects that are mutually beneficial for both parties.

Dartmouth Revenue

Tax Base

Figure 6.13: Dartmouth’s Tax Base

Tax Classification	Total	Percent
Residential	\$5,544,025,674	84.7%
Commercial	\$666,196,383	10.2%
Industrial	\$81,902,875	1.3%
Personal Property	\$250,269,640	3.8%
Total	\$6,542,394,572	100.0%

Source: MA Division of Local Services, 2022

The tax base in Dartmouth is primarily residential, with homeowners providing 84.7% of the tax revenue. Commercial and industrial properties make up almost 12% followed by personal property at 3.8%.

Comparing Dartmouth to the neighboring two cities and two towns, they all have a split tax rate between residential tax and commercial/industrial tax rates. The only neighboring town that has a flat tax rate is Westport. Dartmouth has one of the highest average single-family tax bills and averaged single-family value but has one of the lowest tax rates for both residential and commercial. As a matter of fact,



the commercial tax rate in Dartmouth is approximately half of what the rate is in New Bedford and Fall River. This makes Dartmouth a great location for commercial development and helps to support the local economy.

Figure 6.14: Regional Tax Base Comparison

Community	Avg. Single Family Tax Bill	Residential Assessed Valuation	Commercial Assessed Valuation	Industrial Assessed Valuation	Residential Tax Rate	Commercial Tax Rate	Avg. Single Family Value
Dartmouth	\$4,431	84.7%	10.2%	1.3%	\$9.4	\$17.5	\$467,924
Fall River	\$3,584	80.4%	10.1%	6.1%	\$12.6	\$27.0	\$283,995
Freetown	\$4,825	77.4%	4.3%	13.4%	\$12.1	\$20.6	\$400,086
New Bedford	\$4,055	79.9%	9.8%	5.0%	\$15.5	\$33.5	\$260,927
Westport	\$4,193	92.0%	5.0%	0.5%	\$8.5	\$8.5	\$494,508

Source: MA Division of Local Services, 2022

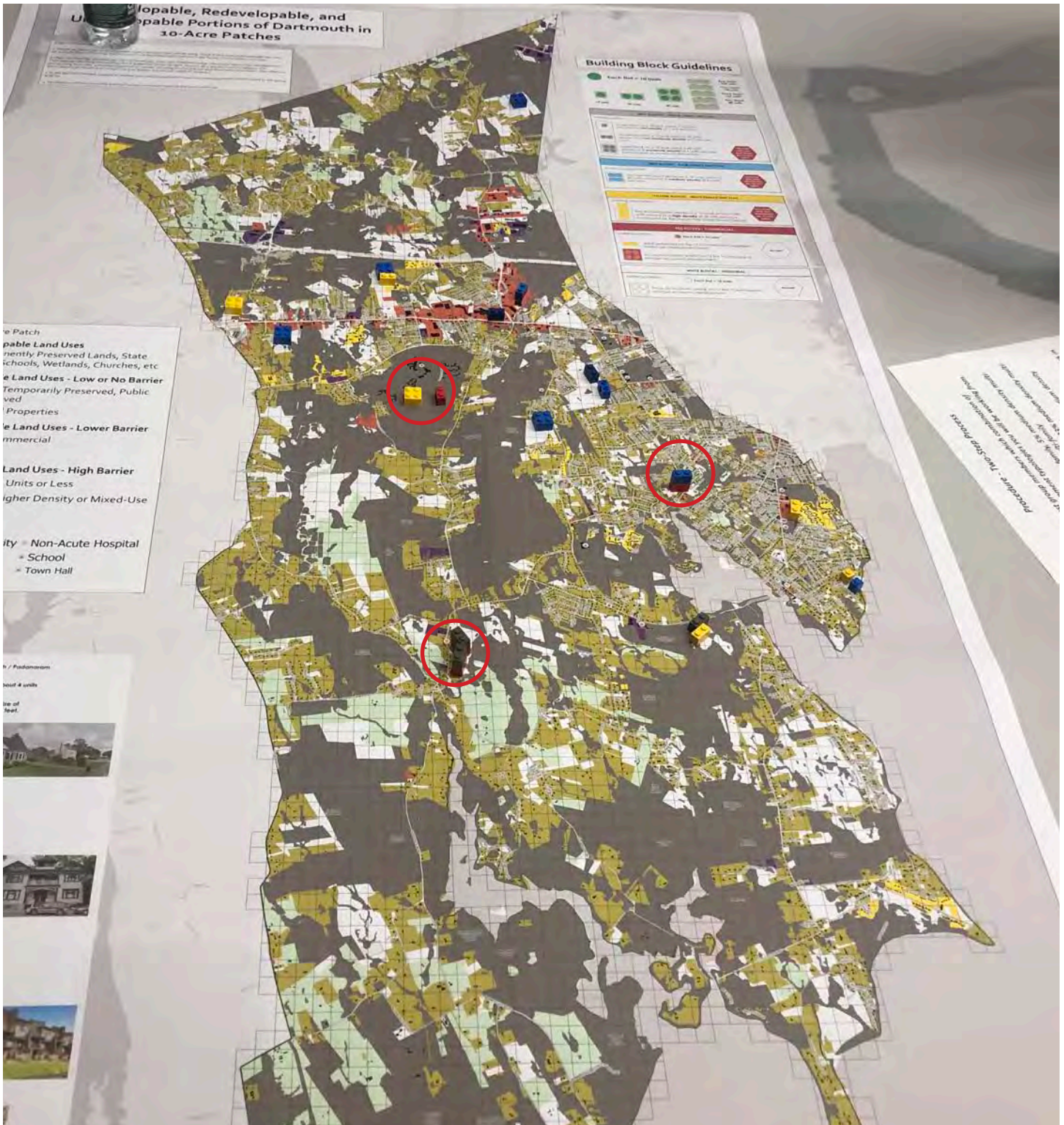
ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE

Community Goals and Existing Local Economic Development Plans, Programs, and Incentives

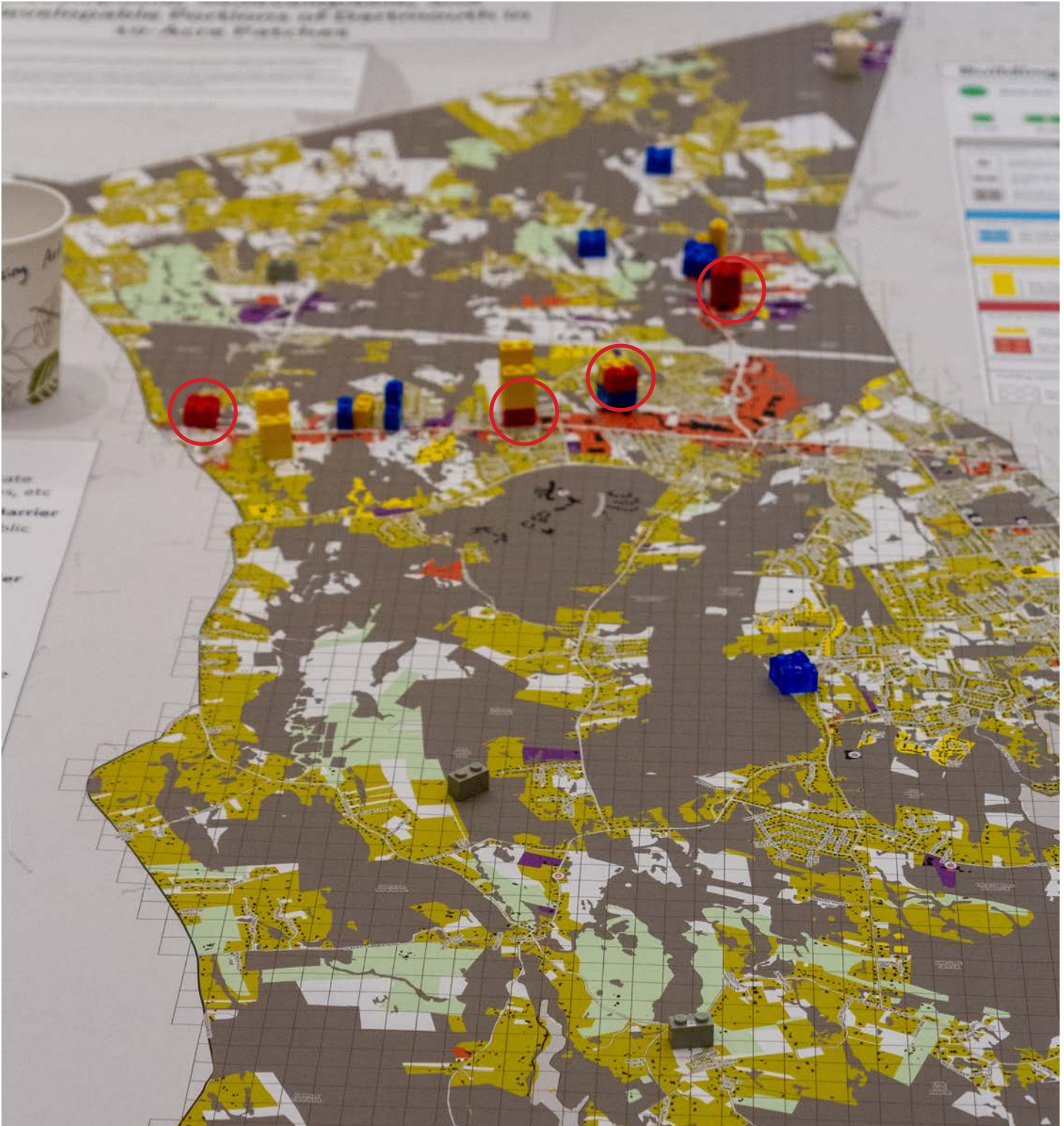
Master Plan Public Input

During the Dartmouth Master Plan’s Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development workshop, residents participated in two exercises. The primary exercise asked workshop participants, gathered into three groups, to complete a development chip exercise. Each group had a large format map at their table, showing the Town of Dartmouth with a 10-acre grid overlay, and existing land use information for the categories of undevelopable land (permanently preserved lands, wetlands, water, state- and federally-owned lands, etc.); developable land (vacant land and unprotected farmland); redevelopable land low barrier (commercial and industrial uses); and redevelopable land high barrier (residential uses). The participant groups used sets of legos to physically distribute new commercial development throughout the town according to their preference for the location of commercial development. Residential units could be stacked on top of commercial units to represent mixed-use development.

We note that the basemap did not include parcel lines, and that the intention was not to single out specific properties for development. The exercise was meant to obtain input on the general characteristics of locations where participants felt development of various densities should occur, for example, near existing development, near existing infrastructure, away from environmentally sensitive features, etc. During the map activity, SRPEDD’s facilitators helped guide the discussion and took notes on the conversation occurring between group members.



Group One - completed worked with the "Balancing Act" scenario; commercial development locations emphasized with red circle



Group Two - completed worked with the "Balancing Act" scenario; commercial development locations emphasized with red circle

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The participating groups placed new commercial development as desirable in the following locations (with an indication of where mixed-use residential/commercial development was specifically suggested):

- Near UMass Dartmouth;
- Near Russells Mills Village;
- In South Dartmouth at the head of Apponagansett Bay;
- Locations along Route 6 (mixed-use); and
- On Faunce Corner Road above Route 195.

In addition, some insights about economic development priorities emerged in comments and group conversation, including:

- “Densities should occur near existing recent development, near existing infrastructure, and away from environmentally sensitive features.”
- “Route 6 is the town’s main economic engine. We don’t want to compromise the ability of Route 6 businesses to prosper and provide a revenue base for the town. However, in underutilized areas, some infill residential would be desirable. Medium density housing near the mall, around town center plaza, near Walmart, and at the vacant Benny’s would provide mixed-use access to amenities, infrastructure, and services.”
- “Additional development [belongs] in North Dartmouth along Faunce Corner Road, and off existing village areas in South Dartmouth and Bliss Corner. The workshop development scenarios envisioned mixed-use developments that contain both a residential and commercial component.”
- “When large properties become available, we want to move it to a village model; For example, Repurpose old police station – mixed-use: residential on top, commercial below – ‘a village feel.’”
- “Hawthorn Country Club will be a good for high density with commercial – town water/sewer.”
- “We love our farmland, but do not want all of it to be permanently preserved. In areas where there can be ready extensions of existing infrastructure, we should proactively target development, expanding the tax base while also preserving the cohesive farmland tracts that are most precious to us.”

These, along with data analysis and prior plans, influence the Goals and Strategies of this element.

Prior and Ongoing Municipal Planning

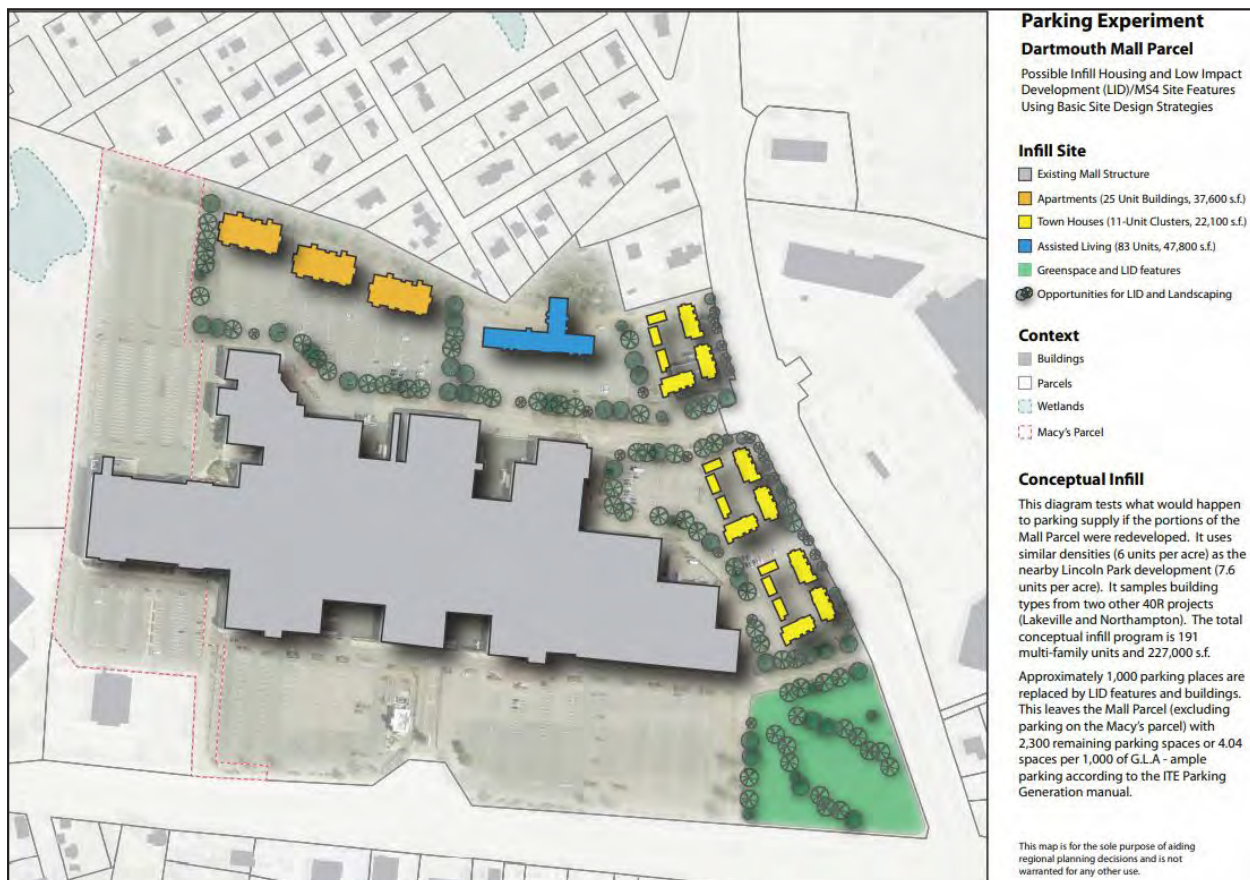
The following “take-away messages” from existing economic development-related municipal plans also serve as guides for this element’s Goals and Strategies.

The Town of Dartmouth finalized its **previous Master Plan in 2007**; some of its content is still relevant today, especially its focus on the importance of a specialized Economic Development Commission to coordinate municipal activities and streamline permitting; the need to maintain current, flexible zoning in key areas of town, such as Faunce

Corner ("for higher end office uses") and Route 6; and the opportunity that UMass-Dartmouth presents for potential innovation and public-private partnerships

The **2015 Reimagining the Dartmouth Retail Corridor** study examined possible futures for commercial sites along Route 6 from Faunce Corner Mall Road to Cross Road. The plan encourages the town to adopt flexible mixed-use zoning for the corridor in order to take advantage of excess parking areas, vacancies, and emerging demographics trends – all in an effort to support the successful retail and service industries in the area. The study also emphasizes direct partnerships between local institutions – including UMass and the town, itself – to improve connections and support economic activity.

The **Route 6 Gateway Mixed-Use Overlay District** study evaluated a section of Route 6 from Slocum Road east to the New Bedford City Line. Lasting over two years, this study was focused on looking at redevelopment of underutilized sites, increased residential options to create mixed-use, and improvements to the roadway, including access management. The result of this study was to propose a Gateway Mixed-Use Overlay District that included reduced lot sizes and setbacks, by-right mixed-use that allowed affordable housing, special permit apartment style residential uses, high -value business uses, and "design conditions" providing for pedestrian and aesthetic improvements.



Infill scenario developed in the 2015 Reimagining the Dartmouth Retail Corridor Study

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The **2014 Padanaram Streetscaping Charette** advocated for “a professional parking evaluation of the on-street and off-street parking; it also asserted that an analysis of parking supply, demand, and patterns of use should be undertaken to inform the public parking strategy. This should include evaluation of curb cuts and off-street parking, using public ways for circulation.” These considerations remain important today, as Dartmouth seeks to further connect Padanaram as a destination in town without creating unintended adverse impacts on the existing neighborhood and its village character.

The **2019 Padanaram Harbor Management Plan (PHMP)** was adopted after an extensive public process. The PHMP includes recommendations to address known issues and advance opportunities to improve the upper and lower harbor and its adjacent shores, which include the active village commercial center, making it an important and relevant document for town economic development considerations. After plan adoption, the Harbor Management Plan Implementation Committee (HMPIC), was appointed by the Select Board in February 2021 to address and facilitate the implementation of the PHMP.

At present, the HMPIC is working with the town and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to accomplish a Harbor Economic Analysis. The Town has had a longstanding connection to the maritime economy but lacks a comprehensive economic development strategy that builds on its strengths. A Harbor Economic Analysis will position the Town to capitalize on new and emerging opportunities. It will help the Town to understand the revenues and costs associated with the Harbor which can inform policy decisions, focus investments, set costs for service and estimate capital and operating expenses. The HMPIC in collaboration with NOAA economists completed 80% of the analysis at no cost to the Town. The Town applied for an SEC grant in October 2022 to hire a consultant to complete the study.

Without listing each recommendation contained in the PHMP, this Master Plan integrates the PHMP and the work of the HMPIC through general reference in the Master Plan strategy actions. For example, in the strategies for Economic Development, there is included strategy **ED-3G: Implement the Commercial Use recommendations developed in the Padanaram Harbor Management Plan.** In the PHMP, these include recommendations 6-1 through 6-7.



Economic Development Goals and Strategies

In order to address the priorities identified by community members, economic development-related data, and Dartmouth’s existing body of planning, this Master Plan established the following goals for economic development in Dartmouth:

Economic Development Goal 1:

Advance and enable a diverse program of growth and redevelopment along the Route 6 Corridor.

Why Dartmouth / Why Now?

This key economic engine for Dartmouth is the subject of several existing plans. It is clear that, in addition to being one of the main corridors through Dartmouth, commercial development along Route 6 provides significant tax revenue and employment in town. The Master Plan public input process reinforced these facts: participants clearly identified the importance of not only protecting the economic viability of Route 6 and the Dartmouth Mall, but also focusing further growth to underutilized and/or vacant sites that are near existing development and where infrastructure service is available. Dartmouth can build on many of its existing attributes to support continued health in Route 6’s retail and service industries while also encouraging complementary uses and actions that position the corridor for more flexible, successful economic development outcomes.

Key Strategies for Action			
Strategy		Responsible Party	Time frame
ED-1A	Annually update an inventory of vacant and underutilized commercial sites along Route 6 for targeted re-use and redevelopment; this inventory would ideally be maintained electronically, presented in an interactive map on the Town’s web page, made available and affirmatively distributed to prospective businesses and developers, and updated at least annually.	Town Administration, Planning Board, Proposed Economic Development Committee (EDC, see ED-3E)	1 Year



ED-1B	Identify and create overlay zones or new base zones in key “transitional areas” of Route 6 that provide opportunities for larger scale economic development in life science businesses and other emerging technology sectors. Updated zoning should also account for unique dimensional needs and footprints.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, the public, Proposed EDC	5 Years
ED-1C	Identify and create flexible mixed-use overlays that allow a wider variety of development types to be built along Route 6. Invigorate existing retail corridors with infill housing, offices, and workspace uses that complement existing service and retail businesses. New overlay zoning should include updated use tables to attract emerging and changing types of uses, such as creative-focused or cultural uses, co-working spaces, and small fabrication spaces. Mixed-use residential features and dimensional and design features may be added in order to provide guidance and flexibility for new and emerging uses.	Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, the public	3 Years
ED-1D	Building on new established and reinvigorated public-private partnerships, create permanent open lines of communication with key businesses and property owners along the Route 6 corridor. These relationships can inform future infrastructure needs, resolution to permitting and zoning issues, and position the town to advocate for its interests while also understanding the needs of the local and regional business communities.	Town Administrator, Proposed EDC	5 Years
ED-1E	Examine the potential for height limit increases along a section of the Route 6 corridor.	Planning Board, Town Meeting	1-2 Years



Economic Development Goal 2:

Explore economic development on key sites with existing or potential infrastructure services.

Why Dartmouth / Why Now?

In Addition to Route 6, Dartmouth is fortunate to have several other locations with economic development potential throughout town. While the scale, type, and shape of each site would be different due to each one's unique context, they can all play a role in creating a diverse and stable economic profile for the town. The following strategies describe some of the main locations that received attention during the Master Plan process; each strategy briefly describes the potential actions that the town and its partners can pursue to further their economic development.

Key Strategies for Action			
Strategy		Responsible Party	Time frame
ED-2A	<p>Faunce Corner Road – Well served by municipal sewer, water, and roadways (with an interchange with I-195), Faunce Corner Road has seen significant economic development in recent decades. These potential sites can also include remaining agricultural land at the intersection of Faunce Corner Road and Old Fall River Road. Public outreach revealed willingness to see the conversion of some strategically located farms to more intensive economic development if they have existing or easy access to necessary infrastructure. The town can also consider rezoning target properties to Office Industrial (from Limited Industrial) – much of the high value economic development along Faunce Corner Road has taken place under the Office Industrial district, including the Boston Children's, SouthCoast, and Hawthorn health care facilities.</p>	<p>Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Assistant Town Administrator, Planning Director, the public</p>	<p>5 Years</p>



ED-2B	Hawthorn Country Club – Consider this closed golf course as a site for potential redevelopment. Town staff can conduct a basic redevelopment feasibility study for this 56-acre site, examining potential mixed-use, office, or other productive uses and exploring the need for zoning changes (the site is currently zoned Single Residence B) and infrastructure needs.	Director of Development, Planning Director	2 Years
ED-2C	Bliss Corner – Abutting New Bedford’s South End, Bliss Corner looks, feels, and functions like a small downtown. As such, Dartmouth should pursue planning and economic development initiatives that support villages. Of particular interest are programs such as the MassDOT Complete Streets Funding program and the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI), which offers “a range of services and assistance to communities seeking help on how to revitalize their villages.”	Assistant Town Administrator, Planning Director	3 Years
ED-2D	Padanaram – Located along the beautiful southern coastline of town, with maritime history, modern-day connections to Buzzard’s Bay, and galleries and shops, Padanaram represents a similar opportunity to cultivate a cluster of seasonal tourism-based businesses – this can only add to Dartmouth’s successful economic development repertoire. Specific actions to support this potential include: the creation of design guidelines for any future development or redevelopment; a dedicated placemaking, signage, and wayfinding program to further define and “brand” Padanaram as a destination; completing parking and transportation access studies and that manage the public’s ability to safely and conveniently access the village without adverse impacts to its residents and character; and affirmative marketing and tourism strategies. This Master Plan recommends that this suite of activities be conducted and led by the proposed Economic Development Committee (see Strategy ED-3E, below).	Assistant Town Administrator, Planning Director, HMPIC	2 Years



<p>ED-2E</p>	<p>Farmland suitable for redevelopment due to its proximity to existing development and infrastructure – Using a suitability analysis that clearly and narrowly identifies necessary characteristics, the town can explore the following statement from the Master Plan public input: “We love our farmland, but do not want all of it to be permanently preserved. In areas where there can be ready extensions of existing infrastructure, we should proactively target development, expanding the tax base while also preserving the cohesive farmland tracts that are most precious to us.” The proposed suitability analysis would seek to find land that is near existing, recent high value growth and with easy access to needed infrastructure. Suitable sites should be the subject of scenario planning and zoning.</p>	<p>Assistant Town Administrator, Planning Director</p>	<p>on-going</p>
<p>ED-2F</p>	<p>New Bedford-Dartmouth Industrial Park – while the existing Industrial Park is largely “built-out,” efforts to update the existing General Industrial district could yield further economic development by allowing for more intensity and higher value uses, creating more opportunity, and concentrating growth where it belongs in town.</p>	<p>Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, Assistant Town Administrator, Planning Director, the public</p>	<p>3 Years</p>

Economic Development Goal 3:

Pursue innovative, specialized process improvements that lead to better outcomes for Dartmouth’s local economy.

Why Dartmouth / Why Now?

Municipalities must employ all the useful tools in their economic development “toolkit” to achieve a balanced economy that benefits the broadest possible cross-section of its residents and businesses. Many of the strategies below are just that – commonsense ideas and actions that have been deployed across the Commonwealth. It is important to note that Dartmouth has many “home field” competitive advantages that make the likelihood of succeeding even higher than in other communities with fewer assets.

Key Strategies for Action			
Strategy		Responsible Party	Time frame
ED-3A	Develop a robust and diverse economy providing suitable employment opportunities for residents and a stable tax base.	Assistant Town Administrator	on-going
ED-3B	Protect and enhance maritime and agricultural related businesses	Proposed EDC, Agricultural Commission, Assistant Town Administrator, HMPIC	on-going
ED-3C	Provide efficient and effective government services to encourage Economic Development	Town Administration and Staff	on-going
ED-3D	Consider and integrated Economic Development Plan – Similar to creating a specialized EDC, a community’s Economic Development Plan can provide a deep dive into planning and market information that is richer and more specialized (e.g. projected demand for space by industry type or retail opportunity gap analysis) than what is typically considered in a Master Plan. Numerous communities across the Commonwealth have created specialized Economic Development Plans to inform the efforts of their EDCs or Redevelopment Authorities. These documents can provide much-needed information and “boosts” to redevelopment proposals and other site-specific/project-specific economic development initiatives.	Assistant Town Administrator and Proposed EDC	3 Years



<p>ED-3E</p>	<p>Create a proactive, forward-thinking Economic Development Committee (EDC) to guide municipal actions. These specialized bodies are typically authorized and empowered by the Select Board; they are comprised of local professionals and officials with a variety of professional backgrounds, often including finance, law, planning, real estate, construction, grant-writing, and public policy. The EDC makes recommendations to the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator on specific actions to pursue to advance the mission of creating high-wage jobs and high-value development that benefits the entire community. Importantly, EDCs provide the type of necessary, regular, and focused attention needed to pursue many of the Strategies in this element. Using their knowledge of Dartmouth and its unique set of assets and challenges, the EDC can advance a balanced program of actions, such as: (1) updating and managing permitting guides in partnership with the local business community; (2) actively marketing the unique character and assets of Dartmouth (ranging from farms and a university to coastal beauty and major shopping) centers; (3) pursuing unique partnerships with local entities (such as UMass-Dartmouth and the owners of the Dartmouth Mall); (4) working with municipal counterparts to ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity; and (5) shepherding specialized ideas and potential projects to successful completion. Many of these actions require more attention and resources than are necessarily available without dedicated economic development officials at the helm.</p>	<p>Board of Selectmen, Town Administration, and Proposed EDC</p>	<p>1 Year</p>
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ED-3F	Explore further “town-gown” partnerships with UMass-Dartmouth, its Center for Entrepreneurship, and its ongoing Ocean Corridor Economic Alliance Northeast (OCEAN) initiative with U.S. EDA – Cities and towns across New England benefit from our region’s relative concentration of institutes of higher education and innovation. Home to U-Mass-Dartmouth and numerous competitive advantages (such as its coastline and infrastructure connections), Dartmouth is particularly well-resourced in terms of “town-gown” potential. The Proposed Economic Development Committee proactively position Dartmouth to monitor, influence, and otherwise build upon these assets and emerging industry clusters. The EDC’s efforts can include formal, regular relationships with UMass and its faculty and staff on related economic development activities.	Town Administration and Proposed EDC	On-going
ED-3G	Implement the Commercial Use recommendations included in the Padanaram Harbor Management Plan.	Town Admin., Planning, HMPIC	10 years
ED-3H	Utilize the outcomes of the Harbor Economic Analysis being undertaken by the town and the HMPIC to maximize desirable economic use of the harbor.	Town Admin., HMPIC	On-going
ED-3I	Pursue a feasibility study for dredging in the Harbor. The main Apponagansett Bay channel has developed shallow areas which are expected, in the near future, to negatively impact navigation, resulting in economic losses due to decreased recreational and commercial use accessibility.	Town Admin., Harbormaster, Waterways Committee, HMPIC	1-3 years

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