

North Attleborough Master Plan 2023



NORTH ATTLEBOROUGH
MASSACHUSETTS



SRPEDD
Southeastern Regional Planning
& Economic Development District



Federal Disclaimer, Title VI and Nondiscrimination Notice of Rights of Beneficiaries

The Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO) through the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) operates its programs, services, and activities in compliance with federal nondiscrimination laws including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and related statutes and regulations. Title VI prohibits discrimination in federally assisted programs and requires that no person in the United States of America shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency), be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance. Related federal nondiscrimination laws administered by the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, or both prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, sex, and disability. These protected categories are contemplated within SRPEDD’s Title VI Programs consistent with federal interpretation and administration. Additionally, SRPEDD provides meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to individuals with limited English proficiency, in compliance with US Department of Transportation policy and guidance on federal Executive Order 13166.

Individuals seeking additional information or wishing to file a Title VI/Nondiscrimination complaint may contact the SRPEDD Title VI/Nondiscrimination Coordinator at the contact information here. All such complaints must be received, in writing, within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. Assistance will be provided, upon request, to individuals unable to provide the complaint form in writing.

Southeastern Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMMPO)

Title VI Coordinator -SRPEDD
88 Broadway, Taunton, MA 02780
Phone: 508 824-1367 or dial 711 to use MassRelay
Email: lcabral@srpedd.org

Massachusetts Public Accommodation Law (M.G.L. c 272 §§92a, 98, 98a) and Executive Order 526 section 4 also prohibit discrimination in public accommodations based on religion, creed, class, race, color, denomination, sex, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, gender identity and expression, and veteran’s status, and SRPEDD and the SMMPO assures compliance with these laws. Public Accommodation Law concerns can be brought to SRPEDD’s Title VI /Nondiscrimination Coordinator or to file a complaint alleging a violation of the state’s Public Accommodation Law, contact the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination within 300 days of the alleged discriminatory conduct.

The SMMPO is equally committed to implementing federal Executive Order 12898, entitled “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations”

and Executive Order 13985 (2021) entitled “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.”

In this capacity, the SMMPO identifies and addresses disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on low-income and minority, including BIPOC, Asian or Pacific Islander populations, as well as religious minorities, LGBTQ+ persons, Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons or those who have a disability. The SMMPO carries out this responsibility by the consistent, fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, and by involving underserved individuals in the transportation process and considering their transportation needs in the development and review of the SMMPO’s transportation plans, programs and projects.

English: If this information is needed in another language, please contact the MPO Title VI Coordinator at 508-824-1367 ext. 235 or at lcabral@srpedd.org.

Spanish: Si necesita esta información en otro idioma, por favor contacte al coordinador de MPO del Título VI al 508-824-1367 ext. 235 o en lcabral@srpedd.org.

Portuguese: Caso estas informações sejam necessárias em outro idioma, por favor, contate o Coordenador de Título VI da MPO pelo telefone 508-824-1367, Ramal 235 ou em lcabral@srpedd.org.

Haitian Creole: Si yon moun bezwen enfòmasyon sa a nan yon lòt lang, tanpri kontakte Koòdonatè a Title VI MPO nan 508-824-1367 ext. 235.

Simplified Chinese: 如果需要其他语言的此信息，请致电 508-824-1367 分机联系 MPO Title VI 协调员。235 或发送电子邮件至 lcabral@srpedd.org。

Simplified Chinese: 如果需要其他语言的此信息，请致电 508-824-1367 分机联系 MPO Title VI 协调员。235 或发送电子邮件至 lcabral@srpedd.org。

Traditional Chinese: 如果需要其他語言的此信息，請致電 508-824-1367 分機聯繫 MPO Title VI 協調員。235 或發送電子郵件至 lcabral@srpedd.org。

Mon Khmer Cambodian (Khmer): បុរសិបបីតីមាននេះស្តារការជាភាសាផ្សេង សូមទាក់ទង អ្នកសម្របសម្រួល MPO Title VI តាមរយៈលេខ 508-824-1367 ext ១ 235 ឬនិយាយ lcabral@srpedd.org ។

Acknowledgements

This report was made possible with participation and technical assistance from the following:

Town of North Attleborough

- Bill Blais, Planning Board Vice Chairperson
- Michael Borg, Town Manager
- Marie Clarner, Planning Board Chairperson
- Gil Hilario, Town Planner
- Lyle Pirnie, Economic Development Director
- North Attleborough Planning Board
- North Attleborough Town Council

Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD)

- Eric Arbeene, AICP; Principal Comprehensive Planner (former)
- Sara Brown, CPO; Senior Comprehensive Planner
- Robert Cabral; Director of Housing and Community Development
- Lizeth Gonzalez, Director of Economic Development
- Kevin Ham; Homeland Security Program Manager & FAA-Certified Drone Pilot
- Grant King, AICP; Comprehensive Planning Manager
- Bill Napolitano; Rivers, Trails, & Watershed Coordinator
- Taylor Perez; Senior Comprehensive Planner & Community Engagement Specialist
- Helen Zincavage, AICP, CFM; Manager of Environmental Programs

Table of Contents

Federal Disclaimer, Title VI and Nondiscrimination Notice of Rights of Beneficiaries	2
Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	8
What is a Master Plan?.....	9
Statutory Elements.....	10
Housing Production Plan	11
About North Attleborough.....	12
Key Features	12
A Brief History	12
North Attleborough in Numbers.....	14
Land Use	29
Hire a consultant to review existing zoning bylaws and regulations for clarity and update site plan review, dimensional, and use regulations, where necessary.	31
Modernize zoning bylaw access by implementing a digital solution, such as eCode360, while also updating and simplifying Planning Applications, fees, and the Application process.....	33
Examine the feasibility of establishing a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District in key areas in town.	35
Implement mixed-use zoning with clear design guidelines in key areas in Town where a 40R would otherwise not be eligible.	38
Investigate and implement multi-family zoning changes to achieve compliance with M.G.L. c. 40A Section 3A "Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities.".....	40

Housing 43

Implement high priority strategies from the Town’s 2022 Housing Production Plan (HPP). ... 45

Pursue “friendly 40Bs,” 40Rs, and other partnerships with developers with the intent to produce affordable housing units in appropriate locations..... 46

Create Design and Site Plan Guidelines to ensure that the look and location of new housing development reflect community standards and neighborhood feel. 48

Investigate opportunities for adaptive reuse to redevelop underutilized municipally owned land and buildings, including the Courtois Site..... 49

Strategies 50

Examine methods to provide direct assistance to help preserve housing for vulnerable communities, including senior residents. 51

Implement strategic zoning amendments with the goal of encouraging higher density development, reducing barriers for accessory or multi-family units, or actively pursuing development for populations without existing housing options (including older adults and those with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses). 52

Economic Development 57

Create a user-friendly Development and Permitting Guide to facilitate business development. 59

Consider creating a permanent outdoor dining policy to provide restaurants more flexibility and to help enliven the public streetscape in Downtown. 60

Coordinate with small businesses and residents to create a Downtown Revitalization Plan, including pedestrian-oriented transportation recommendations, new design guidelines, signage, wayfinding, and outdoor seating plans 62

Implement a Facade Improvement Program to assist business owners with improving the quality and look of storefronts, signage, and building facades in Downtown..... 64

Create a Route 1 Economic Development Plan to craft a vision for future development and revitalization of the Mall and surrounding commercial areas along the corridor..... 67

Partner with a developer to revitalize the Emerald Square Mall into a walkable, mixed-use village-style center..... 68

Inventory and begin remediation efforts of Brownfield sites and underutilized parcels in town that are suitable for new commercial development or repurposing into a community asset, including, but not limited to, 35 Robinson, Webster Mill, Benson Trust Site, Ferrara Property, and Handy and Harman. 70

Open Space & Recreation 73

Work to develop a local multi-use trail system and, where feasible, a regional trail system in collaboration with local partners and municipalities 77

Develop a town-wide water access master plan to clarify allowed activities and improve parking, walking, and watercraft access at key fishing, swimming, and boating sites in town. 79

Adopt the Community Preservation Act to fund the acquisition of open space and community development projects..... 82

Explore parcels eligible for the creation of small, neighborhood-focused uses, such as dog parks, community gardens, skate parks, playgrounds, and pocket parks. 84

Provide additional recreation opportunities at existing underutilized open spaces and recreation sites in town for individuals of all ages and abilities and as cited in the 2021 OSRP, including ADA accessibility..... 87

Inventory and address maintenance concerns, including lighting, drainage, and parking at key recreational and athletic fields in town. 88

Natural & Cultural Resources 91

Explore conserving parcels in the town’s western “Greenbelt” and in other areas that are consistent with the town’s Priority Protection Area mapping. 93

Establish an Agricultural Commission that can proactively plan for agricultural preservation and assist local farmers in maintaining the lands and practices of agriculture, particularly with accessing resources to farming under climate change paradigms..... 94

Protect the quality and quantity of the town’s water resources (water bodies and groundwater). Work to address impaired water resources in need of a total maximum daily load (TMDL) by planning improvements at the watershed and sub-watershed scale. 95

Establish group of volunteers to document species habitat records for the town and the National Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) database, or other conservation organizations, to preserve biodiversity, variety of habitat, and intact ecosystems. 98

In partnership with residents and business owners, identify building facades and areas in town that would benefit from art installations and murals.....101

Coordinate with the Cultural Council, Fire Department, and downtown businesses to explore new event opportunities that highlight cultural features of North Attleborough and support community gathering.102

Climate & Resilience105

Ensure vulnerable populations, including older adults/senior residents, have access to air conditioning during heat events. 107

Identify locations eligible for green infrastructure investments such as vegetative stormwater management and climate-resilient or pollinator-friendly street trees. 108

Address flooding and flood storage concerns described in the 2019 MVP Plan and 2019 Stormwater Management Program, including flooding along the Ten Mile River and in Downtown and in New Development and Redevelopment.110

Adopt Low Impact Development (LID) strategies into land use bylaws to mitigate effects and

reverse damage caused by development in the Town’s ecosystems or watershed. Start with an audit of existing bylaws using the Mass Audubon Low Impact Development Bylaw Review tool.113

Services & Facilities 115

Create an ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan to identify important accessibility concerns in existing open spaces and town-owned facilities. 117

Continue to update the new North Attleborough town website and social media to actively circulate information regarding town regulations, meetings, local events, restaurants, parks, conservation areas, and cultural assets.....118

Continue to seek funding through Green Communities’ competitive grants to accomplish energy efficiency measures in town buildings and facilities.....121

Maintain MS4 compliance and upgrade stormwater infrastructure and practices described in permit and planning documents.122

Advertise the location of community shelters that provide relief from intense storms and extreme heat or winter events. Clearly mark and advertise roadway evacuation routes.123

Pursue improvements and new locations for municipal facilities reaching the end of their lifespan, including the Fire Department Headquarters and Senior Center.....124

Coordinate facility improvements with the creation of a new Social Services Center.126

Transportation & Circulation129

Conduct a Downtown Parking and Access Study to determine the most efficient and flexible use of parking for the Downtown throughout various times of the day/year.131

Work with MassDOT to conduct Road Safety Audits (RSAs) on state-owned roadways and intersections with a high number of crashes and safety concerns; implement items previously identified through RSAs.133

Coordinate with MassDOT to study and implement changes to Route 1 in anticipation of future mixed-use development and to create a cohesive corridor that is more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly.134

Continue to construct high-priority "Complete Streets" improvements in Partnership with MassDOT.135

Prioritize the creation of new biking connections and improve the safety of existing connections to enhance "bikeability" for residents, particularly for underserved and vulnerable populations.136

Encourage new developments to install permeable surfaces and stormwater recapture measures (green infrastructure elements such as bioswales, curb cuts into rain gardens, etc). . 139

Pursue electric and hybrid options for town vehicle fleets and install additional electric vehicle charging stations along high-traffic routes.140

Implementation143



Introduction

The Town of North Attleborough is a bustling suburban community of 30,834¹ residents that boasts a number of rich amenities, from its vibrant downtown to its many open spaces and natural resources. Situated between Plainville, Attleboro, Mansfield, and Cumberland, RI, the town enjoys access to I-95 and I-295 and has two main commercial corridors, Route 1 and South Washington Street. A former center of jewelry production, North Attleborough is now known for its numerous small businesses and large retailers, making it an attractive area for commercial investment. It has a diverse housing stock of single- and multi-family homes, as well as larger apartment complexes and condominiums.

In 2020, North Attleborough partnered with the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to create a ten-year Master Plan. Massachusetts General Law defines a Master Plan as “a statement, through text, maps, illustrations or other forms of communication, that is designed to provide a basis for decision making regarding the long-term physical development of the municipality.”² In short, it is a document that outlines a roadmap to help the town build on its many assets and address its challenges.

¹ Census 2020 DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171) P1

² **M.G.L. Chapter 41 Section 81D: Master plan; economic development supplement**

What is a Master Plan?

A Master Plan can be many things. It is a narrative that tells the story of North Attleborough’s history and the experience of living in town today. It is a technical document that considers population, market, and land use changes to chart where the Town currently is and its course for tomorrow. It is a policy document that lays out a consensus vision for North Attleborough and articulates the strategies and actions that will help the town meet its goals. In short, it is a long-range plan that helps guide the town, that builds trust by making transparent decisions, and that bases those decisions on accurate information and public input.

The State of Massachusetts requires that all cities and towns create and update a Master Plan as needed. Master Plans frequently result in bylaw changes, participating in new state or federal programs, coordinated grant applications and infrastructure investments, updated and more efficient administration, and increased volunteerism, service, and stewardship in a community. More importantly, the Master Planning process is a meaningful opportunity for a city or town to come together as a community, to reassess its goals and priorities, and to set a course to achieve those goals over the next several years.

Topics in a Master Plan M.G.L. c. 41 § 81D

According to M.G.L. Chapter 41 Section 81D, a Master Plan shall include the following elements:

1. Goals and policies;
2. Land Use;
3. Housing;
4. Natural and Cultural Resources;
5. Open Space and Recreation;
6. Services and Facilities;
7. Circulation [and Transportation]; and
8. Implementation Program.

Additionally, the law specifies:

“Such plan shall be made, and may be added to or changed from time to time, by a majority vote of such planning board and shall be public record. The planning board shall, upon completion of any plan or report, or any change or amendment to a plan or report produced under this section, furnish a copy of such plan or report or amendment thereto, to the department of housing and community development.”

Statutory Elements

A Master Plan has nine required “elements.” They are:

1. The Statement of Goals and Policies sets out North Attleborough’s vision for the future. It presents community values, goals, and the land use objectives that will meet these goals.
2. The Land Use Element describes North Attleborough’s current and future land use patterns, including proposed locations for various types of activity, such as residences, businesses, and recreation, and the preferred relative intensity of development across the town’s diverse built landscapes.
3. The Housing Element creates a plan to meet the town’s housing needs, which are identified using demographic and market information.
4. The Economic Development Element identifies strategies for growing the town’s economy by building upon local strengths and bringing new and compatible opportunities to North Attleborough.
5. The Natural and Cultural Resources Element is an opportunity for North Attleborough to highlight and take stock of its natural, cultural, and historic resources.
6. The Open Space and Recreation Element describes existing open space and recreational facilities in town and aligns plans for future recreation and open space with project population needs.
7. The Services and Facilities Element identifies existing and anticipated needs for public infrastructure and services.
8. The Circulation and Transportation Element provides an inventory of existing and proposed transportation infrastructure and services across all modes including private cars, public transit, and bicycle and pedestrian routes.
9. The Implementation section provides a blueprint and schedule for making the master plan a reality.

We organize this plan so that each “element” is a single chapter.

Public Outreach and Community-Driven Planning

Input from residents is essential to ensuring a Master Plan accurately reflects the goals and priorities of the community that creates it. Participation from residents and local stakeholders is the best way to make sure that a Master Plan is authentic, actionable, and produces change that is driven by the community’s vision for their city or town.

Most of North Attleborough’s Master Plan public outreach process took place during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, this project’s public feedback was gathered through a variety of forums, including online and in-person workshops, social media, tabling events, and surveys. The Master Plan also sources feedback from the complementary Housing Production Plan’s public engagement process.

Housing Production Plan

This Master Plan serves as a sister document to a concurrently developed Housing Production Plan (HPP) for the Town of North Attleborough. An HPP, as defined by 760 CMR 56, is a document that shall contain at a minimum the following elements, covering a period of five years:

1. Comprehensive housing needs assessment;
2. Affordable housing goals; and
3. Implementation strategies.

To learn more about the Housing Production Plan and its findings, contact the Town of North Attleborough.

Public Events and Workshops

The project team hosted five public events throughout the Master Plan process. These events included the following:

- Visioning Workshop; February 2021
- Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Workshop; April 2021
- North Attleborough Farmers Market Tabling; July 2021
- Open Space/Recreation, Natural/Cultural Resources, and Climate Resilience Workshop; November 2021
- Transportation/Circulation and Services/Facilities Workshop; July 2022

The project team also conducted four surveys related to topics addressed throughout this Master Plan and hosted several online mapping exercises. Responses from these two types of public engagement forums will be referenced throughout the plan.



About North Attleborough

Key Features

North Attleborough's walkable, mixed-use downtown is one of the region's true Downtowns. They also have an abundance of natural resources including several rivers, such as the Ten-Mile River and Seven-Mile River, and numerous ponds and lakes, such as Greenwood Lake (site of a fish hatchery) and Falls Pond (popular for fishing, swimming, and boating). The town's World War I Memorial Park and Zoo offers picnic areas, trails, a ski slope, playgrounds, a sports field, an Arboretum, and a petting zoo. It also includes the highest point in Bristol County [Sunrise Hill (Watery Hill)] at 390 feet above sea level.

A Brief History

- **Prior to European Colonization | 1675 and earlier:** Pokanoket or Wampanoag tribes inhabited the greater Attleboro area, which served as a core where hunting, fishing, and quarrying occurred.
- **Organization of the Weymouth Company | 1643:** Led by Reverend Samuel Newman, the Weymouth Company completed the Rehoboth Purchase, which encompassed much of current Rehoboth, Seekonk, and Attleboro.
- **Wamsutta or Rehoboth North Purchase | 1661:** A second land purchase added nearly 10,000 acres of land including North Attleborough and Plainville.
- **The Town of Attleborough is Incorporated | 1694:** Modern-day North Attleborough and neighboring Attleboro are incorporated. By 1699, 131 residents occupied the area, mostly along Old Post Road, known at the time as Bay Road.
- **Industrial Development | Late Eighteenth to Nineteenth Centuries:** Much of the area's economy was divided into agricultural, textile, and jewelry industries. An individual known only as "the foreigner" began manufacturing jewelry in town in 1780. By 1858, there were 23 jewelry manufacturers in the North Attleborough/Attleborough area.

- **Expansion and Suburbanization | Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries:** During this time, much of North Attleborough's village was expanded, with new swathes of commercial and residential development taking shape over the course of the late 1800s to early 1900s. The construction of Interstate 95 in the 1960s proved to be transformative for the town, allowing the economy to shift away from its agricultural origins. Additional infrastructure projects, such as the construction of Interstate 295 and the Commuter Rail line connection to Boston, fostered suburban development and the construction of civic amenities, such as the WWII Memorial Pool.
- **Population Boom and Commercialization | Present:** North Attleborough grew considerably during the end of the twentieth century, with population booms exceeding +20% during some decades. However, the town's growth has been modest leading into the 2000s and has not exceeded 10% in the past three decades. Extensive commercial development has occurred over the last 30 years, including the construction of the Emerald Square Mall and development of Route 1.

Image 1: Downtown North Attleborough and Town Offices [Kevin Ham/SRPEDD]



North Attleborough in Numbers

In addition to direct input from the public and town decision-makers, the Master Plan relies on data from a variety of sources to help tell North Attleborough's story. This section offers a high-level overview of the town's population, housing stock, economy, open spaces, natural resources, transportation routes, and town infrastructure.

Below is a brief description of some of the data sources that are referenced most often throughout the report:

American Community Survey (ACS) and the U.S. Census

The American Community Survey, or ACS, gathers data on a sample of the population through monthly surveys US Census Bureau produces on topics including housing, jobs, education, and more. The Five-Year ACS shows data that has been collected and aggregated over a five-year period from 2014 to 2019. The Decennial Census³ is a count of the entire population conducted and released every 10 years. These data sources have some overlap, but also gather information on separate topics.

ESRI Business Analyst

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software provider ESRI offers an online mapping service called Business Analyst that allows users to run market analyses on specific geographies. Here, it is used to retrieve population and housing unit projections out to 2027.

Massachusetts Executive Office on Labor and Workforce Development

Massachusetts' Executive Office on Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) creates and oversees workforce-related services, such as workers' rights protection and workers' safety. They also manage workforce-related data related to employment, industry, and labor markets.

³ At the time of this writing, much of the content of the 2020 Decennial Census data has still not been released. Because of this, some of the data, ranging from demographic information to the Town's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) run through the year 2020 or 2021.

Population and Demographics

North Attleborough currently has 30,834 residents as of 2020; a number that has increased by 7.4% since 2010. Like many communities in Southeastern Massachusetts and throughout the nation, North Attleborough's population is aging – the median age in town increased from 35.6 to 40.2 between 2000 and 2020.

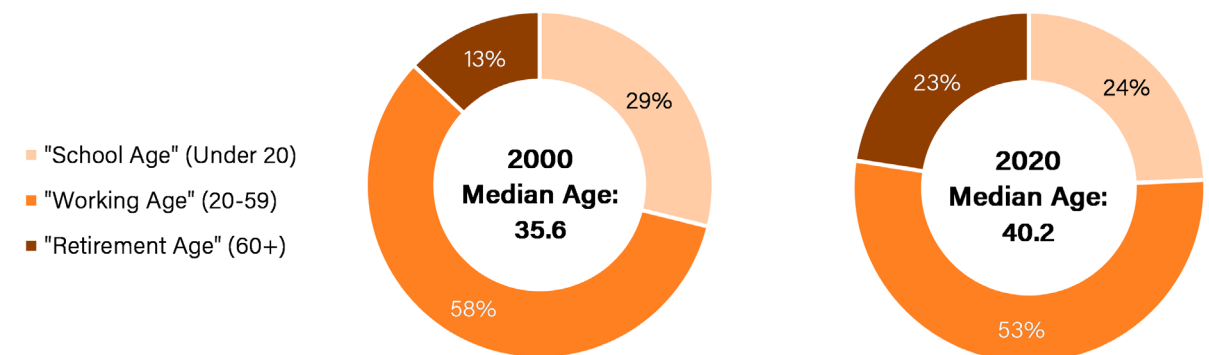
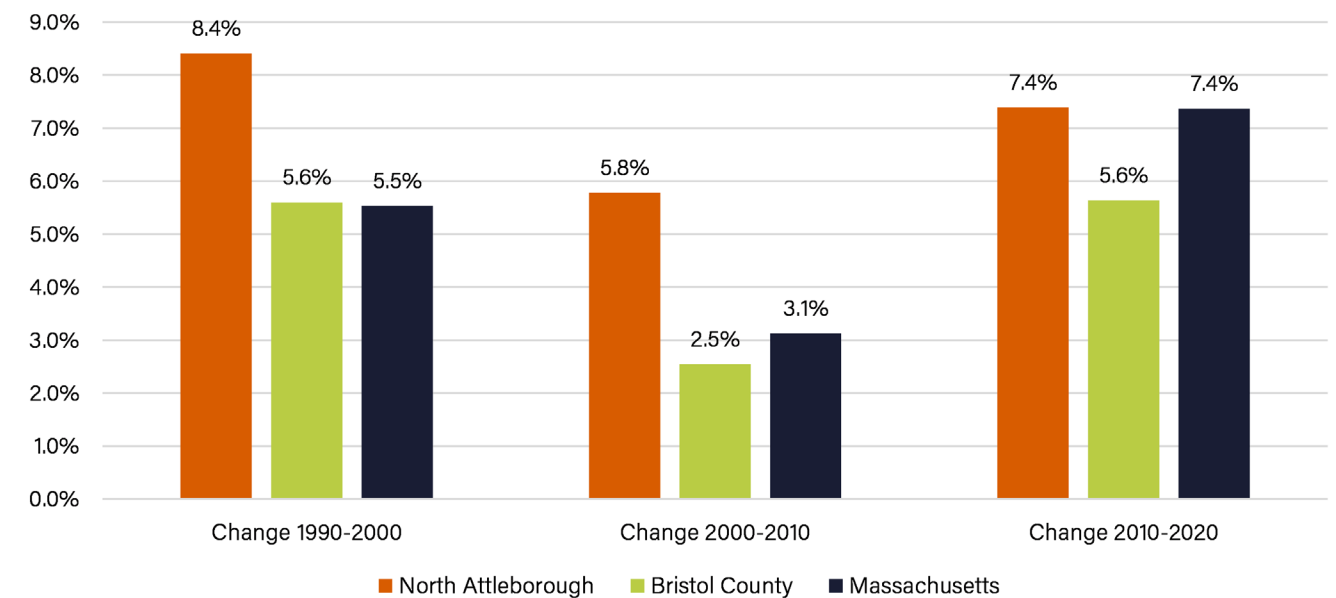


Figure 1 (top): Population Breakdown; US Census, 2000, 2010, and 2020; Total Population
 Figure 2 (bottom): Changes in Age; Census 2000 and ACS 2020 5yr Estimates, Total Population

ESRI Business Analyst, which projects population and housing unit changes for 2022 and 2027, predicts that North Attleborough will grow at a very modest rate. Between 2022 and 2027, growth is expected to occur at a rate >1%, adding 631 new residents and 294 new housing units – significantly slower growth than prior decades.

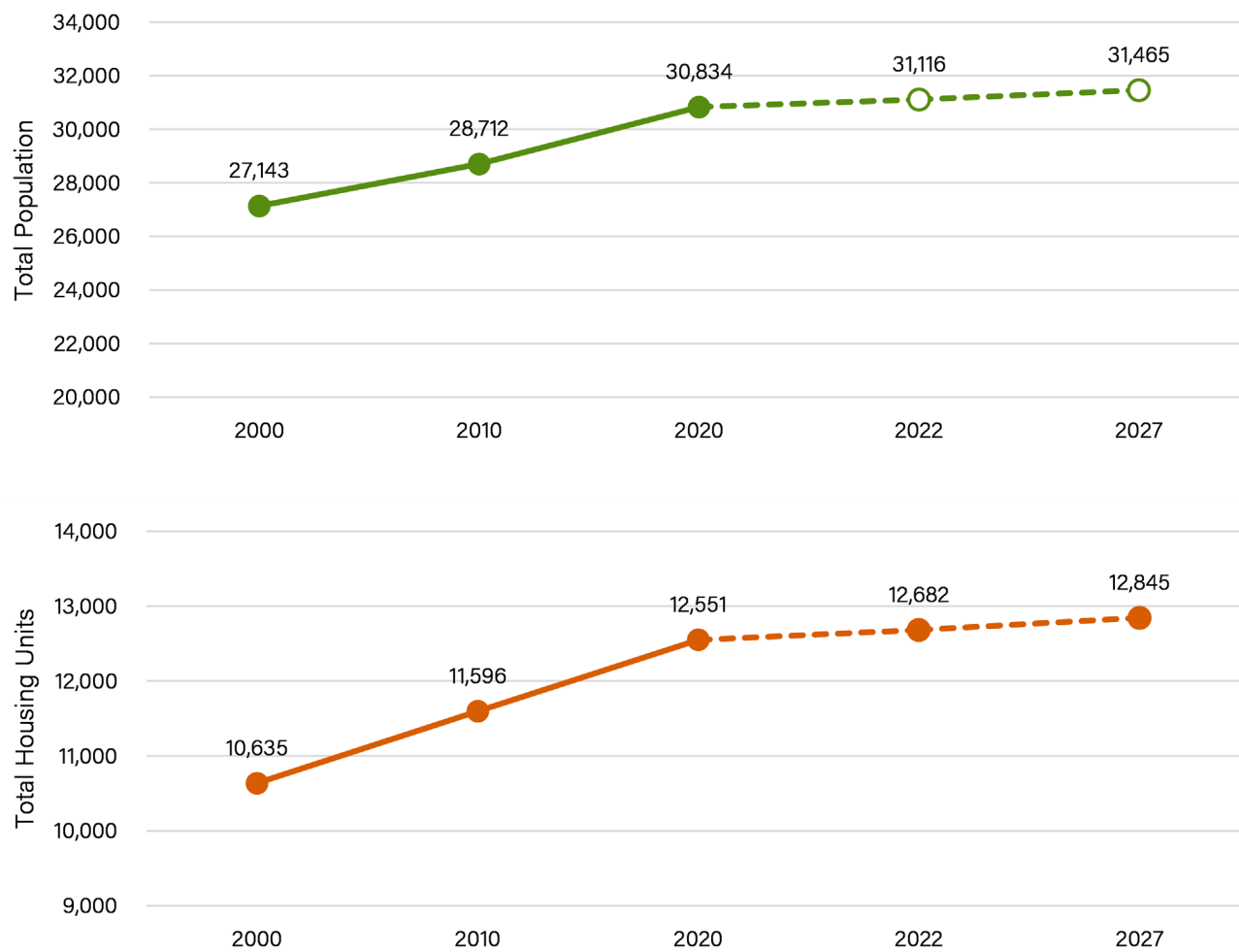


Figure 3 (top): Population Projections; ESRI Business Analyst, 2022
 Figure 4 (bottom): Housing Unit Projections; ESRI Business Analyst, 2022

North Attleborough is a relatively affluent community, with a median household income of \$91,994 as of 2020, 9% higher than the state median income and 28% higher than Bristol County’s median income. Of all the households in town, 2 in 5 (43.35%) make \$100,000 or more annually. The Town should ensure effort is made to adequately address the housing needs of lower- and moderate-income residents in town, as these issues can often go overlooked in more affluent communities.

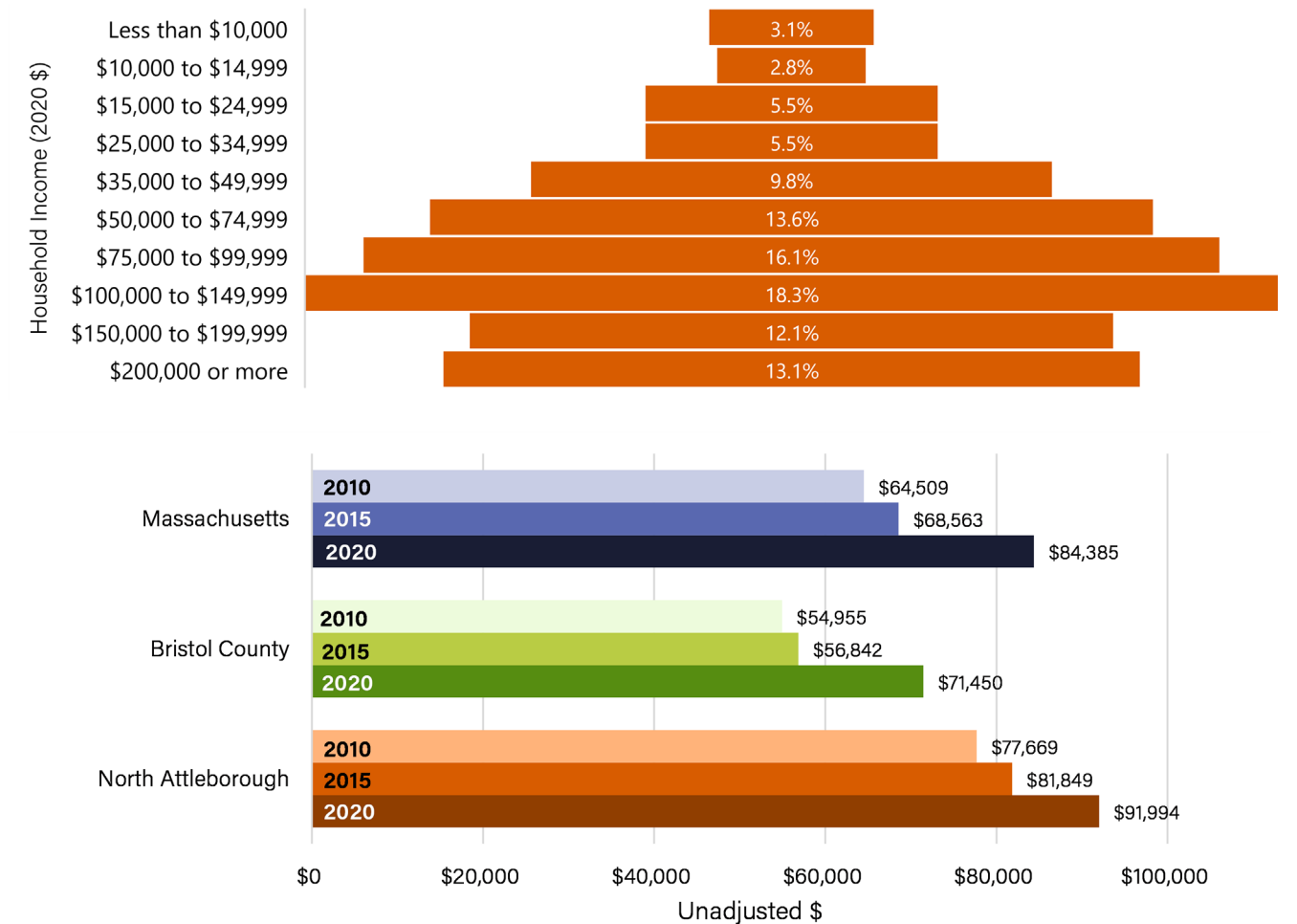


Figure 5 (top): Household Income Breakdown; ACS 5yr Estimates, 2020; Total Households
 Figure 6 (bottom): Change in Median Household Income; ACS 5yr Estimates, 2010, 2015, and 2020; Total Households

Land Use and Housing

Much of North Attleborough’s land is dedicated to lower-density, single family housing. Land along Route 1 tends to be larger-lot, single-use commercial properties. Through the development of a “greenbelt” in the west, the Town has preserved several spaces as open space, recreation, and agricultural land uses. Much of North Attleborough’s institutional land uses reside on the east side of town.

Most of the residential structures in town are older and pre-date the year 2000. While the most significant boom in housing construction occurred between the years 1980 and 1999, housing production has been consistent throughout North Attleborough’s history. While production decreased between 2000 and 2009, it dropped significantly after 2008. Moving forward, it will be important for the town to navigate the needs of the population, either through construction of new housing or the retrofit of structures as they age.

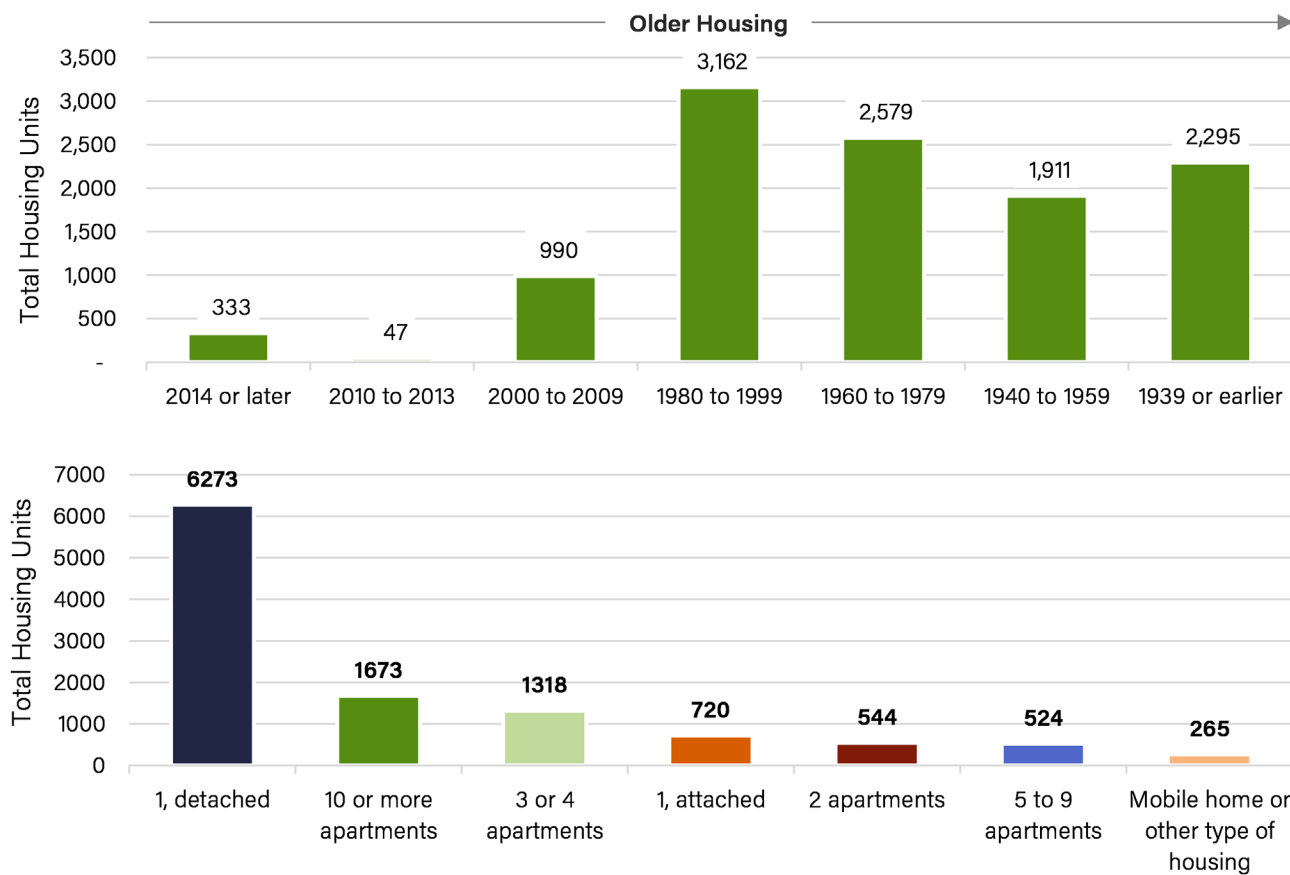
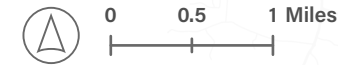
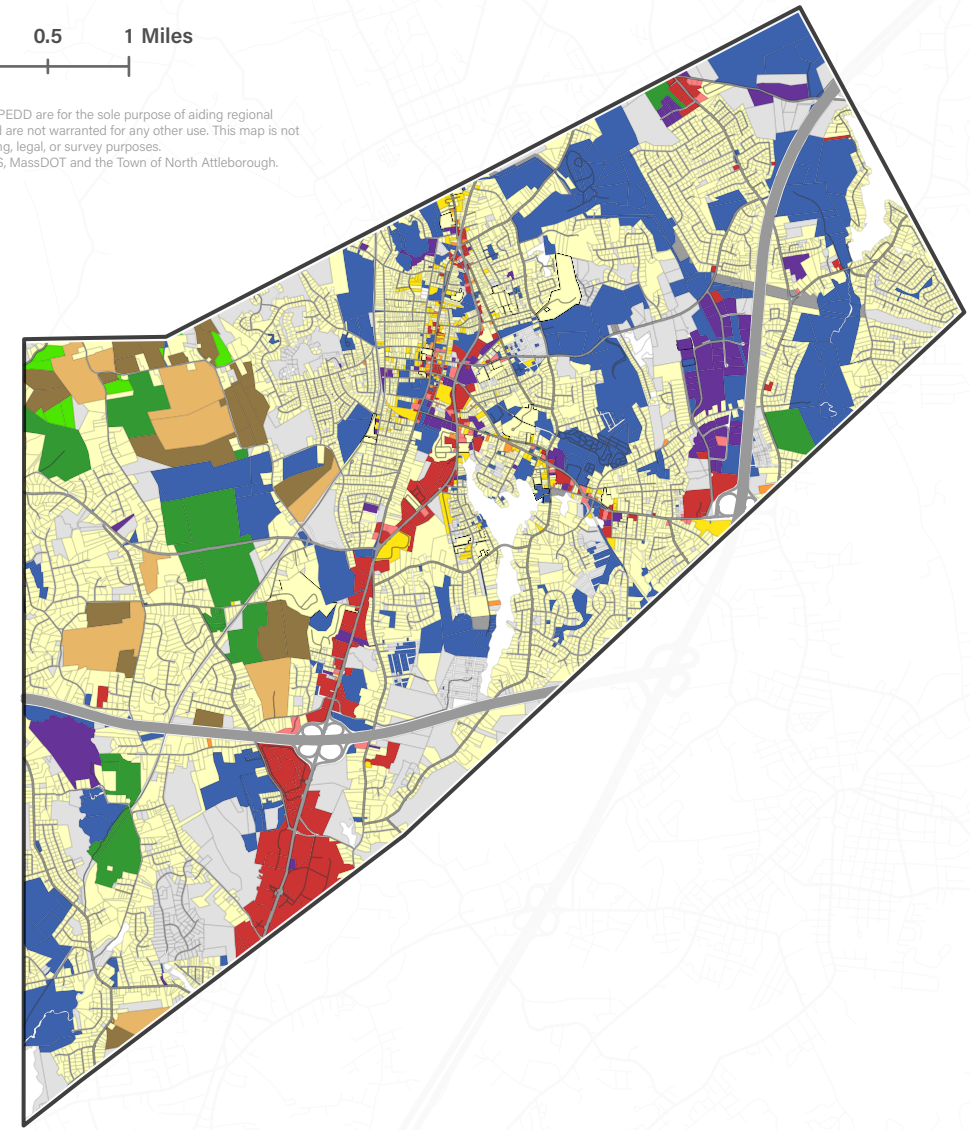


Figure 5 (top): Housing Units by Age; ACS 5yr Estimates, 2020; Total Households

Figure 6 (bottom): Housing Units by Units in Structure; ACS 5yr Estimates, 2010, 2015, and 2020; Total Households



Maps produced by SRPEDD are for the sole purpose of aiding regional planning decisions and are not warranted for any other use. This map is not intended for engineering, legal, or survey purposes.
Data sources: MassGIS, MassDOT and the Town of North Attleborough.



Legend

Land Use FY22

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Residences <= 3 units | Commercial | Non-Productive Agricultural/
Horticultural Land |
| Apartments >= 4 units | Industrial | Open Space and Recreation |
| Mixed-Use | Institutional | Utility and Transportation |
| Office | Res/Ag and Res/OS | Vacant |
| | Agriculture | No Data |

Map 1: Land Use; MassGIS; 2022.

Economy and Industry

North Attleborough’s residential tax rates are consistent, and slightly lower than nearby towns, such as Plainville, Attleboro, and Mansfield. Its commercial tax rate is significantly lower than Attleboro and Mansfield – and slightly lower than Plainville. However, most tax-producing properties in town are residential (78.4%), indicating that other factors are prohibiting commercial and mixed-use development in Town.

Most of the industry in town relates to retail trade, accounting for over 3,300 jobs in 2021. The largest retail employers (and employers in the Town) include Walmart Supercenter and Lowe’s Home Improvement. While this industry still comprises the largest portion of jobs in North Attleborough, it decreased in the period between 2010 and 2021 by nearly 20%, highlighting a need for diversification of industries in town.

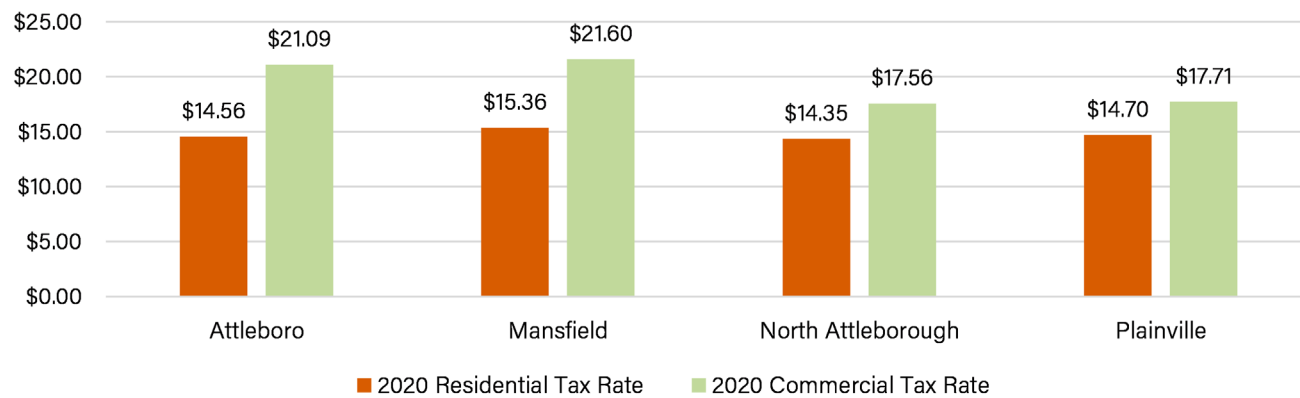
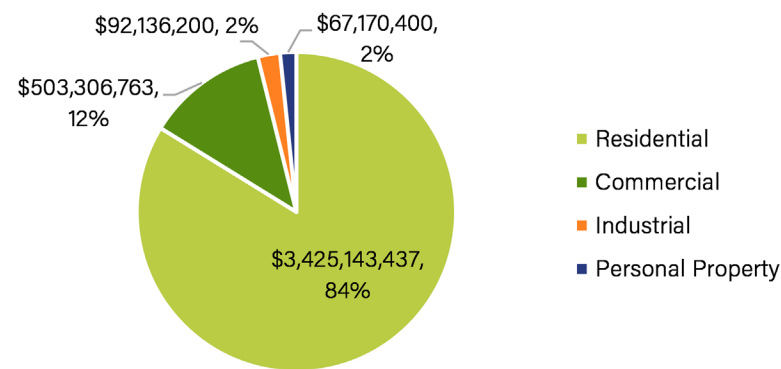


Figure 7 (top): North Attleborough assessed values; Massachusetts Department of Revenue; 2020

Figure 8 (bottom): North Attleborough and neighboring towns’ tax rates; Massachusetts Department of Revenue; 2020

Table 1: Industry Breakdown by NAICS Code; Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development; 2021.

NAICS Code and industry	2010 Jobs	2021 Jobs	Percentage Change (2010-2021)
44-45 Retail Trade	4,145	3,319	-19.9%
31-33 Manufacturing	1,352	1,296	-4.1%
72 Accomodation and Food Services	1,007	1,073	6.6%
81 Other Services, Except Public Administration	1,228	797	-35.1%
62 Health Care and Social Assistance	697	782	12.2%
23 Construction	310	552	78.1%
42 Wholesale Trade	323	333	3.1%

Table 2: Top Employers in Town; Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development; 2021.

Company Name	Number of Employees
Walmart Supercenter	500-999
Lowe’s Home Improvement	500-999
Macy’s	250-499
North Attleboro YMCA	250-499
Best Buy	250-499
Distron Corp	100-249
Fuller Box Co	100-249
Galt Medical Corp	100-249
JCPenney	100-249
Madonna Manor Inc	100-249
Metalor Technologies USA Corp	100-249
Needletech Products	100-249
North Attleborough High School	100-249
North Attleborough Middle School	100-249
Shaw’s Supermarket	100-249

Open Space and Natural Resources

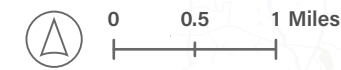
North Attleborough has a wealth of open spaces that host areas for hiking, wildlife viewing, and fishing. A strong sidewalk grid connects open spaces and recreational areas within downtown, whereas parks and open spaces on the east and west of town rely more on vehicular access. Some notable open spaces in town include:

- The North Attleborough National Fish Hatchery, 225 acres, located at 144 Bungay Rd;
- The WW1 Memorial Park, 184 acres, located at 365 Elmwood St;
- The Bragg and MacDonald Memorial Town Forest and Dog Park, 142 acres, located along Plain St; and
- The Chorney Property, 86 acres, located at 363 Ellis Rd.

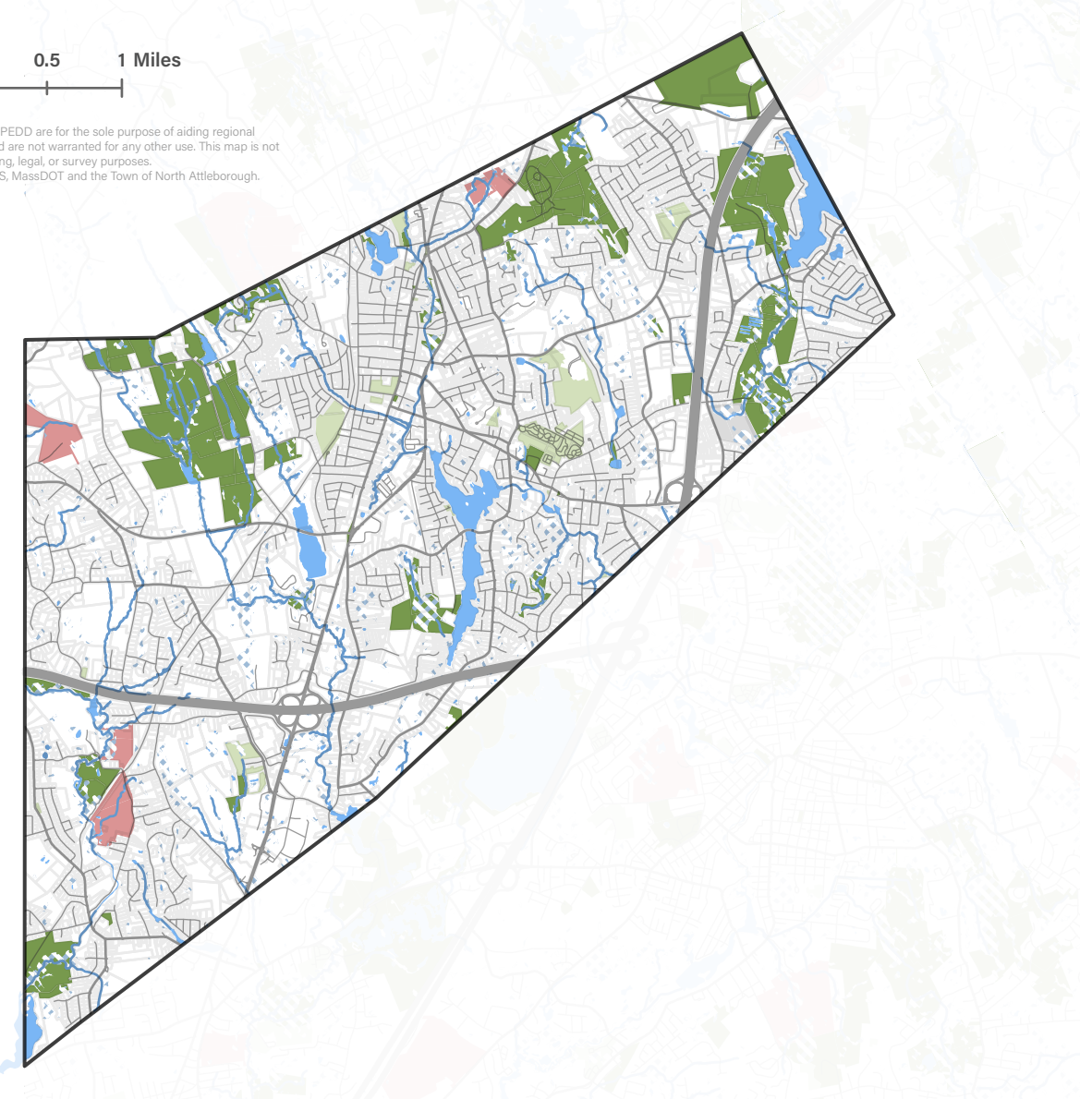
Additionally, most of North Attleborough’s core habitats and critical landscapes are in the northeast and southwest of town. These habitats support several rare and/or special concern, threatened, and endangered species, including moths, mussels, salamanders, box turtles, fish, and flowers.⁴

North Attleborough’s water resources, which border both the eastern and western edges of town and coincide with many of the town’s core habitats, play a critical role in supplying water to the region.

⁴ For more information on North Attleborough’s rare and significant natural communities, consult the [2021-2028 Open Space and Recreation Plan](#), page 21.



Maps produced by SRPEDD are for the sole purpose of aiding regional planning decisions and are not warranted for any other use. This map is not intended for engineering, legal, or survey purposes.
Data sources: MassGIS, MassDOT and the Town of North Attleborough.



Legend

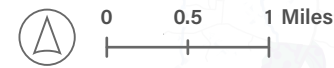
Open Space by Level of Protection

- In Perpetuity
- Limited
- Term Limited
- None
- Unknown

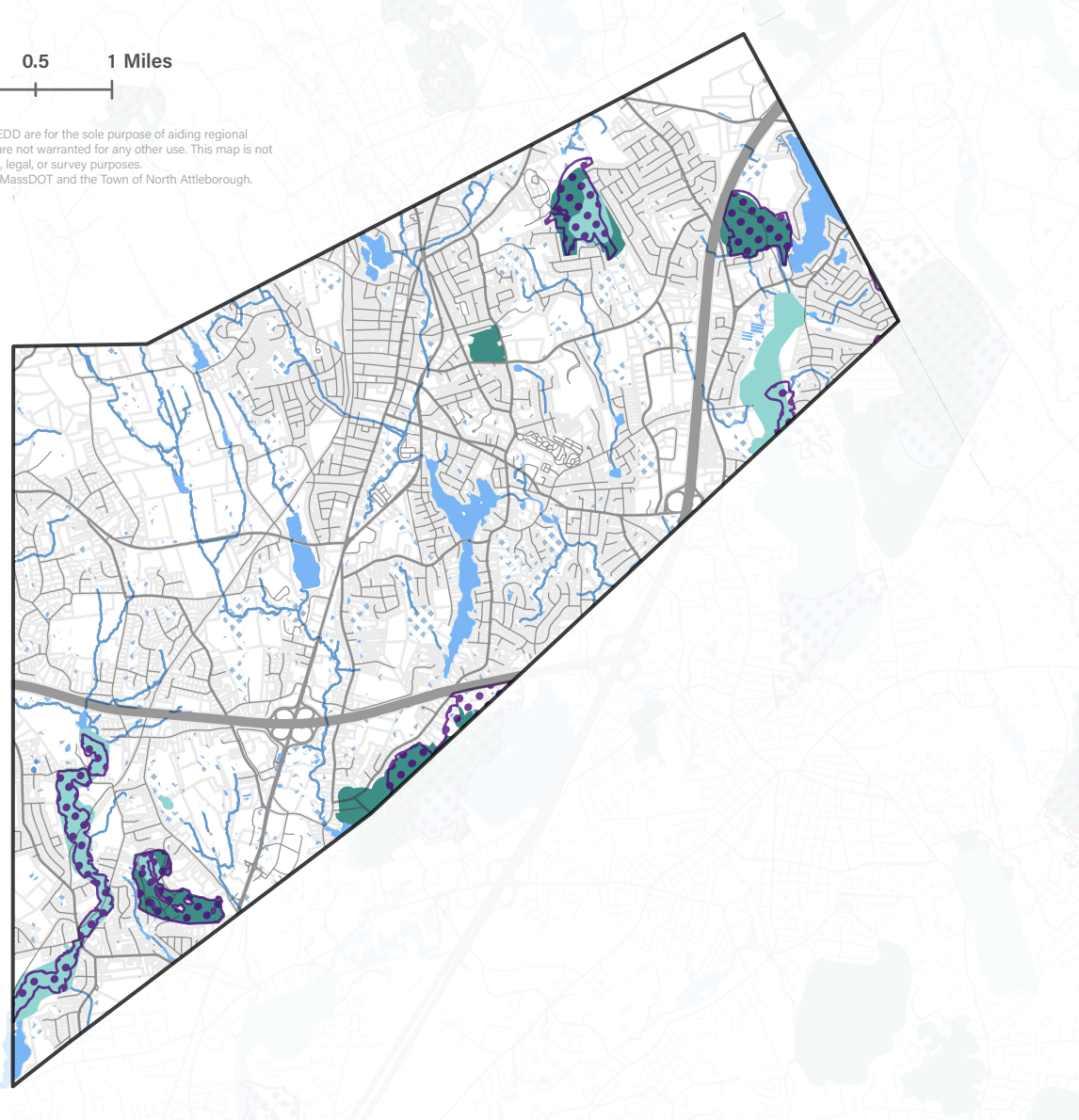
Water and Wetlands

- Water
- Rivers and Streams
- ⋄ MassDEP Wetlands

Map 2: Open Space by Level of Protection; MassGIS; 2023.



Maps produced by SRPEDD are for the sole purpose of aiding regional planning decisions and are not warranted for any other use. This map is not intended for engineering, legal, or survey purposes.
Data sources: MassGIS, MassDOT and the Town of North Attleborough.



Legend

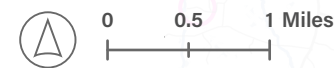
Habitats

- NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species
- BioMap2 Critical Natural Landscapes
- BioMap2 Core Habitat

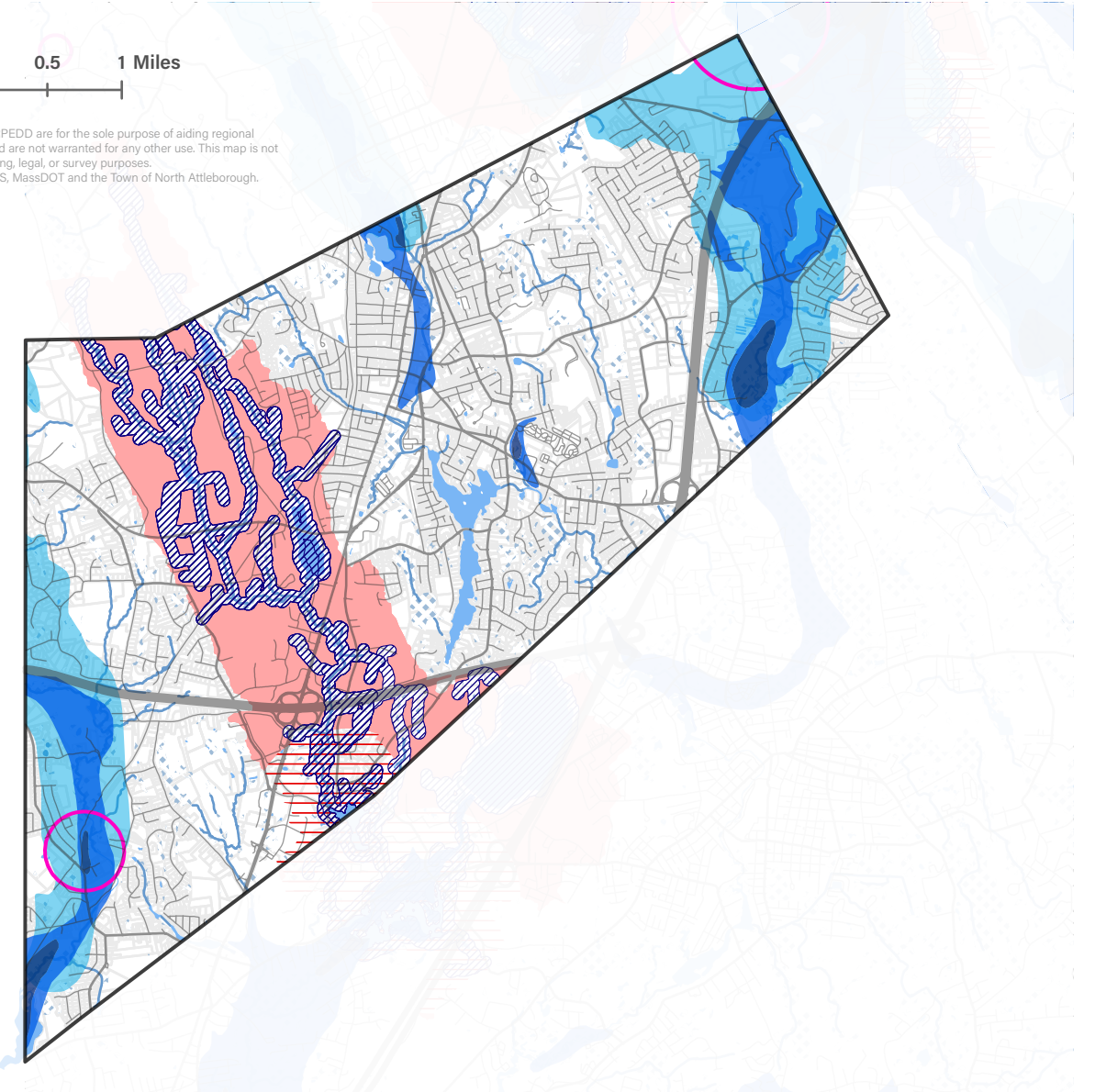
Water and Wetlands

- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- MassDEP Wetlands

Map 3: NHESP and BioMap2 Habitats; MassGIS; 2022.



Maps produced by SRPEDD are for the sole purpose of aiding regional planning decisions and are not warranted for any other use. This map is not intended for engineering, legal, or survey purposes.
Data sources: MassGIS, MassDOT and the Town of North Attleborough.



Legend

MassDEP Aquifers

- Pond
- Low Yield (<50gpm)
- Medium Yield (100-300gpm)
- High Yield (>300gpm)
- No Data

Water and Wetlands

- Rivers and Streams
- Water
- MassDEP Wetlands
- MassDEP Approved Zone II Aquifers

Surface Water Protection Areas

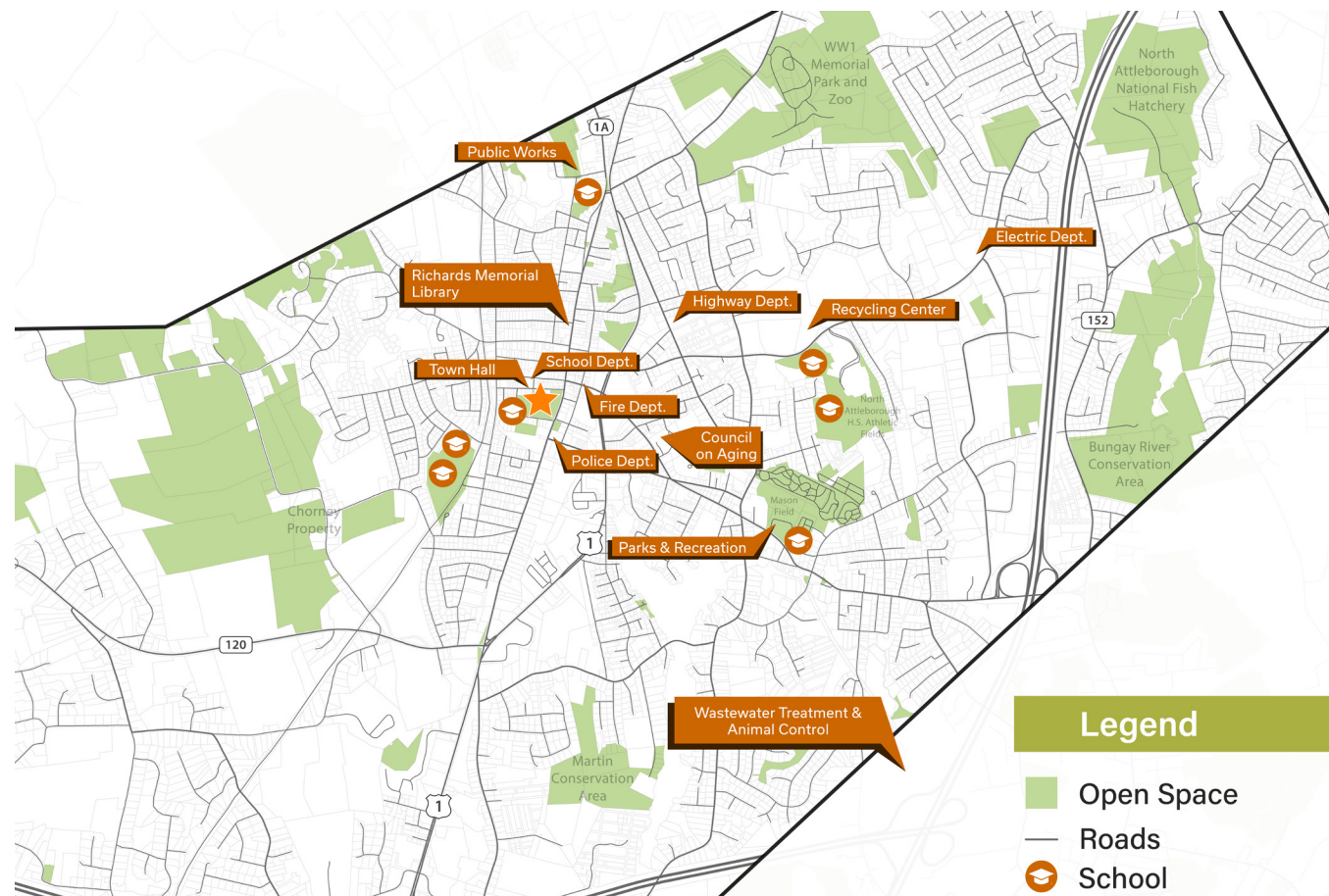
- ZONE A
- ZONE B
- ZONE C
- Interim Wellhead Protection Areas (IWPAs)

Map 4: Water Resources (Aquifers, Zone II Aquifers, SWPAs, IWPAs); MassGIS; 2022.

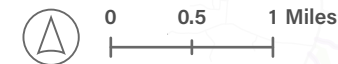
Transportation and Facilities

The town’s sewer network extends to most several properties in the northeast of town, and serves the Route 1 corridor – the areas in which the majority of commercial development takes place. However, the primarily residential, western portion of North Attleborough relies on septic systems for utility services.

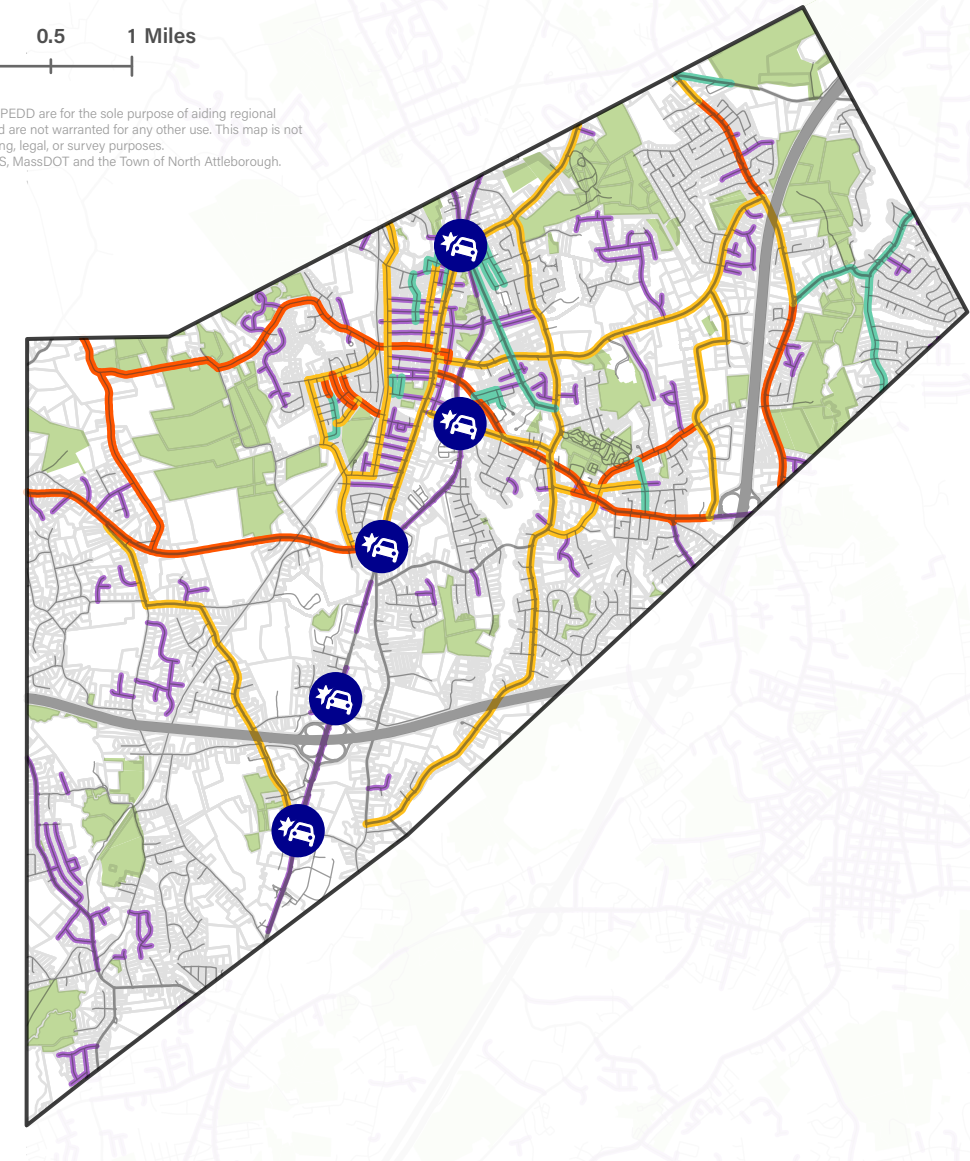
Most of North Attleborough’s core services, such as the library, police and fire departments, council on aging, and several schools are located near Downtown and Attleborough Falls, two central neighborhoods that are accessible to many residents by virtue of proximity and a strong sidewalk network.



Map 5: Town Facilities; Town of North Attleborough; 2022.



Maps produced by SRPEDD are for the sole purpose of aiding regional planning decisions and are not warranted for any other use. This map is not intended for engineering, legal, or survey purposes.
Data sources: MassGIS, MassDOT and the Town of North Attleborough.



Legend

Complete Streets Projects

- Bicycle
- Pedestrian
- Bicycle and Pedestrian

■ Open Space

— Existing Sidewalks

● Crash-Prone Intersections

Map 5: Roads, Complete Streets Projects, Crash Prone Intersections; Town of North Attleborough; 2022.



Chapter 1

Land Use

Land use regulations dictate where certain types of development can and cannot go, as well as their look and size. North Attleborough's land use and zoning reflect the Town's patterns of development through both its past and recent decades: the west side of town has seen consistent single family home development in recent years through the creation of subdivisions; the historic downtown continues to serve as a center for dining, shopping, and business; and the Route 1 corridor faces questions about the best way to integrate more uses and density into its existing commercial corridor development. The Town should focus on ensuring sustainable, integrated, and thoughtful development patterns take shape over the course of the next ten years.

Goals

- * **1.1:** Review zoning bylaws for clarity and revise, where necessary, to improve growth outcomes and to encourage mixed-use development in key areas in town.

Goal 1.1: Review zoning bylaws for clarity and revise, where necessary, to improve growth outcomes and to encourage mixed-use development in key areas in town.

Zoning can be a dense and complicated topic to understand. To encourage the types of zoning and land uses that North Attleborough would like to see in the future, the Town should review zoning code language to ensure that it is friendly to those looking to develop properties by adding clarity and simplicity to descriptions of permissible uses in each zone, appropriate distinction between zones, and a streamlined and transparent process for development throughout town. Doing so will encourage appropriate types of development as well as a cooperative and replicable process.

In addition, the Town should consider if the requirements in each of its zoning districts align with the type of development the Town and its residents would like to see moving forward – for example, in areas where the North Attleborough would like to concentrate growth, such as the area south of Downtown, the Town could revise zoning language to allow for smaller lot sizes, more dimensional intensities (e.g., higher allowed lot coverages and building heights) and a mix of uses. Ultimately, the Town can utilize this goal to align its priorities for development moving forward with its current set of regulations in the form of a digestible and clear zoning bylaw.

Strategies

- ▶ **1.1-1:** Review zoning bylaws for clarity and revise where necessary to improve growth outcomes and to encourage mixed-use development in key areas in town.
- ▶ **1.1-2:** Modernize zoning bylaw access by implementing a digital solution, such as eCode360, while also updating and simplifying Planning Applications, fees, and the Application process.
- ▶ **1.1-3:** Examine the feasibility of establishing a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District in key areas in town.
- ▶ **1.1-4:** Implement mixed-use zoning with clear design guidelines in key areas in Town where a 40R would otherwise not be eligible.
- ▶ **1.1-5:** Investigate and implement multi-family zoning changes to achieve compliance with M.G.L. c. 40A Section 3A “Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities.”

Strategy 1.1-1

Hire a consultant to review existing zoning bylaws and regulations for clarity and update site plan review, dimensional, and use regulations, where necessary.

North Attleborough’s zoning and land use patterns range from lower-density, large-lot, primarily single-family homes in the western portion of Town to a higher-density, pedestrian-oriented downtown, with a variety of areas zoned for residential, commercial, and industrial usage spread throughout the community. This breadth of conditions contributes to the formation of a complex zoning code, with many types of residential and commercial zones. Additionally, ongoing development has significantly altered the land-use for many areas in Town, and some structures in Town have outlasted their original use and need architectural and programmatic rehabilitation. Throughout the public feedback process, participants highlighted abandoned former industrial sites and the Town’s aging big-box stores as areas in need of improvement. Considering these issues, the Town should review North Attleborough’s existing zoning bylaw focusing on a variety of aspects including:

- Review the range of residential and commercial zoning categories to see if these zoning types can be consolidated, simplified, and clarified.
- Identify concentrations of underutilized parcels, whose development potential would be enhanced by a change in zoning. Explore potential appropriate future zoning changes for those areas.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-2
- 1.1-4
- 1.1-5
- 3.2-1

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner
- Zoning Board of Appeals

Performance Measures

1. Hire a consultant.
2. Provide draft regulations.
3. Adopted updated site plan review, dimensional, and land use regulations.

- Streamline and clarify, where necessary, zoning procedures and triggers for Special Permitting and Site Plan Review, Dimensional and Use Regulations, as well as other similar facets of the zoning code to ensure that the requirements for development in Town are accessible and understandable.
- Review and update the Subdivision Rules and Regulations for clarity and to include new design standards and alternative subdivision types (i.e., cluster/open space residential design and age-restricted subdivisions).
- Coordinate objectives in this strategy with those of strategies 1.1-2, 1.1-3, and 1.1-4.

Reviewing the Town’s zoning code will ensure a more streamlined development and construction process, while allowing the Town to evaluate the extent to which the current zoning code is responsive to North Attleborough’s evolving needs to provide housing; generate economic development; and to encourage walkable environments with access to a range of transportation types.

Strategy 1.1-2

Modernize zoning bylaw access by implementing a digital solution, such as eCode360, while also updating and simplifying Planning Applications, fees, and the Application process.

The presentation of a Town’s bylaw can significantly increase its legibility, the ability for a municipality to provide updates, and its ease of use. Similarly, the process for navigating a development proposal within the context of a zoning bylaw can have a significant impact on the amount, type, quality, and success rate of development proposals in each community. During the planning process, Town staff and Board members identified a number of ways to improve both the presentation of North Attleborough’s zoning bylaw and the development process that proceeds from its text.

There exist a range of methods for hosting and maintaining a Town bylaw exist online. Of these methods, many Cities and Towns across Southeastern Massachusetts utilize eCode360 to host their zoning codes. There are a handful of advantages to utilizing a system such as this, including:

- Providing a host portal to which the Town can upload and replace elements of the zoning bylaw as it is updated / changed.
- Allowing users an easy method to navigate a bylaw, including linkable table of contents and a search function to find key elements of the text.
- Hyperlinked sections of the bylaw to create an interactive document, connected it to additional, relevant portions of the town’s other legal framework.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-1
- 3.1-1

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner
- Zoning Board of Appeals

Performance Measures

1. Explore pricing for digital solutions.
2. Evaluate options and choose a provider.
3. Host zoning bylaws on eCode360 or a similar online provider.

Currently, the town of North Attleborough's bylaw exists as a linked PDF, which does not have searchable text, and needs to be physically re-uploaded to the website each time there is an amendment to the town's zoning code. By exploring more current and interactive systems of web hosting for the bylaw, the town can provide a much more town-friendly and user-friendly method of interaction.

Complementary to making the zoning itself more accessible, the Town could revisit the Planning Applications to make this process more navigable and predictable for developers. By creating a simplified Planning Application that utilizes check boxes to identify and receive approval for applications, the Town could streamline development for most projects while maintaining the desired check-ins for more complicated review processes where town staff might like to exercise more control, such as subdivisions.

The Town can simplify other aspects of the application by reviewing fees to ensure that they cover the administrative costs associated with addressing a proposal. Additionally, the Town could implement, as part of the revision process, a pre-application workshop to allow for collaboration prior to final engineering submittals. This could help ensure that all aspects of the plan drawings and narratives are compatible with each other and avoid confusion during the permitting, development, and construction process.

Overall, by simplifying and streamlining the development process, and by creating key moments of collaboration between the Town and the developers, North Attleborough can help to produce a business-friendly environment and remove barriers for individuals and businesses who seek to better understand and the Town's Zoning bylaw and development process.

Strategy 1.1-3

Examine the feasibility of establishing a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District in key areas in town.

A 40R Smart Growth Overlay District allows for the creation of a mixed-use district in town, near transit stations, in areas of concentrated development, or in other suitable areas (as determined by the town and the MA Department of Housing and Community Development, DHCD); it includes the provision of required affordable housing units at a rate of 20% of all units built. Utilizing existing portions of the Massachusetts General Law, 40R districts function as an overlay zone, which means that a potential development can follow either the current, existing zoning, or use this new set of zoning controls to guide development. This provides a valuable method to establish a mixed-use zone, while meeting affordable housing goals for the area, but still provides the flexibility for those who wish to follow the existing zoning in the area. Further, the establishment of and compliance with a 40R zone provides financial rewards for constructing affordable housing, reimbursements for educational materials associated with the bylaw, and preference for future funding from DHCD. For towns like North Attleborough who have identified potential areas for growth and are looking to provide more affordable, subsidized housing a 40R bylaw is a powerful zoning tool to develop equitable and sustainable growth.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-1
- 1.1-4
- 1.1-5
- 2.1-1
- 2.1-2
- 2.1-3

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner

Performance Measures

1. Perform site analysis for preferred 40R locations, including an inventory and rationale of parcels included or not included in potential 40R district.
2. Fully adopt and enact preferred 40R districts/sub-districts.

North Attleborough has a variety of areas that could potentially be strong candidates for a 40R bylaw:

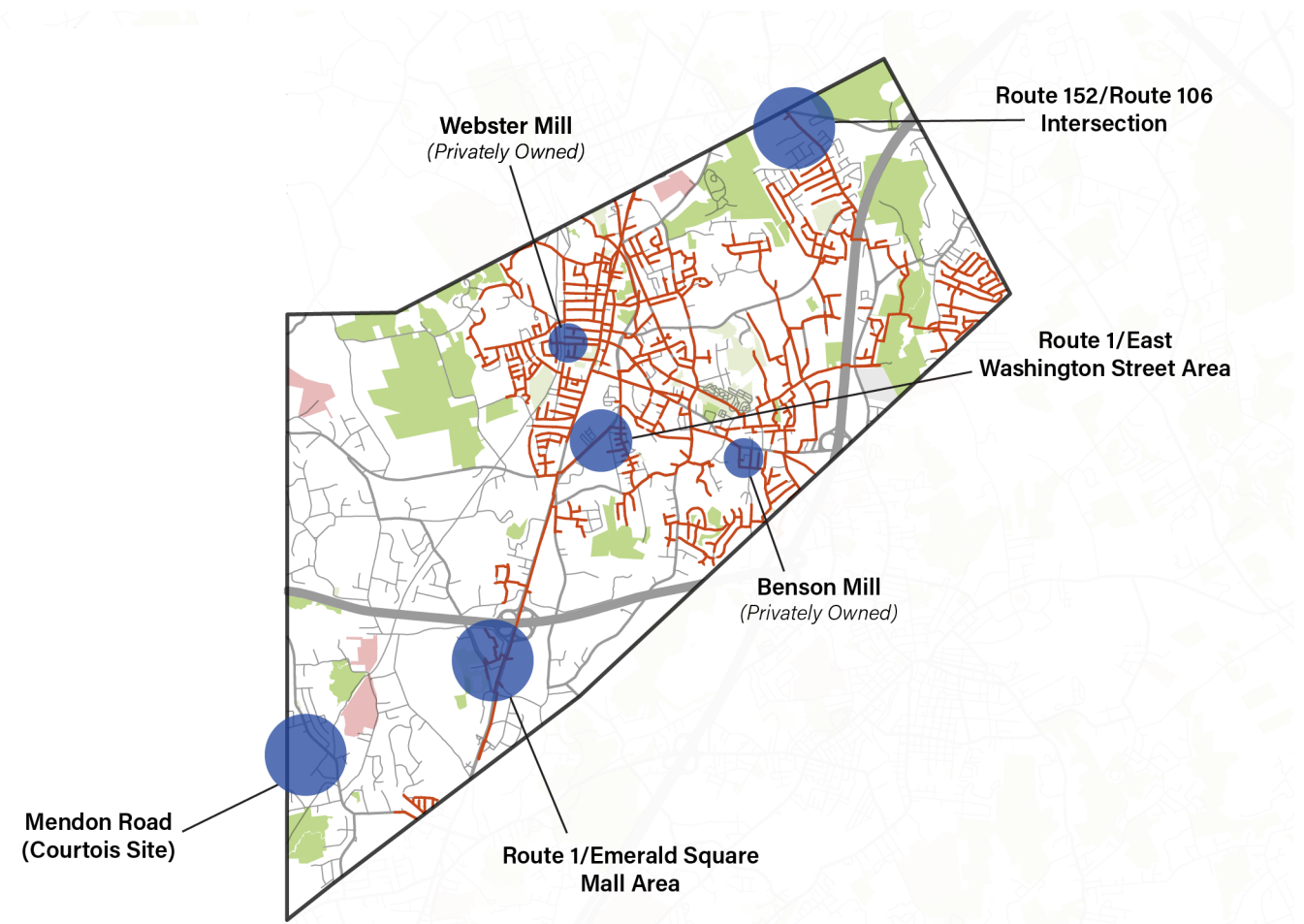
- The intersection of Routes 106 and 152:** This location currently has the elements to support the development of a dense, walkable, mixed-use area. Situated a short distance from North Attleborough’s, Plainville’s, Wrentham’s, and Mansfield’s downtowns, this location has access to jobs, amenities, restaurants, and shopping. Further, the area currently maintains access to Plainville’s and North Attleborough’s downtown via GATRA, as well as the Attleboro MBTA Commuter Rail station, providing access to Boston and Providence – the region’s largest job centers. This area already contains several thriving commercial establishments, a school, multifamily housing, and several parcels that are ripe for growth. Establishing a robust 40R neighborhood here, with design guidelines to direct the scale of development would help transition this location into a compact, walkable, mixed-use destination with affordable housing.
- Broadway at Barrows Street, Bank Street, and Richards Avenue:** This area includes the Webster and Ferrara Mill properties, both of which are currently privately owned, but vacant. Because of these properties’ proximity to downtown, they present an opportunity to produce high quality housing with access to a walkable downtown; local employment, amenities such as schools, town facilities, and shopping; as well as transit access via the GATRA. The adoption of a 40R zone in this area would increase the developability of two significant downtown-adjacent parcels, while addressing the Town’s need to develop subsidized housing.
- John L Dietsch Boulevard:** Represents another opportunity for 40R development. This location has access to Route 95, providing a route to regional job centers; walkability to a grocery store; service from GATRA via Route 10 (connecting any development here to regional transit) as well as adjacency to the Attleboro Falls neighborhood to the west. However, the area surrounding John L Dietsch Boulevard is not currently walkable, which presents a need for improvement. Much like the Route 106 and Route 152 location, this area would benefit from design guidelines to encourage pedestrian scale development.

Case Study

The Town of Middleborough recently adopted new 40R zoning consisting of two sub-districts within their downtown. Through thoughtful planning and the creation of design guidelines, the new zoning will directly contribute to Middleborough’s SHI while also moving the town towards compliance with the MBTA Communities’ Multi-Family Zoning Requirements – all while producing housing and commercial development that is consistent with its traditional Downtown.

Additional Reading

[M.G.L. c. 40R s. 3, Mass.gov’s Chapter 40R Resource Page](#)



Map 6: Zoning Action Areas from the 2023 Housing Production Plan.

Associated Strategies

- 2013 Community Priority Areas
- 1.1-1
- 1.1-3
- 2.1-3
- 2.2-2
- 3.1-3
- 3.2-1

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner

Performance Measures

1. Conduct a built-out scenario in one or more potential districts.
2. Provide draft regulations and design guidelines.
3. Adopt an updated mixed-use bylaw and design guidelines.

Strategy 1.1-4

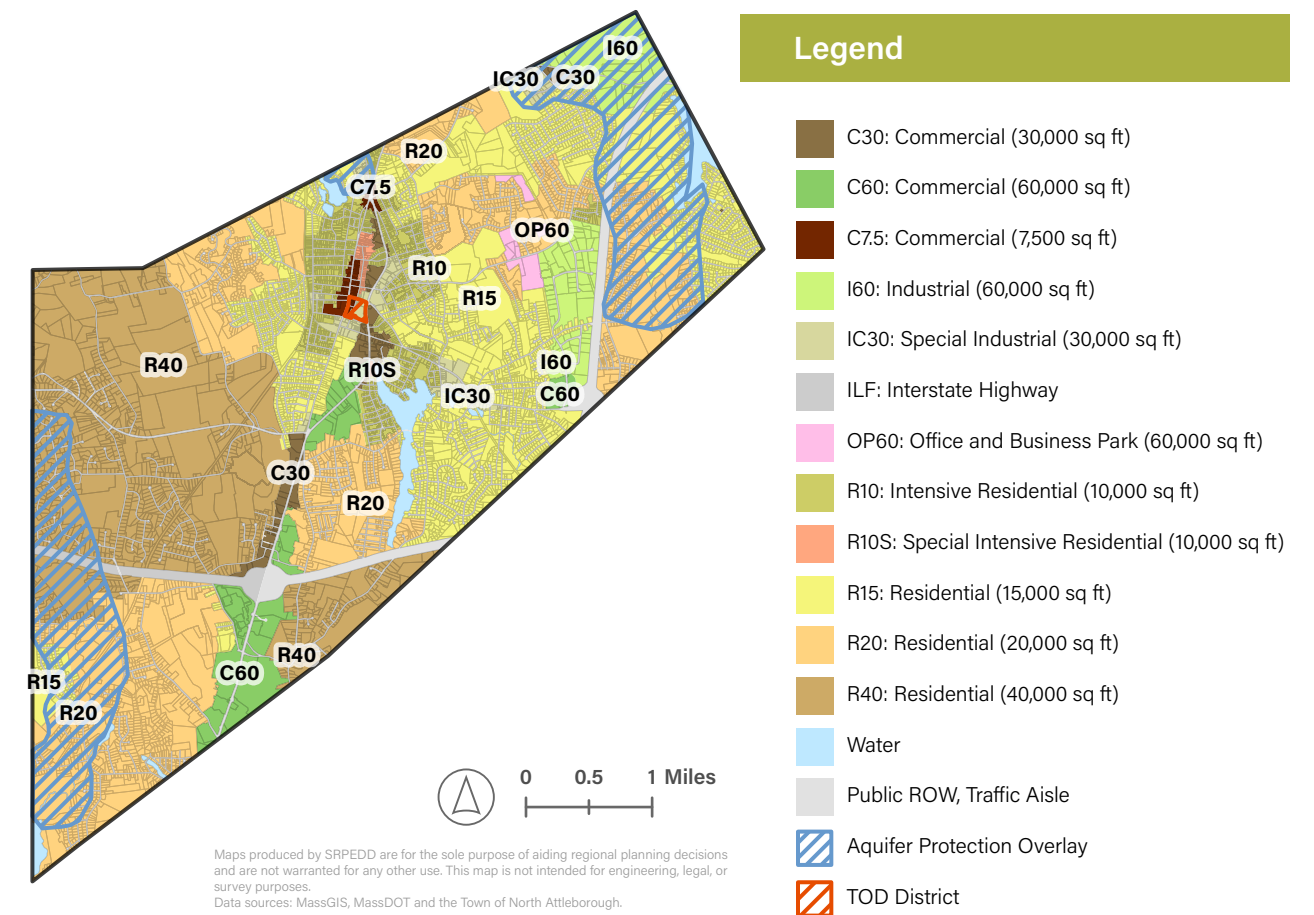
Implement mixed-use zoning with clear design guidelines in key areas in Town where a 40R would otherwise not be eligible.

Some areas in town may be excellent locations for a future mixed-use zone, but do not meet the Commonwealth’s eligibility criteria for the creation of a 40R district. In these cases, the Town may wish to pursue the development and implementation of a mixed-use zoning bylaw. Locational requirements for a 40R location include:

- A transit-oriented development;
- An area of concentrated development;
- Or other highly suitable locations.

In addition to the locational requirements, North Attleborough may determine they wish to develop a future zone with features outside the scope of a 40R district, such as an alternative density to those outlined in 40R requirements. Currently, the Town has partnered with Stantec to explore and create a mixed-use overlay district with varying tiers along Route 1 and within the Downtown. This ongoing study will directly support the diversification of North Attleborough’s housing stock and will help expand the Downtown beyond its current location. These efforts should be coordinated with the development of design guidelines (see Strategy 2.1-3) to ensure new development fits within the context of Downtown and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Like all other zoning changes in town, it will be important to consider the way these modifications of the Town Bylaw will



Map 7: Zoning and Overlays; Town of North Attleborough; 2022.

interact with each other. It will be particularly important to consider coordination with M.G.L 40A Section 3A “Multi-family Zoning for MBTA Communities.” While communities may include mixed-use as a component for zoning 3A compliant communities, this cannot be a requirement for development in a future 3A zone. For more information, please see the next complementary Strategy 1.1-5.

Because of the considerations outlined above, it would be beneficial for the Town and any future consultants to test build-out scenarios, including the interaction of any proposed design guidelines, density proposals, or dimensional requirements between this district and other adjacent districts. This will help ensure North Attleborough achieves a strong urban design presence, meets its affordability goals, produces a strong mix of uses, and improves multi-modal transportation options throughout town.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-3

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Determine necessary zoning changes for Section 3A compliance.
2. Complete the Compliance Model and submit changes to DHCD for pre-adoption review.
3. Adopt zoning amendments that meet the requirements of Section 3A.
4. Complete a District Compliance Application.

Strategy 1.1-5

Investigate and implement multi-family zoning changes to achieve compliance with M.G.L. c. 40A Section 3A “Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities.”

Enacted as part of the economic development bill in January 2021, new Section 3A of M.G.L. c. 40A (the “Zoning Act”) requires that an MBTA community shall have at least one zoning district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right and that meets other criteria set forth in the statute. On August 10th, 2022, the Department of Housing and Community Development released the final guidelines to achieve compliance with Section 3A. Under these guidelines, North Attleborough is considered an “Adjacent Community,” and therefore must zone for, at minimum, a 50-acre multi-family by-right district with a total capacity of 1,255 housing units (10% of the town’s 2020 housing units).

The minimum gross density of 15 units per acre required by the statute is significantly higher than those permitted in any of the Town’s existing residential zones. If planned carefully, achieving compliance with Section 3A could occur in tandem with new zoning amendments that work to increase density and housing development in key areas in town.





Chapter 2

Housing

Housing is one of the most important aspects of an individual's life and livelihood and typically is their primary financial responsibility. The quality, safety, and stability of an individual's home have a significant impact on their life and happiness. North Attleborough has a diverse housing stock of single-family homes, multi-family homes, medium/large apartment complexes, and condominiums. However, the Town's Subsidized Housing Inventory is currently only 3.1%, well below the Commonwealth's 10% requirement. Furthermore, housing affordability and scarcity continue to be ongoing issues in town, just as they are throughout Southeastern Massachusetts and the state. Focusing on increasing the production of new subsidized and market-rate affordable housing (either through new development or adaptive reuse) will help alleviate some of these issues and provide new housing opportunities to key populations, such as older adults, first-time homebuyers, and low-to-moderate income families.

Goals

- * **2.1:** Continue to produce SHI-eligible units to achieve the Commonwealth's required amount and to support communities in need.
- * **2.2:** Produce housing options for older adults to support aging in place and for adults with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses.

Goal 2.1: Continue to produce SHI-eligible units to achieve the Commonwealth’s required amount and to support communities in need.

Those making under 80% of the region’s AMI are eligible for subsidized affordable housing. In North Attleborough, that means any family of four making under \$77,350⁵ is eligible to apply for subsidized housing. To reach 10% on the Subsidized Housing Inventory, the Town would have to build 801 more affordable units. Similarly, to reach at least 0.5% production required for HPP Certification, the Town would need to permit at least 58 units within a 12-month period.

Strategies

- ▶ **2.1-1:** Implement high priority strategies from the Town’s 2023 Housing Production Plan (HPP).
- ▶ **2.1-2:** Pursue “friendly 40Bs,” 40Rs, and other partnerships with developers with the intent to produce affordable housing units in appropriate locations.
- ▶ **2.1-3:** Create Design and Site Plan Guidelines to ensure that the look and location of new housing development reflect community standards and neighborhood feel.
- ▶ **2.1-4:** Investigate opportunities for adaptive reuse to redevelop underutilized municipally owned land and buildings, including the Courtois Site.

⁵ FY22 HUD Income Limits

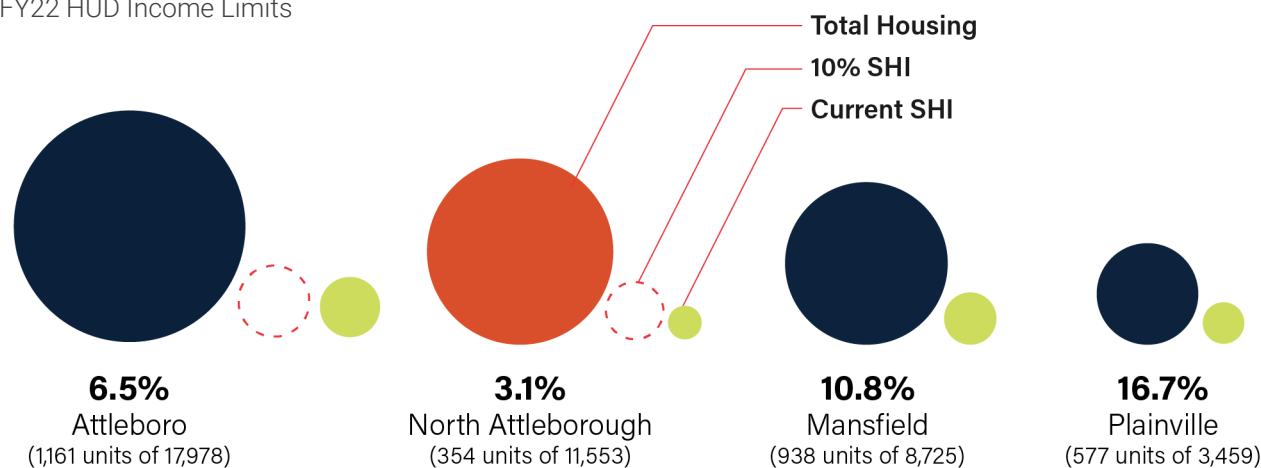
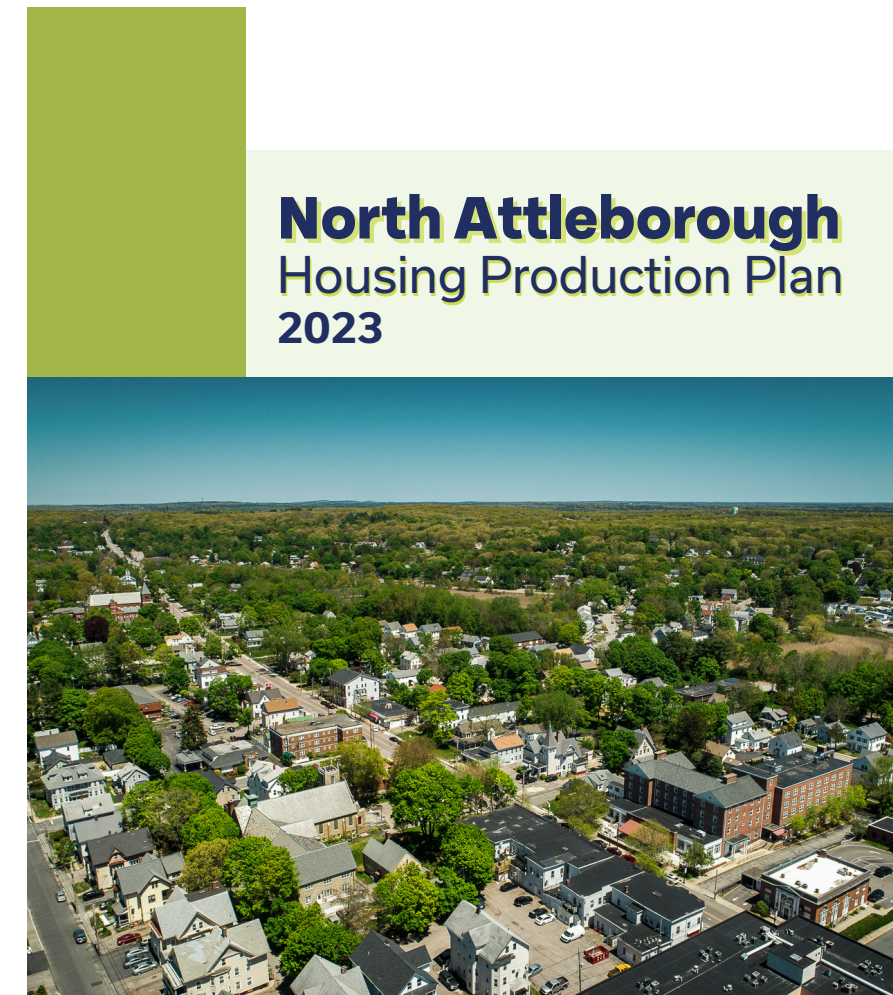


Figure 9: North Attleborough and Neighboring Communities’ SHI; DHCD, 2021

Strategy 2.1-1

Implement high priority strategies from the Town’s 2023 Housing Production Plan (HPP).

Produced alongside this Master Plan, the North Attleborough 2023 Housing Production Plan highlights four goals and ten strategies to work towards improving affordability in town. Many of the HPP’s goals and strategies are echoed in this Plan to avoid confusion and duplication of efforts. For more information on housing in North Attleborough and to learn more about in-depth housing trends, consult the 2023 HPP, which is available on the Town website.



Associated Strategies

- 2.1-2
- 2.1-3
- 2.1-4

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Review the 2023 Housing Production Plan’s Implementation Strategies.
2. Organize key priority items based on expected implementation timeframes and level of impact.
3. Track progress for ongoing housing efforts related to the HPP.

Associated Strategies

- 2.1-4

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner
- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Develop draft amendments to the “Rules and Regulations for Comprehensive Permits.”
2. Adopt updated Rules and Regulations.

Strategy 2.1-2

Pursue “friendly 40Bs,” 40Rs, and other partnerships with developers with the intent to produce affordable housing units in appropriate locations.

Developing a clearly outlined process to review comprehensive permits will help the Town of North Attleborough foster successful working relationships with 40B developers. As we explored in Strategy 1.1-4, the 40R tool also presents opportunities for producing SHI-eligible housing units. Similarly, North Attleborough should pursue proactive partnerships with developers. All these approaches can help the town pursue projects that create new subsidized affordable housing and allow room to negotiate development outcomes that positively impact the built environment and align with the needs (e.g., senior housing units) and desires (e.g., design preferences or parking requirements) of the Town.

One of the most notable tools that North Attleborough can use to guide these relationships is to develop more thorough and clear Rules and Regulations for Comprehensive Permits with the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). These guidance documents establish procedures for an application to the ZBA for permits granted Chapter 40B. Moreover, they are required by 40B and by 760 CMR 56.00 to facilitate the development of affordable housing. “Rules and Regs for Comp Permits” can also serve as a starting point – or a playbook – for collaborative municipal/developer relations.

As described previously, there are 354⁶ SHI units of 11,553

⁶ DHCD SHI, April 2021

year-round housing units⁷ in Town. To reach 10%, North Attleborough would need to provide an additional 801 subsidized units. Furthermore, for this housing production plan to become “certified,” the Town would need to permit between 58-116, or 0.5 - 1.0%, units in a 12-month period. Having a “certified” Housing Production Plan will show North Attleborough’s commitment to meeting its regional need for affordable housing and will provide the Town with the right to deny comprehensive permit applications for up to two years, so long as certification occurred within at least 15 days of the opening of a local hearing. Please note that these numbers are subject to change upon the release of the final 2020 Census year-round housing units.

Additional Reading

[Mass.gov’s Local Initiative Program \(LIP\) Resource Page](#)

⁷ North Attleborough should plan for an increase in the total number of year-round housing units as the forthcoming 2020 Decennial Census is processed and DHCD begins to update SHI counts. Should this number increase from 11,553 units, as reported on the 2010 Decennial Census, so will the required number of affordable units to reach 10%.

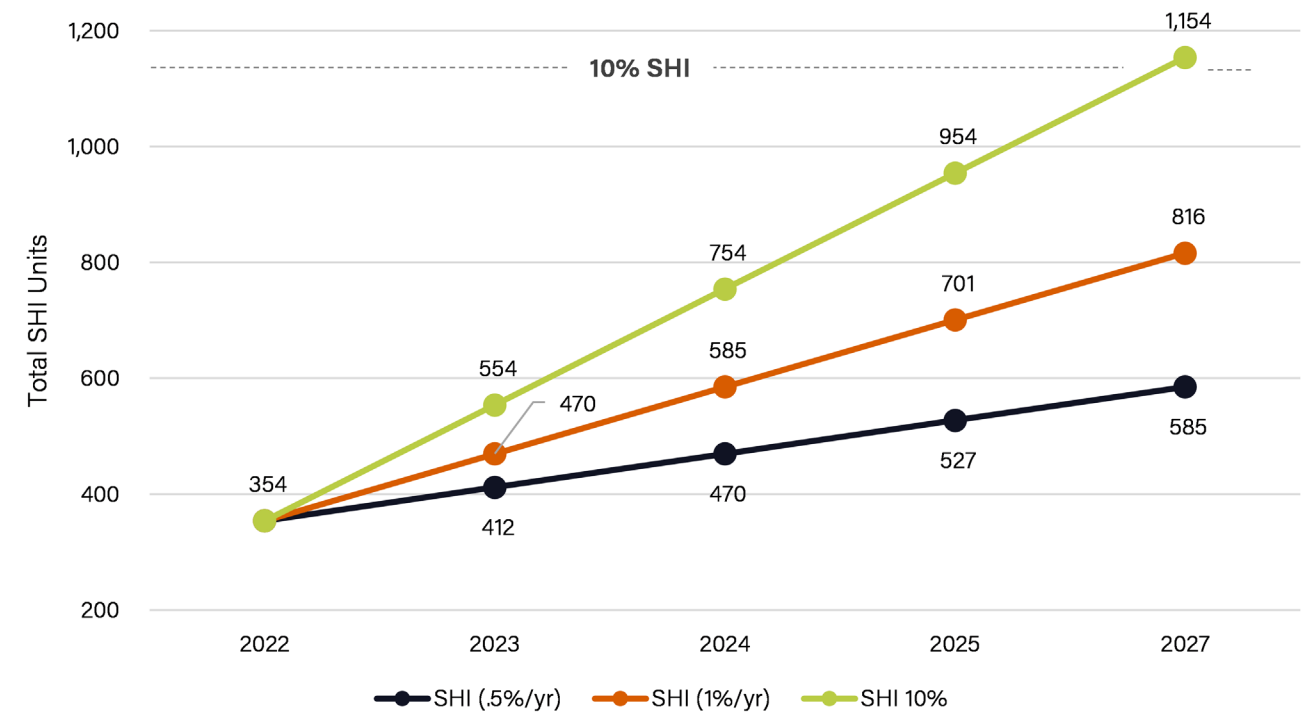


Figure 10: Length of Time vs. Number of Units Permitted Per Year

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-3
- 1.1-4

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Hire a consultant to create design guidelines.
2. Provide draft guidelines to Planning Board, Town Council.
3. Adopt updated design guidelines.

Strategy 2.1-3

Create Design and Site Plan Guidelines to ensure that the look and location of new housing development reflect community standards and neighborhood feel.

Design and site plan guidelines provide a method of assuring communities that the look and location of local development reflect community standards and character. These types of documents are typically graphically rich, using images to guide or, in the case of design standards, control growth. They are typically most appropriate and successful in or near existing areas, such as the Downtown, that have existing architectural character and value. These guidelines provide detail about what the community deems to be acceptable in terms of aesthetics, construction quality, and siting, thereby adding predictability and clarity to the development process.

North Attleborough may benefit from incorporating design guidelines or standards into a future 40R Smart Growth Overlay District or similar zoning bylaw to ensure larger developments (i.e., developments over 10+ units) fit in with the local community fabric and match existing neighborhood feel.

Case Study

The Town of Plymouth adopted **design standards** as a part of its 40R Cordage Park Smart Growth Overlay District. The bylaw specifies dimensional, parking, open space, and building design standards to ensure new development within the district was compatible with existing development. The district was one of the first to be adopted under M.G.L. c 40R. Numerous other communities, such as nearby **Middleborough (40R)** and **New Bedford (TOD)** use design guidelines to shape development outcomes in strategic locations.

Strategy 2.1-4

Investigate opportunities for adaptive reuse to redevelop underutilized municipally owned land and buildings, including the Courtois Site.

This strategy entails first identifying municipal structures and properties that have become abandoned, underutilized, or functionally obsolete; next, the town can determine if these sites have suitable potential to be redeveloped for affordable housing. Reusing these properties as housing enables a community to accommodate growth in established locations instead of on green space and at the same time preserve or restore the architectural fabric of the community.

Case Study

The City of Springfield redeveloped its former Fire Station at 145 Pine Street. The site was sold to the Mental Health Association, which converted the property into 15 studio and one-bedroom apartments. The project contributes to the town's goals of providing affordable housing while also bringing an underutilized municipal building back into an active use.

Associated Strategies

- 2.1-2

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner
- Town Council
- Zoning Board of Appeals

Performance Measures

1. Review inventory of town-owned land and identify high-opportunity parcels.
2. Issue an RFP for a high-opportunity town-owned site.
3. Review RFPs and select a project.
4. Issue permits for development.

Goal 2.2: Produce housing options for older adults to support aging in place and for adults with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses.

The housing and support needs of an individual or family will vary depending on circumstances and stages of life. Folks with chronic illnesses and/or disabilities and older adults tend to have different needs than young couples or those with children, and their housing should be able to support those needs wherever possible. Producing housing options and providing for modifications to existing housing for those with differing needs can help prevent displacement due to an inability to receive the care needed or live comfortably in one's home.

Strategies

- ▶ **2.2-1:** Examine methods to provide direct assistance to help preserve housing for vulnerable communities, including senior residents.
- ▶ **2.2-2:** Implement strategic zoning amendments with the goal of encouraging higher density development, reducing barriers for accessory or multi-family units, or actively pursuing development for populations without existing housing options (including older adults and those with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses).

*"What type of housing should be encouraged in North Attleborough?
(Select all that apply)"*

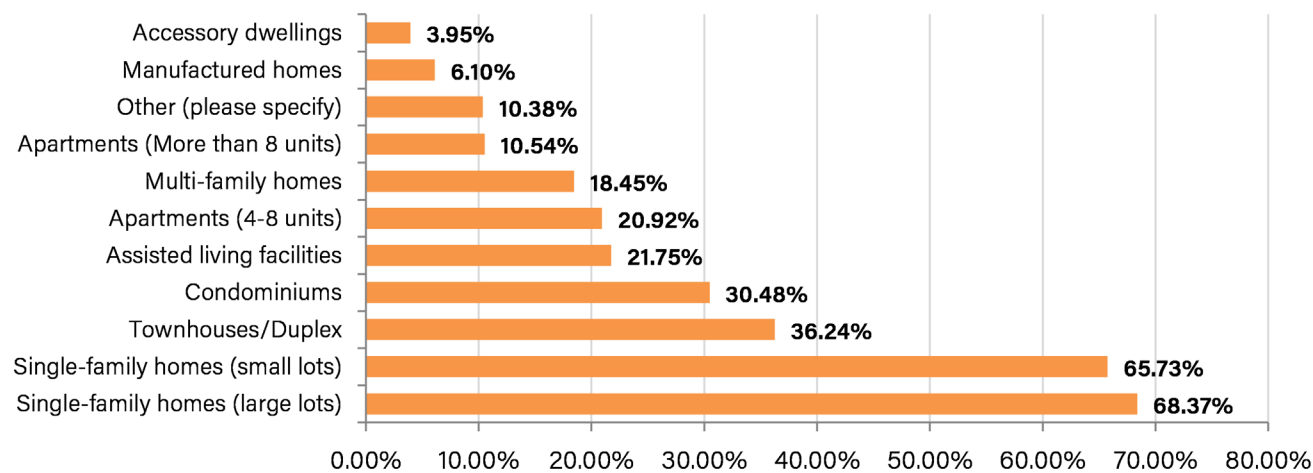


Figure 11: Survey responses to "What type of housing should be encouraged in North Attleborough?"; Master Plan Survey.

Strategy 2.2-1

Examine methods to provide direct assistance to help preserve housing for vulnerable communities, including senior residents.

Direct assistance and preservation tactics help keep affordable units available and allow residents to remain in their homes. These strategies are important when considering displacement concerns and aging populations. They are also critical for maintaining safe and livable homes for all residents.

Case Study

The City of New Bedford operates **several home rehabilitation and accessibility assistance programs** that aim to improve low- and moderate-income residents' housing. These programs offer direct funding and/or low-to-no-interest loans to make necessary accessibility, safety, or home rehabilitation repairs in owner-occupied or investor-owned homes. The programs are funded through HUD's HOME Investment Partnership Program and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The City also administers state programs on behalf of Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP), DHCD, and MassHousing.

Potential Funding Resources

HUD HOME Program, CDBG, MassHousing

Associated Strategies

- 2.1-2

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner
- Town Council
- Zoning Board of Appeals

Performance Measures

1. Review inventory of town-owned land and identify high-opportunity parcels.
2. Issue an RFP for a high-opportunity town-owned site.
3. Review RFPs and select a project.
4. Issue permits for development.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-1
- 1.1-4
- 1.1-5
- 2.1-3

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Town Planner

Performance Measures

1. Hire a consultant to review and update existing residential zoning.
2. Provide draft revisions to the Planning Board and Town Council.
3. Adopt updated bylaws.

Strategy 2.2-2

Implement strategic zoning amendments with the goal of encouraging higher density development, reducing barriers for accessory or multi-family units, or actively pursuing development for populations without existing housing options (including older adults and those with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses).

Zoning changes are one of the main tools available for increasing affordable housing production in a Town. This plan recommends that North Attleborough should pursue a variety of strategies to amend a municipality’s zoning bylaws by modifying existing districts or creating new ones, with the goal of encouraging higher density development, reducing barriers for accessory or multi-family units, or actively pursuing development for populations without existing housing options (e.g., retirement-age residents, first-time homebuyers, low-income residents).

Image 2: A higher density housing development in Town [Kevin Ham/SRPEDD]



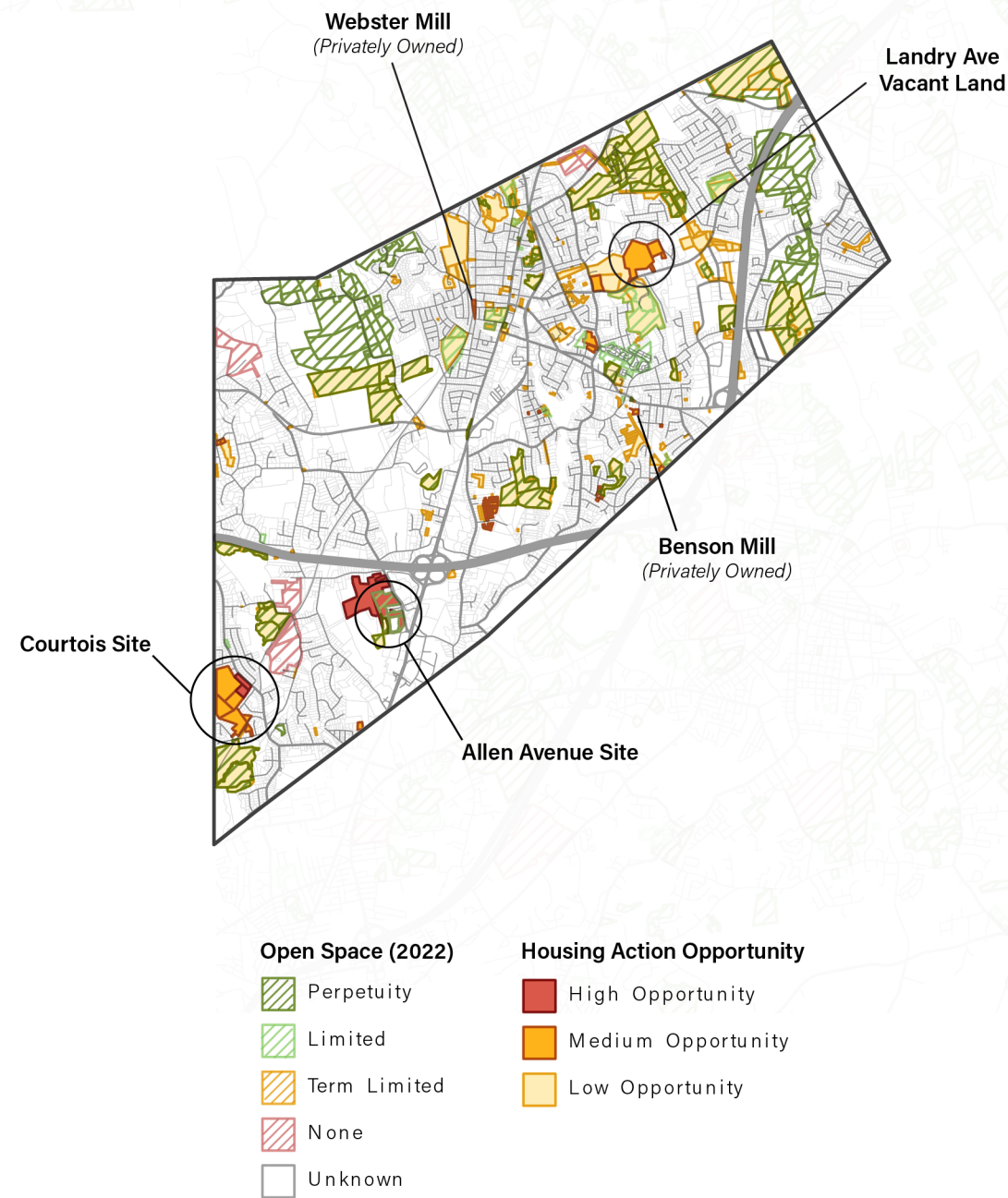
There exist significant barriers to producing the volume and types of housing that could contribute to naturally occurring and subsidized affordable housing due to the majority of North Attleborough’s land area being dedicated to single-family housing, in some cases with large lot requirements. To address this, North Attleborough has several zoning-related options it could pursue:

1. The Town could increase the size of any zones that currently allow for the construction of multi-family housing at moderate densities; these are R10, R10S, and R15.
2. The Town could allow mixed-use zoning to be by-right in zones that currently require a Special Permit; these are C7.5 and IC30.
3. The Town could allow accessory dwelling units by-right.
4. The Town could adopt Chapter 40R Smart Growth Overlays or create a similar higher density mixed-use overlay zone.
5. The Town could simplify the number of residential zones to increase the existing Bylaws’ clarity.

Further, North Attleborough has several areas that would be suitable for some of the above zoning changes, particularly Chapter 40R, identified in Map X below:

1. Route 1/Emerald Square Mall Area
2. Route 1A/East Washington Street
3. Route 152/Route 106 Intersection
4. 262 Broadway (Webster Mill)
5. 35 Robinson Ave (Benson Mill)
6. Mendon Road

However, some of these areas have challenges and may be appropriate for other uses, such as recreation and open space. The Town should go through a planning process to develop a vision for the listed sites.



Map 8: North Attleborough Housing Action Map from the 2023 Housing Production Plan.

It is also essential that the Town keeps in mind the new section 3A of the Zoning Act which requires all MBTA communities to have a zoning district in which multi-family zoning is allowed by-right at a district-wide gross density of at least 15 units per acre; this UPA is significantly higher than those permitted in any of the Town’s existing residential zones. North Attleborough is classified as an “Adjacent Community” due to their adjacency to the City of Attleboro, which hosts a Commuter Rail station. If planned carefully, achieving compliance with section 3A could occur in tandem with new zoning amendments that work to increase density and housing development.

Finally, thanks to recent amendments to the M.G.L. c. 40A (commonly known as the Zoning Act), the process for amending or adopting certain kinds of zoning that produces more housing has been simplified – primarily by reducing the required town meeting vote from a two-thirds supermajority to a simple majority. These important changes can contribute to the town’s implementation of many of the above zoning-related strategies.

Additional Reading

[Mass.gov’s Housing Choice Legislation Resource Page, Section 3A Guidelines](#)



Chapter 3

Economic Development

Economic development describes the process that a community takes to foster business growth, expand the commercial tax base, and improve local quality of life. This process can occur through incentivizing development and job creation, supporting local businesses, fostering community wealth-building programs, and/or increasing local market activity. North Attleborough hosts several commercial hot spots, the two primary areas being the Downtown (largely small businesses) and the Route 1 corridor (a mix of big box stores, small businesses, and car dealerships). The Town should direct its energy toward continuing to invest in its Downtown while planning for a changing, mixed-use future along portions of Route 1.

Goals

- * **3.1:** Continue to foster economic activity and improve amenities in the Downtown to support existing and new small businesses.
- * **3.2:** Focus economic development to areas in town that are suitable for mixed-use, commercial, and industrial growth.

Goal 3.1: Continue to foster economic activity and improve amenities in the Downtown to support existing and new small businesses.

North Attleborough's Downtown is a true asset to the community – one that many towns across the Commonwealth lack. Downtown supports many thriving local businesses that are of great importance to the community's economy and character. According to the Master Plan survey, most residents (84% of survey respondents) think that attracting and supporting small businesses should be a top economic development priority for North Attleborough. The Town should continue to support anchor businesses and work to provide new resources for future businesses to ensure the ongoing growth and improvement of their Downtown.

Strategies

- ▶ **3.1-1:** Create a user-friendly Development and Permitting Guide to facilitate business development.
- ▶ **3.1-2:** Consider creating a permanent outdoor dining policy to provide restaurants more flexibility and to help enliven the public streetscape in Downtown.
- ▶ **3.1-3:** Coordinate with small businesses and residents to create a Downtown Revitalization Plan, including pedestrian-oriented transportation recommendations, new design guidelines, signage, wayfinding, and outdoor seating plans.
- ▶ **3.1-4:** Implement a Facade Improvement Program to assist business owners with improving the quality and look of storefronts, signage, and building facades in Downtown.

Strategy 3.1-1

Create a user-friendly Development and Permitting Guide to facilitate business development.

Development and permitting guides facilitate the implementation of zoning bylaws and permitting requirements. North Attleborough provides dedicated zoning districts for commercial and industrial uses, as well as required permitting that enhances customer experience – something particularly important for businesses in the down. Often, navigating zoning and permitting processes act as a barrier for prospective businesses. For most small businesses, assistance navigating these municipal hurdles can make the difference between opening a business in town and exploring other alternatives.

User-friendly development and permitting guides take many forms from concise handbooks, topic-specific brochures, marketing campaigns, to E-Government webpages, or a coordinated combination of all options. These "Development and Permitting Guides" use graphic design, flow charts, and simple diagrams to help describe and simplify required procedures, to identify departmental points of contact, and to highlight fees, resources, and timelines needed to obtain various permits in town. A guide dedicated to supporting small business development in North Attleborough should also prominently feature the assets that make the town an attractive place to live and do business, such as its walkable downtown, its proximity to Route 1, 1A and 295.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-2
- 3.1-2
- 3.1-4

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Economic Development Director
- Town Planner
- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Apply for Community Compact Cabinet or other funding source.
2. Use CCC or other funding to create a Permitting Guide.

Associated Strategies

- 3.1-1
- 3.1-3

Priority

Low

Responsible Parties

- Economic Development Director
- Town Planner
- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Examine precedents for outdoor dining policies and MOD's Outdoor Dining Factsheet.
2. Provide a draft outdoor dining policy to the Town Council.
3. Adopt an outdoor dining policy.

Strategy 3.1-2**Consider creating a permanent outdoor dining policy to provide restaurants more flexibility and to help enliven the public streetscape in Downtown.**

During the pandemic, outdoor dining supported a number of businesses and enabled them to stay afloat despite the economic impacts of the pandemic. Given the urgent response to support the survival of small businesses, many communities crafted emergency provision outdoor dining policies. On April 1, 2022, Governor Baker signed into law an Act that extended permitted licenses for outdoor dining. North Attleborough responded, implementing an online permitting process to apply for outdoor dining and take-out licenses of food and alcohol. Each license is granted for a year and at the end of the term businesses must apply for an alteration of premises with their local licensing authorities. Otherwise, these amended licenses automatically revert to the status prior to the approval of the expansion of outdoor service as of April 1, 2023.

Numerous North Attleborough businesses utilized outdoor dining to expand their business model during the pandemic – and continue to do so today. Of course, outdoor dining may entail the use of public space, which should be formally managed by the town. North Attleborough should implement a formal outdoor dining policy that dictates the use of sidewalks and on-street parking spaces, while ensuring access to all public users. The Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) developed an **Outdoor Dining Factsheet** that outlines communities' responsibilities to maintain an accessible public

right of way. Managing the use of local sidewalks and other rights of way ensures accessibility for all users and enables small businesses to operate successfully. Combined, these actions will encourage restaurants and other businesses to invest, settle, and stay in North Attleborough. The town is a strong proponent of small business, which means they should provide a robust outdoor dining policy that clearly outlines the permitting process, accessibility requirements, and desired look and feel of outdoor spaces well beyond the expiration date of the state law.

Image 3: Outdoor dining at a local business in Downtown North Attleborough [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Associated Strategies

- 1.1-1
- 1.1-4
- 3.1-2
- 3.1-4
- 5.2-2
- 6.1-2

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Economic Development Director
- Town Planner
- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Create a stakeholder group consisting of local businesses and community members to identify priority placemaking projects.
2. Solicit an RFP, building off work from stakeholder group, and hire a consultant to create a Downtown Revitalization Plan.
3. Adopt the new Downtown Revitalization Strategy, pursue funding for projects, and begin implementing high-priority strategies.

Strategy 3.1-3

Coordinate with small businesses and residents to create a Downtown Revitalization Plan, including pedestrian-oriented transportation recommendations, new design guidelines, signage, wayfinding, and outdoor seating plans.

Many who live in and visit North Attleborough consider the Downtown to be the ‘heart of town,’ given the concentration of municipal services, historic assets, and local businesses. To cement this character for new residents and potential visitors, the Town should generate a plan that explores non-motorized transportation changes, design guidelines, signage/wayfinding, and public realm improvements. Otherwise known as “placemaking,” this combination of strategies could focus on the Downtown’s revitalization by enhancing the ‘sense of place’ (the experiential qualities that people already love about Downtown) to make an area more enjoyable for living, working, and recreation.

Despite embodying many of the traditional qualities of a bustling downtown, participants in workshops felt that North Attleborough lacks a cohesive identity. Public infrastructure improvements, identified through a Downtown Revitalization Plan, could help create this identity and produce a high-quality experience for pedestrians, which builds from North Attleborough’s success in attracting and maintaining thriving downtown businesses. Public realm and non-motorized transportation improvements can create the conditions that enhance the Downtown’s presence as a destination for dining and shopping. Wayfinding and signage can help create a sense of place by differentiating a specific area

or neighborhood from others with graphic elements such as type, color, logos, and pattern. Placemaking strategies should draw from the Town’s natural and cultural heritage to accentuate the experiences and identity of specific spaces that are unique to North Attleborough. Town-wide events tie people’s experiences to specific places, such as farmer’s markets, art festivals and performances, and shop local days or outdoor dining weekends.

The recent Farmers Market hosted on the Town lawn is a perfect example of the type of activity the town should foster at key sites. Developing many of the other improvements outlined in this strategy will create the framework to allow the Downtown to serve as a destination for more events, while thriving economically on the other days of the week.

Funding to support these activities and technical assistance to prepare a placemaking strategy can come from the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) which has received additional support through the Rapid Recovery Plan (RPP) Program as a response to the pandemic to help local downtowns. In addition, the Community One Stop for Growth can provide additional assistance through the Community Planning Grant program to assist in technical planning and land use/zoning assessments. Local partnerships can help leverage private funding as well as pursue Massachusetts Cultural Council funding in conjunction with the Town.

“Which of the following physical improvements would you like to see as a part of downtown North Attleborough’s streetscape? (select all that apply)”

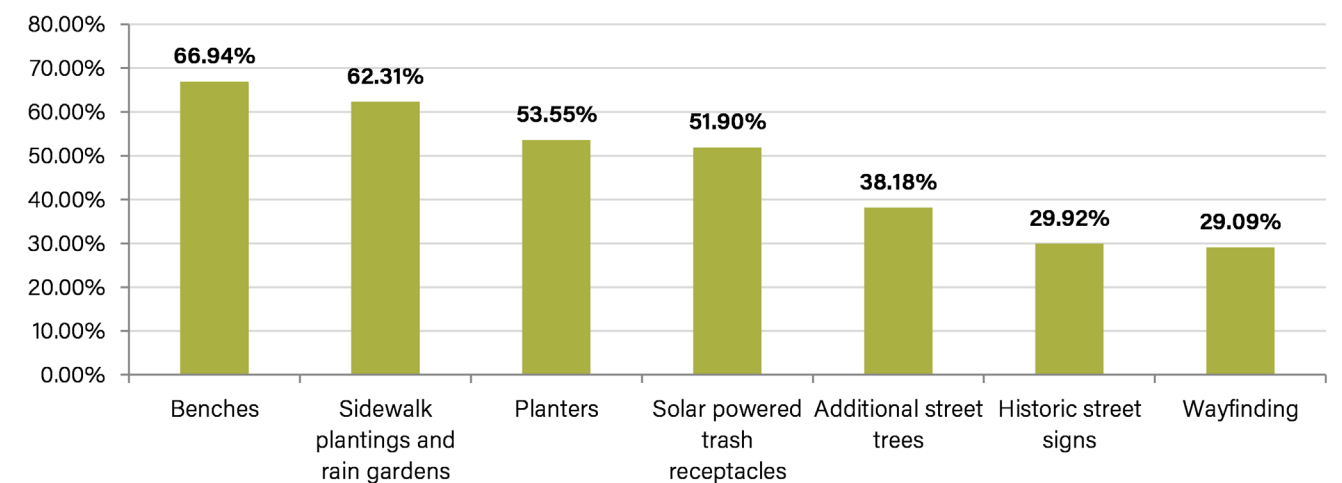


Figure 12: Survey responses to “Which of the following physical improvements would you like to see as a part of downtown North Attleborough’s streetscape?”; Downtown and Placemaking Survey.

Associated Strategies

- 3.1-1
- 3.1-2
- 3.1-3
- 5.2-1

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Economic Development Director
- Town Planner
- Planning Board
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Establish needs in Downtown regarding signage, facade, and storefront improvements. Work with existing groups throughout the process.
2. Identify and pursue funding opportunities for improvements, establish eligibility for funding.
3. Disburse funding to eligible recipients in Downtown, implement improvements.

Strategy 3.1-4

Implement a Facade Improvement Program to assist business owners with improving the quality and look of storefronts, signage, and building facades in Downtown.

A Facade Improvement Program in Downtown North Attleborough offers a collection of storefronts and businesses new life by providing a cohesive design and style to storefronts and signage. The implementation of a Facade Improvement Program addresses the greatest barrier to establishing a new, updated identity in the Downtown core.

Active since the town’s inception, the Downtown was fully developed in the twentieth century and many of the storefronts today look dated. Funded by the state’s Local Rapid Recovery Program (LRRP), DHCD released the **Sign and Facade Toolkit** aimed at supporting towns’ efforts to update and modernize Main Street and Downtowns. The Toolkit provides a blueprint to initiate a Facade Improvement Program and follows the general steps outlined below:

- Step 1: Identify Needs
- Step 2: Community Feedback
- Step 3: Develop Design Guidelines
- Step 4: Develop Criteria for Participation
- Step 5: Authorize the Program
- Step 6: Fund the Program
- Step 7: Sign up Participants
- Step 8: Implement
- Step 9: Measure Success

As outlined by the Sign and Facade Toolkit, North Attleborough is in the midst of identifying the community needs and actively includes stakeholders and considers feedback involving the Downtown’s general improvement. This Master Plan discusses the significance of Design Guidelines for the Downtown, something which the Town is already making progress and should be revealed before the completion of this document.

The next steps to formalize a program for North Attleborough include defining who is eligible for the program and the appropriations for such a program. This information is necessary and important to authorize it at the local level through the Planning Board and Town Council. With their approval the program can officially begin to take applications and award funds for improvements. In order to receive funding from the LRRP program and other grant sources, the town should integrate performance tracking and measure their success.

Image 4: Businesses in the Downtown [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Goal 3.2: Focus economic development to areas in town that are suitable for mixed-use, commercial, and industrial growth.

Running through the center of town, North Attleborough’s Route 1 and Route 1A corridor serves as an economic spine for the town. Driving down this corridor represents a living and ongoing history of North Attleborough’s economic and physical development patterns, beginning at the north with a compact and walkable downtown that contains both bustling storefronts as well as underutilized and vacant mill buildings that harken back to North Attleborough’s industrial era; to the Emerald Square Mall, which served as the town’s retail center during the 1990’s, but has since experienced a significant decline in commercial activity; to the big box stores located further south along Route 1, which embody the diffuse and auto-centric development patterns of the late 90’s and early 00’s. In addition to the Route 1 corridor, there exist potential development locations at former industrial sites on the perimeter of town.

Each of these segments has distinct and separate economic development needs that require discrete and contextually sensitive approaches as the town looks to bring each of these economic development sites into the 21st century in a way that meets the town’s needs. With thoughtfully considered planning, North Attleborough will be able identify and produce solutions for each of the sites listed in this section.

Strategies

- ▶ **3.2-1:** Create a Route 1 Economic Development Plan to craft a vision for future development and revitalization of the Mall and surrounding commercial areas along the corridor.
- ▶ **3.2-2:** Partner with a developer to revitalize the Emerald Square Mall into a walkable, mixed-use village-style center.
- ▶ **3.2-3:** Inventory and begin remediation efforts of Brownfield sites and underutilized parcels in town that are suitable for new commercial development or repurposing into a community asset, including, but not limited to, 35 Robinson, Webster Mill, Benson Trust Site, Ferrara Property, and Handy and Harman.

Strategy 3.2-1

Create a Route 1 Economic Development Plan to craft a vision for future development and revitalization of the Mall and surrounding commercial areas along the corridor.

Route 1 is North Attleboro’s major commercial corridor, accommodating a mix of retailers, restaurants, and amenities. The heyday of the commercial shopping mall has passed, exacerbated by the rise of on-line shopping – and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic. Today the corridor experiences significant and frequent turnover, though new redevelopments materialized in the last decade to accommodate restaurants and small retailers. Route 1 develops at the will of the market and those who take it upon themselves to see a future on this corridor. The town should take a proactive approach in guiding redevelopment through planning and partnerships, laying out a formal vision for the corridor, and implementing zoning changes and design guidelines to steer all future development.

The Master Plan process revealed significant momentum related to the Downtown, an area that transitions into Route 1 – they act as gateways to one another. The town should coordinate the development of Route 1 specifically by crafting an Economic Development Plan.

Case Study

Burlington’s **Mall Road/128 District Plan**; Dartmouth’s Reimagining the Route 6 Retail Corridor; North Andover’s **Route 125 Corridor Study**; Dighton’s (ongoing) Economic Development Plan; Seekonk’s Economic Development Plan.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-1
- 1.1-3
- 1.1-4
- 3.2-2
- 8.1-3

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Economic Development Director
- Town Planner
- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Hire a consultant to create a Revitalization Plan.
2. Produce a Comprehensive Corridor Plan for Rt 1.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-3
- 1.1-4
- 3.2-3
- 8.1-3

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Economic Development Director
- Town Planner
- Planning Board
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Continue to work with Stantec and others to lay the groundwork for the Mall's future through coordinated planning, public-private partnerships, and responsive zoning/permitting strategies.
2. Market the site to interested buyers.
3. Conduct outreach with residents and potential investors to determine which types of interventions would generate a successful adaptive reuse of the site.

Strategy 3.2-2**Partner with a developer to revitalize the Emerald Square Mall into a walkable, mixed-use village-style center.**

As the remaining commercial anchor on Route 1, the Emerald Square mall represents an opportunity for the town to partner with a private developer to recreate this corridor into a walkable, mixed-use village style center. North Attleborough's commercial corridor consists of 5 miles on Route 1 from South and East Washington Street to Elmwood Street. Over the past decade, with the departure of retailers such as Sears, Babies R Us, and the decline of JCPenney and Macy's, the vibrancy of this retail corridor waned. Though the pandemic exacerbated the decline of in-person retail shopping, redevelopment of the corridor is an opportunity to advance mixed-use development and achieve complementary community development goals in town. This strategy directly responds to the impacts of the pandemic on large retailers and small businesses by proposing redevelopment solutions for obsolete malls to foster placemaking and design efforts to support the revival of small businesses in the along the Town's commercial corridor.

North Attleborough hired Stantec in 2019 to develop a Mixed-use Overlay District bylaw to encourage diversified development between the Downtown and Route 1. As the presence of large retailers declines along Route 1, a mixed-use overlay district would support redevelopment with positive outcomes for economic development, housing, and transportation. The overlay district considers the physical

arrangement of developments to encourage shared access to minimize curb cuts and sprawl, and to enhance overall walkability. Establishing a Mixed-use Overlay District upon the Emerald Square Mall will signal to private developers and investors the type of redevelopment the town seeks to pursue at this particular site. To foster a partnership with a private developer, the town should engage in a study to determine the feasibility for redevelopment, stating clearly their goals for the site, and desired impacts upon the surrounding area. Furthermore, to attract developers, the town should consolidate incentives such as Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) or District Improvement Financing (DIF) and commit to navigating the process with interested parties.

Image 5: The Emerald Square Mall [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Associated Strategies

- 1.1-3
- 1.1-4
- 2.1-1
- 2.1-2
- 2.1-4

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Economic Development Director
- Town Planner
- Planning Board
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Continue to advance reclamation and redevelopment initiatives on key sites with partners such as U.S. EPA, U.S. EDA, MassDevelopment, and SRPEDD.

Strategy 3.2-3

Inventory and begin remediation efforts of Brownfield sites and underutilized parcels in town that are suitable for new commercial development or repurposing into a community asset, including, but not limited to, 35 Robinson, Webster Mill, Benson Trust Site, Ferrara Property, and Handy and Harman.

With a proud manufacturing history, it's no wonder North Attleborough hosts several brownfield sites. Left vacant and underutilized for decades, the Master Plan process renewed interest in brownfield sites for their potential future use.

Rehabilitated, brownfield sites can add to the inventory of commercial, residential, and light industrial tax-generating developments. Remediation efforts upon brownfield sites not only foster positive development, but they improve the look and feel of their given neighborhood.

The process of revitalizing and remediating brownfield sites is a long-term undertaking; North Attleborough already has partners at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and MassDevelopment. Since 2019, EPA awarded the town over \$1.3 Million to assess sites and begin remediation. Complementary to the remediation process, zoning can present additional hurdles towards incentivizing development of older mill and factory buildings in town. The Town can explore implementation of overlay zoning to allow uses that are compatible with the redevelopment goals for relevant parcels throughout town.

Addressing the brownfield sites with a holistic set of strategies creates viable real estate opportunities for future investments, and further achievement of local and state goals related to housing and economic development.

Table 3: North Attleborough HUD Income Limits Breakdown; HUD FY22.

Site	Address	Status
Courtois Site	230 Mendon Rd	EPA awarded the town \$200,000 to remediate the site. With remediation complete the town can pursue development. The site currently has water and sewer limitations.
Sturdy Mills/Benson Trust Site	35 Robinson St	Awarded \$1 Million through EPA's Revolving Loan Fund to clean up both Sturdy Mills and the Webster Mills.
Webster Mills and Ferrara Development Site	262 Broadway	In 2020, the state's Department of Environmental Protection awarded the town \$80,000 to assess the Webster Mill site and determine contaminants.
Handy and Harman	72 Elm St	The state Department of Environmental Management completed a cleanup of the site a few years ago. The site is targeted for commercial development and retail hub. Sold to private developer in 2020 and currently under construction to become a self-storage facility.

Chapter 4

Open Space & Recreation

Open Space and Recreation areas are among a community's most loved, utilized, and iconic public spaces. Whether it's the WWII Memorial Pool where residents learned to swim, the wooded Town Forest trail system where people walk their dogs, or a playground where families play, these places hold a special place in our communities. Additionally, there is growing appreciation for the value of key specialized natural open spaces, such as wetlands and forests, in combating climate change impacts such as extreme heat, stormwater flooding, and water quality challenges.

North Attleborough is fortunate to have several large parks, such as the WWI Memorial Park, and many athletic fields, water bodies, and protected open spaces. The Town should work to ensure the continued preservation and maintenance of these spaces, while also seeking opportunities to create new open spaces and recreational facilities, such as community gardens, hiking trails, and water access points.

Goals

- * **4.1:** Implement the town's 2021-2028 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) and its Seven-Year Action Plan.
- * **4.2:** Improve access to natural areas, parks, and water bodies.
- * **4.3:** Preserve open space and manage growth in key areas of Town.
- * **4.4:** Expand and support recreational opportunities.

Goal 4.1: Implement the town's 2021-2028 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) and its Seven-Year Action Plan.

North Attleborough is fortunate to have a current and conditionally approved Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) for the period from 2021 to 2028.⁸ This specialized document communicates the town's vision and values for improving open space and recreation areas for all residents, users, and ecological functions. Additionally, through its detailed Seven-Year Action Plan, the OSRP itemizes implementation strategies and opens the door to potential grant funding to achieve the plan's six main Goals and their supporting Objectives.

Much like Capital Improvement Plans or Housing Production Plans, OSRPs are more specialized than Master Plans, which cover numerous topics in a municipality. Nevertheless, this Master Plan Goal explicitly supports the town's detailed OSRP and recommends it for full implementation to the greatest extent practicable. Moreover, the remainder of this Master Plan element will also focus on complementary aspects of open space and recreation planning that emerged during the public input for this document, drawing direct connections between the two plans whenever possible.

The 2021 OSRP's main Goals and Objectives are:

OSRP Goal 1: Protect the Quality and Quantity of the Town's Ground and Surface Water Resources

- ▶ Objective 1: Assess and eliminate possible pollution sources in important water resource areas in the most practical and efficient manner possible.
- ▶ Objective 2: Support natural resource conservation and protection in important water resource, wetland, and watershed areas.

⁸ Please see <https://www.mass.gov/doc/open-space-and-recreation-plan-status-2/download> for information from the Massachusetts Division of Conservation Services (DCS) about the plan's status; please also see <https://www.nattleboro.com/DocumentCenter/View/3958/Conditionally-Approved-Open-Space-and-Recreation-Plan-Update-2021-Final-Draft-with-maps-PDF> for a copy of the 2021-2028 OSRP.

OSRP Goal 2: Prevent the Loss the Natural Resources and Habitat

- ▶ Objective 1: Promote preservation of land in coordination with development and work to acquire land to protect sensitive natural resources and habitats.
- ▶ Objective 2: Work to document species habitat records for the town and the NHESP database in order to preserve our biodiversity, variety of habitat, and intact ecosystems.

OSRP Goal 3: Develop a Town-Wide and Regional Multi-Use Trail System Including Walking, Hiking, and Biking

- ▶ Objective 1: Work to develop a local multi-use trail system and, where feasible, a regional biking trail system in collaboration with local partners and municipalities.

OSRP Goal 4: Expand and Improve Recreational Opportunities for All Residents

- ▶ Objective 1: Expand passive and active recreational opportunities and address the recreational needs of a growing and diverse population.

OSRP Goal 5: Prevent the Loss of the Rural, Cultural and Historical Qualities and Assets of the Area

- ▶ Objective 1: Promote open space preservation and cultural and historical preservation and renovation projects.
- ▶ Objective 2: Identify and preserve significant archaeological resources.

OSRP Goal 6: Promote Coordinated, Responsible Land Use Management, and Planning

- ▶ Objective 1: Review the existing plans, management policies, and tools available to town departments, dealing with land use, acquisition, conservation, open space, and recreation to ensure compatibility and coordination of intent and effort.

Goal 4.2: Improve access to natural areas, parks, and water bodies.

North Attleborough controls and maintains an abundance of natural resources. These spaces accommodate a range of activities such as hiking, recreational sports, fishing, boating, kayaking, passive recreation, and more. Open Spaces, such as the WWI Memorial Park and Zoo, Mason Field in Attleboro Falls, and several parks Downtown anchor North Attleborough's array of recreative spaces. Whiting's Pond and Falls Pond (via Barbara Road Beach) provide seasonal water-related activities throughout Town. During public workshops, attendees expressed their desire for increased access to the Town's parks, natural areas, and water bodies.

Strategies

- ▶ **4.2-1:** Work to develop a local multi-use trail system and, where feasible, a regional trail system in collaboration with local partners and municipalities.
- ▶ **4.2-2:** Develop a town-wide water access master plan to clarify allowed activities and improve parking, walking, and watercraft access at key fishing, swimming, and boating sites in town.

Image 6: Falls Pond [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Strategy 4.2-1

Work to develop a local multi-use trail system and, where feasible, a regional trail system in collaboration with local partners and municipalities.

The 2021 OSRP contains a goal shared by many Master Plan public workshop participants – increased access to and connections with walking, hiking, and biking facilities. These include connections within town and with regional networks and assets. In its Seven-Year Action Plan, OSRP Goal 3, Objective 1, on page 66 specifically lists several strategies, responsible parties, and funding sources to advance this goal. These include:

- Evaluate land acquisition potential and construction feasibility for a biking trail utilizing abandoned rail lines. Connect to a regional trail network from North Attleborough through Walpole.
- Develop plan and pursue funding sources to utilize existing on-road and off-road trails, other municipal trails, as well as utility easements as feasible, to create a new local walking and biking local trail system; connect to regional trails as practicable.
- Assess the ability of the town to link key open space parcels, town properties, schools, recreation facilities, etc. (“knit” together existing open space holdings).
- Continue to develop and publish Town Trail Maps/ Brochures for town properties.

Further, North Attleborough's protected open and natural spaces include some very popular recreation trails. Popular locations include the series of hiking trails located in the Town

Associated Strategies

- OSRP Goal 3
- Goal 4.1
- 4.2-2
- 4.3-2
- 4.4-1
- 8.1-5

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Parks and Recreation
- Planning Board
- Conservation Commission

Performance Measures

1. Please see the 2021-2028 OSRP, page 66.

Forest; the WWI Memorial Hiking Loop; as well as several other trails in Town conservation land, such as the Fish Hatchery and Martin Conservation Area. While participants in workshop events highlighted their appreciation for these recreation amenities, public workshop attendees also expressed desire to see an expansion of the Town's trail system.

Expanding the trail system can provide many complementary benefits, such as increasing the recreative capacity in Town; providing increased access to open space for residents and visitors; providing non-motorized transportation linkages between important areas of Town; providing safe and accessible routes for pedestrians and cyclists; and highlighting natural and utilizing the trail system as an opportunity to highlight important cultural, ecological, and historical landmarks throughout town. North Attleborough can develop its trail system in a way that achieves these goals in tandem with a systems-based planning approach to future expansion.

In addition to strategies highlighted in the 2021 OSRP, the Town's future planning for a trail system can also:

- Assess the condition of and locational value of existing trails to identify those that are strong candidates for expansion.
- Identify areas with and beneficial linkages between conservation areas, the downtown, and other local population centers.
- Coordinate with Plainville – and communities beyond - to identify opportunities for connections between towns, with consideration to pedestrian and bicycle linkages between Washington Street, conservation areas, and Plainville's downtown. Prioritize trails in terms of impact, feasibility, and ease of expansion and/or implementation.
- Increased amenities (trails and playgrounds) at the High Street Fields, and in the southern and western "Greenbelt" areas of town.

Smart and careful planning for a Town's trail system can provide substantial quality of life benefits for residents and visitors; highlight important aspects of local culture; and contribute significantly to providing healthy and safe linkages between important areas. North Attleborough has a several well-utilized trails – these can serve as a basis for a networked trail system that provides recreative opportunities throughout Town.

Strategy 4.2-2

Develop a town-wide water access master plan to clarify allowed activities and improve parking, walking, and watercraft access at key fishing, swimming, and boating sites in town.

Due to its location along the Ten Mile River, North Attleborough enjoys multiple sites for water access, including Whiting's Pond and Falls Pond. While Whiting's Beach and Falls Pond Beach at Barbara Road have clearly established guidelines regarding access and permitted activities, many public workshop participants did not know which activities were permitted, how to access the town's water bodies, and during which times of year they were allowed to recreate there. Additionally, many participants expressed a desire for greater access to Hoppin Hill Reservoir and explicit guidelines regarding which activities are permitted in and around the water body. It is important to note that the Reservoir is not a town recreation area. Permitted activities at the reservoir are therefore limited and dictated by the City of Attleboro Water Department, which maintains the reservoir as a public water supply.

Considering this feedback, North Attleborough has an opportunity to strategize locations, prioritize improvements, conduct maintenance, and communicate with the public its goals and decisions for water access in Town through the creation of a Water Access Master Plan. This plan will serve as valuable resource to help the Town maximize the potential of all aquatic recreational activities in North Attleborough.

Associated Strategies

- Goal 4.1
- 4.2-1
- 4.4-1

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Parks and Recreation
- Conservation Administrator
- Town Planner

Performance Measures

1. Secure grant funding to hire a consultant to assist with the plan.
2. Build on Master Plan civic engagement to identify public needs and priorities.
3. Produce a Water Access Master Plan.
4. Secure funding for necessary signage and web-based access information.

Goal 4.3: Preserve open space and manage growth in key areas of Town.

This Master Plan Goal directly complements several OSRP action items, highlighted again below.

OSRP Goal 2: Prevent the Loss the Natural Resources and Habitat

- ▶ Objective 1: Promote preservation of land in coordination with development and work to acquire land to protect sensitive natural resources and habitats.

OSRP Goal 5: Prevent the Loss of the Rural, Cultural and Historical Qualities and Assets of the Area

- ▶ Objective 1: Promote open space preservation and cultural and historical preservation and renovation projects.

OSRP Goal 6: Promote Coordinated, Responsible Land Use Management, and Planning

- ▶ Objective 1: Review the existing plans, management policies, and tools available to town departments, dealing with land use, acquisition, conservation, open space, and recreation to ensure compatibility and coordination of intent and effort.

This Goal also complements several strategies in more growth-focused chapters of this Master Plan, such as Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development. The idea is to use the Master Plan as a guiding document to coordinate policies and initiatives that focus growth to priority areas for development while simultaneously focusing conservation efforts to priority areas for protection. It is especially important to balance open space and conservation efforts with:

- ▶ **Strategy 1.1-3:** Examine the feasibility of establishing a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District in key areas in town
- ▶ **Strategy 2.1-2:** Pursue “friendly 40Bs,” 40Rs, and other partnerships with developers with the intent to produce affordable housing units in appropriate locations.
- ▶ **Strategy 2.1-4:** Investigate opportunities for adaptive reuse to redevelop underutilized municipally owned land and buildings, including the Courtois Site.

- ▶ **Strategy 3.2-1:** Create a Route 1 Economic Development Plan to craft a vision for future development and revitalization of the Mall and surrounding commercial areas along the corridor.

The remainder of this Goal presents other complementary strategies that emerged during the public input for this Master Plan.

Strategies

- ▶ **4.3-1:** Adopt the Community Preservation Act to fund the acquisition of open space and community development projects.
- ▶ **4.3-2:** Explore parcels eligible for the creation of small, neighborhood-focused uses, such as dog parks, community gardens, skate parks, playgrounds, and pocket parks.

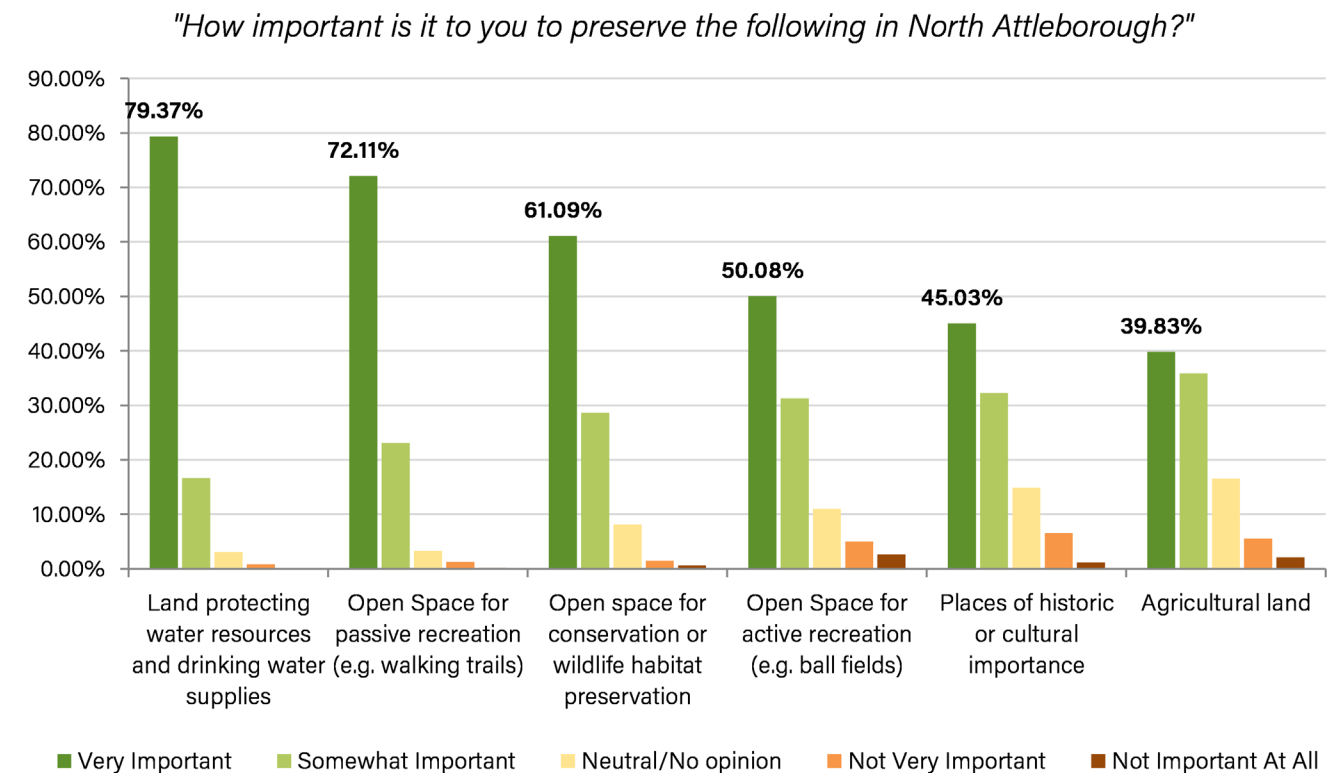


Figure 13: Ranked survey responses to “How important is it to you to preserve the following in North Attleborough?”; Master Plan Survey.

Associated Strategies

- 2.1-1
- Goal 4.1
- 4.3-2

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Planning Board
- Town Manager
- Conservation Commission
- Conservation Administrator

Performance Measures

1. Explore how neighboring communities have implemented CPA in the past.
2. Conduct public outreach and education on CPA.
3. Provide draft legislation to the Town Council and Planning Boards.
4. Adopt CPA.
5. Create a Community Preservation Committee to manage CPA funding.

Strategy 4.3-1**Adopt the Community Preservation Act to fund the acquisition of open space and community development projects.**

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a smart growth tool that helps communities preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. CPA also helps strengthen the state and local economies by expanding housing opportunities and construction jobs for the Commonwealth's workforce, and by supporting the tourism industry through preservation of the Commonwealth's historic and natural resources. As part of this Master Plan process, SRPEDD created a CPA informational brochure for North Attleborough to use in a public education campaign needed to adopt the Act.

The Act allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing, and outdoor recreation. Community preservation monies are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of not more than 3% of the tax levy against real property, and municipalities must adopt CPA by vote of the local legislative body (Town Council)⁹ and by ballot referendum. Each CPA community then creates a local Community Preservation Committee (CPC) upon adoption, and

⁹ Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts - www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/elecpa/cpaidx.htm; please note that this is one of two methods, the other being a ballot petition to place a vote to adopt CPA on a local election ballot. This Master Plan recommends the "legislative body" route because it is more common (used by approximately two-thirds of existing CPA communities) and because it involves public support from elected officials and local champions in advance of the ballot question.

this five-to-nine-member board makes recommendations on CPA projects to the community's legislative body.

North Attleborough should pursue the adoption of CPA to fund future open space acquisitions and recreational programming. Adopting CPA will likely require a robust educational and promotional campaign to increase resident buy-in. Please refer to the SRPEDD-produced flyer for more specifics.

Success Story

Numerous cities and towns in the region and across Massachusetts have adopted CPA and pursued CPA projects in their communities. The Massachusetts Division of Local Services **maintains a list of municipalities that have adopted CPA**, at what percent tax surcharge, and the year the Act was adopted.

Additional Reading**Community Preservation Coalition's Overview of CPA**

Associated Strategies

- Goal 4.1
- 4.3-1
- 4.4-1

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Parks and Recreation
- Town Planner
- Town Manager

Performance Measures

1. Coordinate guidance on eligible parcels from the OSRP and a basic GIS analysis.
2. Create a prioritized list of strategic land acquisitions.
3. Match eligible funding sources with land characteristics and pursue acquisitions.

Strategy 4.3-2

Explore parcels eligible for the creation of small, neighborhood-focused uses, such as dog parks, community gardens, skate parks, playgrounds, and pocket parks.

North Attleborough has a healthy network of parks, public spaces, and open spaces that serve as destinations for visitors throughout the town and for visitors from neighboring communities. However, throughout the public engagement process, participants identified a strong desire for smaller-scale, neighborhood-based parks. The Town should identify opportunities to add these more localized spaces, with a specific consideration towards those areas that have limited access to North Attleborough's current park and open space network. Suggestions from public workshops included:

- Purchase and repurpose key privately-owned underutilized spaces in and around the downtown (e.g., the site on Church Street and North Washington);
- Design new football and lacrosse fields;
- Site additional playgrounds throughout town, particularly in areas furthest from the Town's schools that have limited access to play spaces; and
- Construct neighborhood dog parks.

The Town should use guidance from the 2021 OSRP and simple GIS analysis to create a priority matrix, like the one used in this Plan, to identify potential open space acquisitions that would be feasible, impactful, and achievable within a reasonable timeframe. The decision-making process should address geographic and social equity, as well as programming gaps in North Attleborough's open space network. From this, the Town could generate a plan and strategy to address open space acquisition under the guidance of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Image 7: The North Attleborough Dog Park, located within the Memorial Town Forest [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Goal 4.4: Expand and support recreational opportunities.

Strategies

- ▶ **4.4-1:** Provide additional recreation opportunities at existing underutilized open spaces and recreation sites in town for individuals of all ages and abilities and as cited in the 2021 OSRP, including ADA accessibility.
- ▶ **4.4-2:** Inventory and address maintenance concerns, including lighting, drainage, and parking at key recreational and athletic fields in town.

This goal corresponds directly with:

OSRP Goal 4: Expand and Improve Recreational Opportunities for All Residents

- ▶ Objective 1: Expand passive and active recreational opportunities and address the recreational needs of a growing and diverse population.

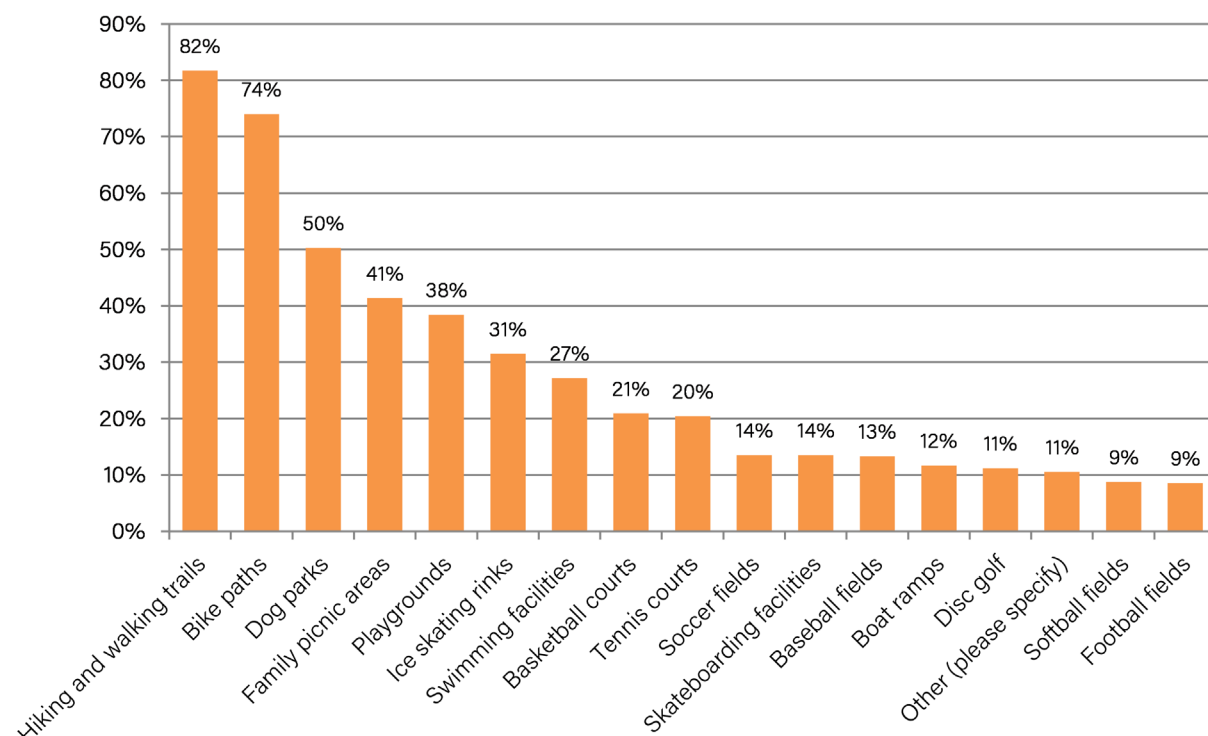


Figure 14: Survey responses to “What new or additional recreational amenities would you like to see in North Attleborough?”; Master Plan Survey.

Strategy 4.4-1

Provide additional recreation opportunities at existing underutilized open spaces and recreation sites in town for individuals of all ages and abilities and as cited in the 2021 OSRP, including ADA accessibility.

Feedback from the Master Plan public process emphasized a need to expand the offerings at some of the Town’s notable public spaces and parks. Residents who took the Master Plan survey indicated that their most preferred additions would include new hiking and walking trails, bike paths, dog parks, and family picnic areas. This feedback further identified adjacencies to existing parks, or other parts of the Town’s parks and public spaces, as locations to consider additional programming, as well as locations for expansion of Town utilized public and open space. Suggestions included:

- Providing pocket parks and community gardens in the downtown’s existing open spaces.
- Formalizing the sledding hill at WWI Memorial Park; adding improvements and upgrades or expanding it to include downhill skiing; and
- Increasing winter programming for parks around town, such as ice skating, hot chocolate sales, and connecting the space to local business commerce.

The North Attleborough Parks and Recreation Department is in a good position to identify locations for expansion. The Town could further support endeavors to expand public space programming by creating a clear and streamlined process for permitting; identifying partnerships with local businesses; and hosting cultural programming events.

Associated Strategies

- Goal 4.1
- 4.2-1
- 4.2-2
- 4.3-2

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Parks and Recreation
- Conservation Commission
- Town Planner

Performance Measures

1. Please see the 2021-2028 OSRP Action Plan, page 63.

Associated Strategies

- Goal 4.1
- 4.3-1
- 4.4-1
- 6.1-2
- 7.1-1

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Parks and Recreation
- Town Council
- Town Manager

Performance Measures

1. Inventory all sites in need of maintenance in town.
2. Begin the process of securing and/or allocating funding for repairs.
3. Track maintenance progress and continue to monitor the ongoing condition of key recreation sites.

Strategy 4.4-2**Inventory and address maintenance concerns, including lighting, drainage, and parking at key recreational and athletic fields in town.**

Master Plan survey respondents cited North Attleborough's passive and active recreational facilities as some of the most important resources for continued preservation. Maintenance related to lighting, and drainage concerns occur in all parks, athletic fields and public spaces and are a typical part of a public realm's lifecycle and can be inconspicuous, or, at times cause broader concerns for the community. Often, users of a park or open space are the first to identify a need for repairs.

During public meetings, participants identified various locations where they would like to see improvements throughout Town. Locations receiving the most comments included:

- General maintenance at the WWI Park & Zoo;
- Requests for lighting at the Department of Public Works parcel;
- Maintenance concerns related to public furniture and lighting in the downtown;
- Lighting at the High Street Soccer field; and
- Columbia Field maintenance

There are likely other areas in need of maintenance throughout town and the above locations represent a small set of sites that will ultimately need attention. Because of this, it will be essential for the Town to continue to monitor and inventory sites that need maintenance. Further public engagement will be beneficial to gain community insight on maintenance concerns.

Image 8: A baseball game takes place at Mason Field [Kevin Ham/SRPEDD]





Chapter 5

Natural & Cultural Resources

North Attleborough boasts a unique combination of untouched natural features and highly developed areas of regional importance, including Route 1 and the historic Downtown. This diversity of landscapes allows residents to enjoy a variety of activities in town, from fishing in the National Fish Hatchery to enjoying seasonal events like the weekly Farmers Market in front of Town Hall. Ensuring that these natural resources, such as local agricultural and flood-resilience features (i.e., wetlands and pervious surfaces), are preserved while cultural development continues in key areas throughout the Downtown and elsewhere should be of high priority for North Attleborough.

Goals

- * **5.1:** Preserve lands with flood- and climate-resilience, agricultural, and habitat value.
- * **5.2:** Explore placemaking additions and new event opportunities for Downtown and all of North Attleborough.

Goal 5.1: Preserve lands with flood- and climate-resilience, agricultural, and habitat value.

North Attleborough has a unique combination of both untouched natural features and highly developed land. Ensuring that these natural resources, such as local agricultural and flood-resilience features (e.g., wetlands and pervious surfaces), are preserved while development continues in key areas throughout town should be a high priority for the Town.

Strategies

- ▶ **5.1-1:** Explore conserving parcels the town’s western “Greenbelt” and in other areas that are consistent with the town’s Priority Protection Area mapping.
- ▶ **5.1-2:** Establish an Agricultural Commission that can proactively plan for agricultural preservation and assist local farmers in maintaining the lands and practices of agriculture, particularly with accessing resources to farming under climate change paradigms.
- ▶ **5.1-3:** Protect the quality and quantity of the town’s water resources (water bodies and groundwater). Work to address impaired water resources in need of a total maximum daily load (TMDL) by planning improvements at the watershed and sub-watershed scale.
- ▶ **5.1-4:** Establish group of volunteers to document species habitat records for the town and the National Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) database, or other conservation organizations, to preserve biodiversity, variety of habitat, and intact ecosystems.

Strategy 5.1-1

Explore conserving parcels in the town’s western “Greenbelt” and in other areas that are consistent with the town’s Priority Protection Area mapping.

North Attleborough’s OSRP and 2013 Community Priority Area Report provide guidance on areas where the town should focus its conservation efforts. One of these key areas is in the western part of town, known as the “Greenbelt” contains several Priority Protection Areas (PPA), including: Abbott Run Water Protection Area (ID# 211-08), Blais Farm (211-09), Depot Street Farm (211-10, Fales Road Farms (211-11), and Hoppin Hill Water Resource and Conservation (211-13). In 2023 and 2024, SRPEDD and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) will work with communities across southeastern Massachusetts to update this PPA planning. North Attleborough can use both this Master Plan and the updated PPA mapping to refine and refresh its approach to targeted conservation properties in the Greenbelt and throughout town.

According to Master Plan public input, there are similarly underutilized, but privately owned parcels around the fish hatchery. Some of these parcels span the distance between the fish hatchery and the Town’s protected forest areas to the north. Additionally, there are some potential sites along Landry Avenue that the Town could consider acquiring.

Each of the locations listed in this strategy represent a substantial opportunity for the Town to protect resilient and habitat-rich land, increasing connectivity for habitat, recreative opportunity for residents and visitors, as well and provide resilient value for the Town and region.

Associated Strategies

- 2013 Community Priority Areas
- OSRP Goal 2
- Goal 4.1
- 5.1-2

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Conservation Administrator
- Conservation Commission
- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Coordinate guidance from the OSRP and basic GIS mapping of these parcels.
2. Create a prioritized list of land acquisitions.
3. Match eligible funding sources with land characteristics and pursue acquisitions.

Associated Strategies

- 5.1-1

Priority

Low

Responsible Parties

- Conservation Commission
- Conservation Administrator
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Consult the Massachusetts Association of Agricultural Commissions’ “Getting Started” Guide to establish necessary local champions and public support.
2. Draft an agricultural commission bylaw for adoption by the Town Council.

Strategy 5.1-2

Establish an Agricultural Commission that can proactively plan for agricultural preservation and assist local farmers in maintaining the lands and practices of agriculture, particularly with accessing resources to farming under climate change paradigms.

Many towns with abundant agricultural resources choose to establish an Agricultural Commission to represent farmers and promote agriculture-related interests. The focus of these commissions varies by town, but can include:

- Advocating for farmers and farming businesses;
- Addressing farming-related issues;
- Obtaining agriculture-related technical assistance;
- Encouraging the protection of farmland and agricultural resources; and
- Promoting agriculture-based economic development.

The Town can begin by outlining the number of members to serve on the commission and identifying interested potential members. Upon identifying interested parties, the Town can then draft a bylaw describing the composition of the commission. Once the bylaw has been drafted, North Attleborough can establish the commission through a vote of the Town Council, from which point the group will serve as a standing committee.

Additional Reading

Massachusetts Association of Agricultural Commissions’ Toolkit to Organize a Town Agricultural Commission

Strategy 5.1-3

Protect the quality and quantity of the town’s water resources (water bodies and groundwater). Work to address impaired water resources in need of a total maximum daily load (TMDL) by planning improvements at the watershed and sub-watershed scale.

North Attleborough comprises a significant portion of the Ten Mile Watershed, which also includes all or some water bodies and groundwater in Plainville, Attleboro, Wrentham, Foxborough, Mansfield, Seekonk, Rehoboth, Pawtucket RI, and East Providence RI. Because of this, decisions made in North Attleborough have significant impact, not just within town, but regionally (at the watershed scale). Based on its strategic location, the Town should work to address water resources in town that are most impaired through total maximum daily load (TMDL). TMDL represents the total amount of a given pollutant that a water body can accept while still reaching the Commonwealth’s standards for public health and healthy ecosystems.

To maintain standards for drinking water, North Attleborough should continue to monitor all Zone 1 and 2 protection zones for wellheads. Zone 1 represents all areas within 100 to 400 feet of a wellhead, while Zone 2 represents a recharge area for a particular well (defined by hydrological studies and approved by Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, MassDEP). Typically, a municipality will own this land and limit uses to those related to water supply. Currently North Attleborough does not own all the land around the Whiting Street Well; similarly, the Plainville Well #1, which contributes

Associated Strategies

- OSRP Goal 1
- Goal 4.1
- 5.1-4
- 6.1-2
- 6.1-3
- 6.2-1
- 8.2-1

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Conservation Commission
- Conservation Administrator
- Department of Public Works
- Town Manager

Performance Measures

1. Continue to enforce provisions of the town’s Aquifer Protection Overlay Zoning and monitor Zone 1 and 2 Protection Zones in partnership with MassDEP.

to North Attleborough's water supply, contains some residential uses. The Town should continue to monitor these locations, while coordinating with the appropriate parties. Further, the town can engage with public education campaigns, directed towards residents and occupants of land adjacent to Zones 1 and 2 about appropriate land management practices to reduce groundwater pollution.

In addition to concerns regarding ground water and drinking water, the Town should consider the impact of chemical runoff, as part of stormwater runoff, and also those types of land uses that contribute significant amounts of chemicals to North Attleborough's waterbodies: these include manufacturing, heavy-use roads, golf courses, sand and gravel pits, septic systems, and more. These sources can contribute to problems such as high metal content in the water, excessive algae growth, harmful biological material content, water turbidity, as well as many other water quality concerns.

The Town should continue to identify these sources, particularly singular sites (known as point-source polluters) which contribute large amounts of pollution to water bodies. Additionally, when considering general flow of harmful materials into water bodies (non-point-source polluters), the Town should identify strategic locations, often upstream in the watershed, where it is possible to reduce the overall effect that pollutants can have on the Ten Mile.

Additional Reading

[Mass.gov's Overview on The Basics of Total Maximum Daily Loads \(TMDLs\)](#)

Image 9: The Ten Mile River [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Associated Strategies

- OSRP Goal 2
- Goal 4.1
- 6.2-1

Priority

Low

Responsible Parties

- Conservation Commission
- Conservation Administrator

Performance Measures

1. Gauge interest in creating a dedicated volunteer group and pursue these activities to the greatest extent practicable.

Strategy 5.1-4

Establish group of volunteers to document species habitat records for the town and the National Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) database, or other conservation organizations, to preserve biodiversity, variety of habitat, and intact ecosystems.

North Attleborough is home to several sensitive ecosystems and species. There are many organizations, throughout Massachusetts, who work through strong networks of local volunteers to identify, observe, report, and ultimately protect the Commonwealth's endangered species and vernal pool locations. The Town can assist individuals who are interested in this work by providing structural support through the creation of a volunteer group to establish and maintain habitat records in Town.

Organizations, such as the National Heritage and Endangered Species Program and the Native Plant Trust have established and successful systems in place. North Attleborough could tap into support networks from these organizations, utilize their online infrastructure and reporting tools, and collaborate with these organizations to create summaries and guides for identifying local species and ecosystems of interest.

Case Study

Pepperell houses a significant population of salamanders and wood frogs. The Town, through its Conservation Administrator and a group of steadfast volunteers, identified key species habitat locations and migration locations. During mating season, these salamanders and wood frogs cross local, highly trafficked streets as they navigate from wooded areas to seasonal vernal pools. A group of volunteers who have been monitoring these species and their habitats volunteered as crossing guards to ensure safe passage during this important lifecycle phase.

Additional Reading

[Native Plant Trust's Article on Collaborating for Effective Conservation, Mass.gov's Resource Page to Report Rare Species & Vernal Pool Observations](#)

Image 10: The North Attleborough National Fish Hatchery nature trail [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Goal 5.2: Explore placemaking additions and new event opportunities for Downtown and all of North Attleborough.

Residents frequently cite the Downtown as one of North Attleborough’s key amenities, and over 630 residents weighed in on future placemaking and cultural amenities that could take shape within it. The Town should continue to invest in and beautify its downtown to ensure it remains a vibrant, accessible, and unique feature within the community.

Strategies

- ▶ **5.2-1:** In partnership with residents and business owners, identify building facades and areas in town that would benefit from art installations and murals.
- ▶ **5.2-2:** Coordinate with the Cultural Council, Fire Department, and downtown businesses to explore new event opportunities that highlight cultural features of North Attleborough and support community gathering.

"Which of the following would you like to see more of at downtown?"

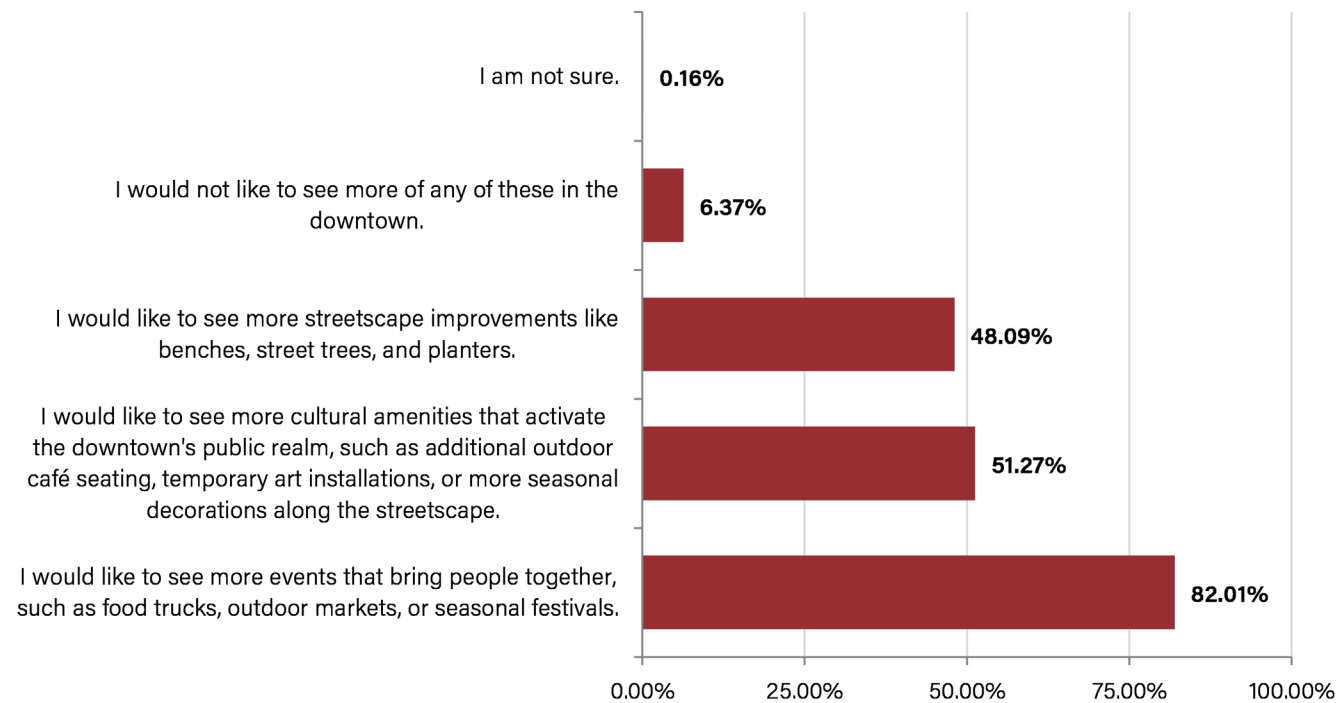


Figure 15: Survey responses to "Which of the following would you like to see more of at downtown?"; Downtown and Placemaking Survey.

Strategy 5.2-1

In partnership with residents and business owners, identify building facades and areas in town that would benefit from art installations and murals.

The addition of art installations and/or murals throughout the Downtown can create new and exciting features for those who visit to enjoy while also providing local artists the opportunity to collaborate with the community. The Town can begin by inventorying existing building facades and open spaces that could benefit from an installation. Upon identifying a space, the Town and Cultural Council could then seek funding for the project, for example through programs such as **Mass Cultural Council's Festival & Projects Grant**, and issue an RFP for artists to submit plans. Upon receiving proposals, the Town and local stakeholders can begin the process of choosing a proposal and initiating the project.

Additional Reading

Mass Cultural Council's Festivals & Projects Frequently Asked Questions

Associated Strategies

- 3.1-4

Priority

Low

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Cultural Council
- Parks and Recreation

Performance Measures

1. Create a stakeholder group to assist with identifying several spaces suitable for new art installations.
2. Acquire funding through Mass Cultural Council or other sources.
3. Solicit an RFP based on suggestions from the stakeholder group and hire a local artist to create an installation.

Associated Strategies

- 3.1-1
- 3.1-2
- 7.1-2

Priority

Low

Responsible Parties

- Conservation Commission
- Conservation Administrator

Performance Measures

1. Gauge interest in creating a dedicated volunteer group and pursue these activities to the greatest extent practicable.

Strategy 5.2-2

Coordinate with the Cultural Council, Fire Department, and downtown businesses to explore new event opportunities that highlight cultural features of North Attleborough and support community gathering.

Many residents enjoy the ongoing series of seasonal events that take place throughout town, such as the Farmers Market and Block Party. Furthermore, 82% of survey respondents support the creation of more events that bring people together, such as food truck days and seasonal festivals.

When asked their preference on events, respondents top four responses were seasonal festivals (80%), bi-weekly foot truck events (66%), restaurant days/weeks (60%), and beer gardens/craft beer festivals (60%). The Town Council and Cultural Council should work together with the Fire Department, the Town Planner, the Economic Development Coordinator, local business representatives, and others in town to form a working group tasked with creating these new events while ensuring necessary safety measures are being met and supporting downtown foot traffic. This group could produce a schedule of events, paying mind to the following:

- A roster of local businesses who would participate in events (i.e., vendors for a seasonal festival, or a rotation of food trucks for bi-weekly events)
- Clear permitting and safety expectations to allow vendors to participate in events, such as a list of necessary permits and how to achieve them.

- Physical maps or plans to outline the layout and locations for large and infrequent, or small and frequent events (or elements such as a closed off 21+ area for serving alcohol).
- Public safety details to be assigned to events (i.e. police or security assigned to a beer garden, fire safety protocols related to a large event).
- A financial plan for any capital investments the Town would like to make to support Placemaking endeavors (i.e., temporary structures, moveable furniture, decorations for holiday festivals).

The creation of a working group, and outlining of procedures, such as those listed above, will assist the Town in generating an ongoing and replicable system to produce the types of events respondents during public meetings would like to see in North Attleborough, for years to come.

"Which of the following describe the types of events you would like to see take place in North Attleborough's downtown? (select all that apply)"

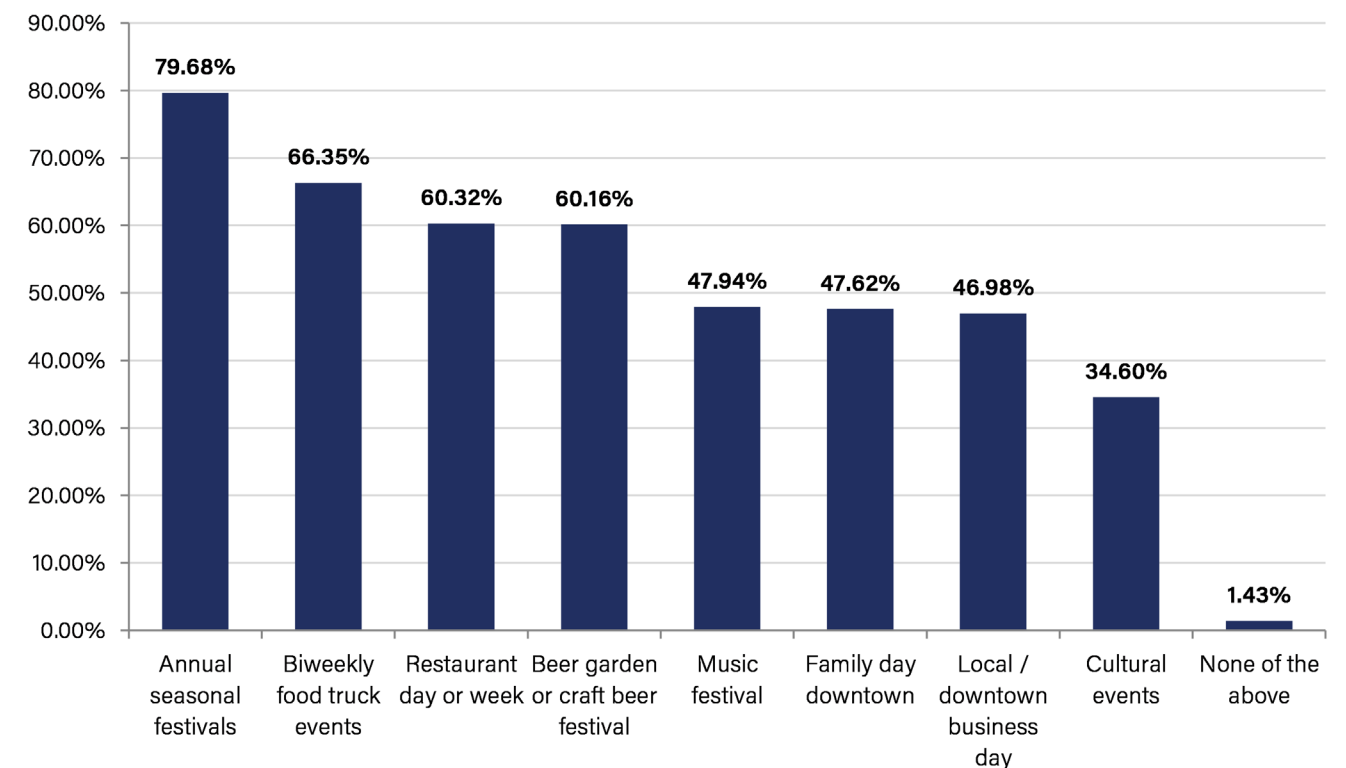


Figure 16: Survey responses to "Which of the following describe the types of events you would like to see take place in North Attleborough's downtown?"; Downtown and Placemaking Survey.

An aerial photograph showing a large, calm lake in the foreground. In the background, there are several houses with brown roofs and green lawns, surrounded by dense trees with some autumn-colored foliage. The sky is clear and blue.

Chapter 6

Climate & Resilience

Despite its inland location, North Attleborough, like all municipalities, can benefit from planning for a changing climate and environmental hazards. Given its aging population and proximity to the Ten Mile River, the Town should prioritize preparing for potential disasters and more frequent weather events related to climate change, such as extreme heat events and increased rainfall volume. The Town can prepare for this by improving supportive municipal services to create more resilient, climate-ready communities. Many of the goals and strategies in this chapter work alongside many of the other objectives outlined in this document - planning for climate and resilience largely serves as an extension of sound, commonsense planning.

Goals

- * **6.1:** Develop town facilities and infrastructure to increase climate resilience.
- * **6.2:** Institute climate resilient bylaws and plans.

Goal 6.1: Develop town facilities and infrastructure to increase climate resilience.

Rising temperatures and the potential for more frequent and/or severe storm events means the Town of North Attleborough should be prepared to support its most vulnerable populations in the event of a natural disaster. Elderly residents, children, those with disabilities, and individuals living alone are some of the most vulnerable during extreme weather events. By proactively planning for these events, the Town can work to support, protect, and ensure the safety of its residents.

Strategies

- ▶ **6.1-1:** Ensure vulnerable populations, including older adults/senior residents, have access to air conditioning during heat events.
- ▶ **6.1-2:** Identify locations eligible for green infrastructure investments such as vegetative stormwater management and climate-resilient or pollinator-friendly street trees.
- ▶ **6.1-3:** Address flooding and flood storage concerns described in the 2019 MVP Plan and 2019 Stormwater Management Program, including flooding along the Ten Mile River and in Downtown, new development, and redevelopment.

Strategy 6.1-1

Ensure vulnerable populations, including older adults/senior residents, have access to air conditioning during heat events.

The top three warmest years on record are 2016, 2019, and 2020, taking first, second, and third place, respectively.¹ As each decade emerges as warmer than the previous, it is becoming increasingly important for municipalities to prepare for extreme heat events, for example, the drought that occurred this past summer of 2022, during which 94% of the state was under moderate drought conditions or worse.²

Among those most vulnerable to the effects of extreme heat events and heat stress are older adults (65+), who since 1999 have been several times more likely to die from heat-related cardiovascular disease.³ According to the CDC, older adults do not adjust as well to sudden changes in temperature when compared to younger individuals, are more likely to have chronic medical conditions that change the body's response to heat, and are more likely to take prescription medications that affect the body's ability to regulate its temperature or sweat.⁴ Given these factors, the Town should ensure that municipal facilities, especially public facilities, such as the Library, Council on Aging, and schools, are equipped with adequate air conditioning and drinking water access (i.e., water fountains and water bottle fill stations). Additionally, the Town could plan to open cooling centers during extreme heat events to accommodate residents' potential needs.

¹ See the United Nations article "[2021 joins top 7 warmest years on record: WMO](#)"

² See the Boston Globe article "['They all dried up.' Drought, climate change take toll on Christmas trees](#)"

³ See the EPA's [Climate Change Indicator: Heat-Related Deaths](#)

⁴ See the CDC's [article on Heat and Older Adults](#)

Associated Strategies

- [2.2-1](#)
- [7.1-2](#)
- [7.2-3](#)
- [7.2-5](#)

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Department of Public Works
- Council on Aging
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Inventory town facilities and cooling centers, including the **one located in the North Attleborough Middle School gym**, to assess the age and quality of their HVAC systems.
2. Evaluate if existing cooling capacity is meeting the town's needs.
3. Determine priority maintenance concerns and work to acquire funding to implement upgrades.
4. Expand cooling center offerings as necessary.

Associated Strategies

- 6.1-3
- 6.2-1
- 7.2-2
- 8.2-1

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Conservation Commission
- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Establish a working committee to identify areas eligible for upgrades.
2. Explore Commonwealth resources, such as Massachusetts DCR's Urban and Community Forestry Program's Challenge Grants, and implementation experiences from other communities with "Tree Planting" Committees.
3. Pursue funding to implement key investments.

Strategy 6.1-2

Identify locations eligible for green infrastructure investments such as vegetative stormwater management and climate-resilient or pollinator-friendly street trees.

In addition to traffic management, it is important to consider all the potential benefits that streets can provide. We use streets to manage our stormwater runoff. They are also a significant portion of the public realm for residents and visitors. Additionally, when planned thoughtfully, streets provide ecological value for local flora and fauna, such as pollinators.

When considering which improvements to make, and where to make them, it is important to consider the Town's street network, environmental network, and population centers. For example, providing street trees in locations with high pedestrian volumes and vulnerable populations provides protection from extreme heat events. Similarly, connecting streets with a robust palette of plantings to existing green spaces or natural areas in Town can provide "green corridors" for habitat movement. Lastly, providing curb cuts with green infrastructure, in locations with a high volume of stormwater runoff, or at a critical position in the watershed that contributes water volumes, can provide abatement from localized flooding.

North Attleborough can further address the ecological value that plantings, such as stormwater gardens and street trees, can provide by introducing a schedule of native plants for town-owned properties and infrastructure. By making plant choices readily available and accessible, the Town can provide a resource for local businesses to include plants with high

habitat and pollinator value, produce information for establishments to implement successful landscape elements, and generate a placemaking thread, through selection of some similar plant species, that can provide identity and continuity throughout town.

When addressing green infrastructure improvements, it is important to consider the intersectional nature of these elements. For example, street trees provide habitat for local species, in addition to shade for pedestrians. By the same notion, a road that floods could also send contaminants to local habitat and water sources, so it is important to infiltrate runoff 'upstream' of sensitive locations. Ultimately, the Town should consider areas where it can make the most significant impact, while considering multiple forms of resilience when citing green infrastructure improvements.

Image 11: A street tree in Downtown North Attleborough [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Associated Strategies

- 6.1-2
- 6.2-1
- 7.2-2
- 8.2-1

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Department of Public Works
- Conservation Administrator
- Conservation Commission
- Town Planner
- Town Manager
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Implement “High-Priority” recommendations of both specialized documents to the greatest extent possible.

Strategy 6.1-3

Address flooding and flood storage concerns described in the 2019 MVP Plan and 2019 Stormwater Management Program, including flooding along the Ten Mile River and in Downtown, new development, and redevelopment.

Both the 2019 Municipal Vulnerability Plan (MVP) and the 2019 Stormwater Management Program highlighted major causes of concern in town, namely flooding along the Ten Mile River and in Downtown, which has led to the closure of numerous streets in the past. This Master Plan supports these specialized planning and engineering studies – the Town should explore implementing top priorities from both of these plans, including culvert cleaning, dredging, and dam maintenance. Some high priority items from the Town’s 2019 Stormwater Management Program include:

- Work with the Conservation Commission to diligently enforce the town’s Stormwater Management and Land Disturbance Regulations; and
- Continue to Implement the “Six Minimum Control Measures” from the town’s Stormwater Management Program, NPDES Phase II Small MS4 General Permit, especially “Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control” and “Stormwater Management in New Development and Redevelopment (Post Construction Stormwater Management).”

Additionally, North Attleborough should consider implementation strategies from the 2019 MVP Plan, such as:

- Dredging and widening of Ten Mile River bridges and culverts;
- Strategically evaluating the possibility of dam removals;
- Increasing catch basin cleaning downtown;
- Widening Church Street Bridge; and
- Investigating and preparing for downstream impacts from dam release.

Image 12: A culvert along the Ten Mile River [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Goal 6.2: Institute climate resilient bylaws and plans.

By integrating climate and resiliency focused bylaws into Town policy, North Attleborough can work to systematically address climate change concerns in the most proactive way. By doing so, the Town will ensure future development is sustainable, climate-considerate, and resilient to potential natural disasters/extreme weather.

Strategies

- ▶ **6.2-1:** Adopt Low Impact Development (LID) strategies into land use bylaws to mitigate effects and reverse damage caused by development in the Town's ecosystems or watershed. Start with an audit of existing bylaws using the Mass Audubon Low Impact Development Bylaw Review tool.

Strategy 6.2-1

Adopt Low Impact Development (LID) strategies into land use bylaws to mitigate effects and reverse damage caused by development in the Town's ecosystems or watershed. Start with an audit of existing bylaws using the Mass Audubon Low Impact Development Bylaw Review tool.

Low Impact Development strategies promote environmentally friendly land use development and site design. LID focuses on incorporating features into development that allow water to infiltrate onsite, recharge the water table, and manage pollutants. LID can be applied to new developments or be incorporated into redevelopments and/or retrofits. These strategies can include:

- Capturing water in rain barrels and cisterns;
- Designing with permeable pavers;
- Incorporating vegetated swales and buffers;
- Adding rooftop gardens; and
- Reducing asphalts, paving, and other impermeable surfaces.

Additional Reading

[Mass.gov's resource page on Low Impact Development](#)

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-1
- 6.1-2
- 6.1-3
- 7.2-2

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Conservation Commission
- Conservation Administrator
- Planning Board
- Town Planner

Performance Measures

1. Conduct an audit of existing bylaws using the Mass Audubon Low Impact Development Bylaw Review tool.
2. Work with the Conservation Commission to draft LID Strategies into existing bylaws.
3. Provide draft bylaws to the Town Council, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission.
4. Adopt LID strategies.



Chapter 7

Services & Facilities

Town services and facilities are highly important components of any municipality and are what keep a community running year-round. Town services may include waste management, electricity distribution, and road maintenance, while municipal facilities may include the local public library, town hall, and police department. North Attleborough offers many highly regarded municipal services, including the local utility management, animal control, and education. The Town should focus on both improving access to and updating their municipal facilities to maintain their quality.

Goals

- * **7.1:** Improve town-wide accessibility and services.
- * **7.2:** Create resilient and responsive community facilities.

Goal 7.1: Improve town-wide accessibility and services.

It is important for individuals of all abilities to be able to access everyday places and use everyday resources. This could include attending a local public meeting, playing at the park, or walking to school. Where possible, the Town should ensure publicly accessible buildings, such as Town Hall and the Police Department, are accessible to those with disabilities, language barriers, or other factors that may otherwise limit their ability to best utilize town services and facilities.

Strategies

- ▶ **7.1-1:** Create an ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan to identify important accessibility concerns in existing open spaces and town-owned facilities.
- ▶ **7.1-2:** Continue to update the new North Attleborough town website and social media to actively circulate information regarding town regulations, meetings, local events, restaurants, parks, conservation areas, and cultural assets.

Answer of "Unsatisfied" or "Very Unsatisfied" to the question: "How satisfied are you with the physical accessibility (ADA compliance, maintenance) of:"

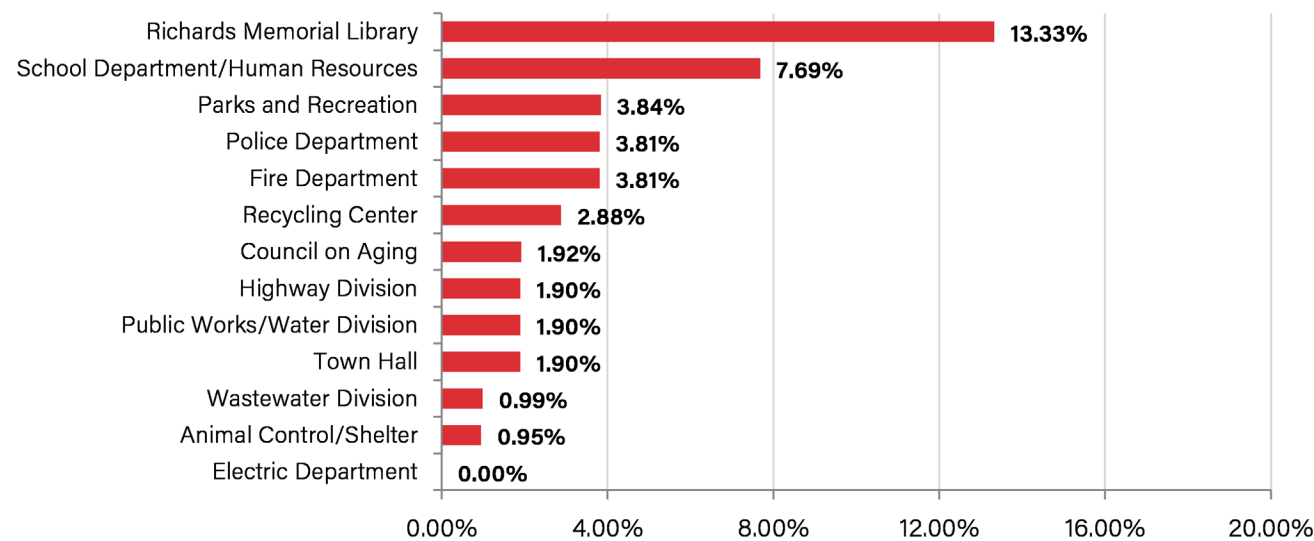


Figure 17: Survey responses answering "Very Unsatisfied" or "Unsatisfied" to "How satisfied are you with the physical accessibility (ADA compliance, maintenance) of:"; Transportation and Services Survey.

Strategy 7.1-1

Create an ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan to identify important accessibility concerns in existing open spaces and town-owned facilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed into law in 1990 and protects those with disabilities from discrimination. Under the law, all municipalities must complete a self-evaluation and transition plan to assess compliance with ADA standards.

The Town of North Attleborough currently does not have an ADA Self-Evaluation or Transition Plan, which increases liability for ADA-related violations and creates inequities between folks of differing abilities. North Attleborough should pursue the creation of an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, which can be funded through the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) Municipal Americans with Disabilities Act Grant. An ADA Plan would directly address accessibility concerns throughout town and in key public open spaces, which could directly support North Attleborough's goals of expanding recreation opportunities for older adults and residents with disabilities. Upon completion and submission of the plan, the Town can apply for additional funding through MOD's program to support identified capital improvements.

Case Study

Many communities in the region have been pursuing ADA compliance in the past several years, including the Towns of Lakeville, Dighton, and Plainville. Most notably, the Town of Dighton completed their ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan in 2019 and recently received a \$150,000 grant from MOD to implement various accessibility improvements in town.

Associated Strategies

- 4.2-2
- 4.4-1
- 8.1-4

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Commission on Disability
- Town Council
- Town Manager
- ADA Coordinator

Performance Measures

1. Apply for funding through MOD.
2. Use MOD funding to hire a consultant to produce an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan.
3. Re-apply for funding through MOD to pursue capital improvements identified in the ADA Plan.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-2
- 5.2-2

Priority

Low

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Cultural Council

Performance Measures

1. Solicit feedback from the public and town departments regarding North Attleborough's new website.
2. Work with the town's hired consultant to continue to update department pages to reflect feedback.
3. Work to establish and track North Attleborough's online presence through the town website and social media.
4. Update the website on a monthly basis with new events/meetings, and on a quarterly basis for department pages.

Strategy 7.1-2

Continue to update the new North Attleborough town website and social media to actively circulate information regarding town regulations, meetings, local events, restaurants, parks, conservation areas, and cultural assets.

One of the easiest ways for a resident to access information about town services and facilities is through the municipal website and social media pages. For example, 1 in 3 (35%) of Master Plan survey respondents said they learn about Town events and information from the town website. Furthermore, 38% and 45% of respondents said they get their information from the Town Facebook Page and local community Facebook pages, respectively.

North Attleborough recently updated their municipal website to improve its functionality and appearance. To complement this update, Town staff should work to update all relevant department, board, and committee pages, including pages for the Planning, Economic Development, and Building Departments.

The Town should also build off these improvements by continuing to actively post about town events and advertise town-run social media on relevant department pages. Some information that has been cited at public meetings and could be described in detail include:

- Local conservation areas and trails;
- Water access points;
- Town events;
- Business resources; and
- Historic sites.

The Town could work to create a seasonal event schedule that is regularly updated with new information and annual festivities, for example, the Kringle Fest, 5K Turkey Trot, Restaurant Week, Town Hall movie nights, and other local happenings.

"How do you get information about what is going on in Town? (Select all that apply)"

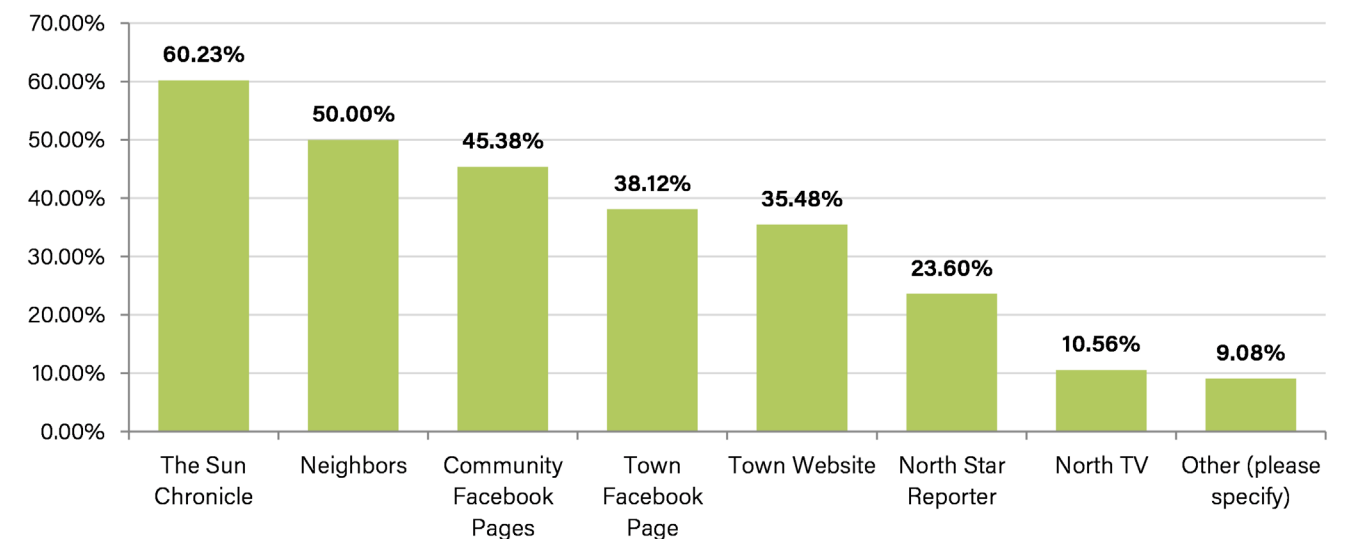


Figure 18: Survey responses to "How do you get information about what is going on in Town?"; Master Plan Survey.

Goal 7.2: Create resilient and responsive community facilities.

Creating more resilient community facilities will benefit the Town of North Attleborough through increased building longevity, decreased long-term maintenance or reconstruction costs, and increased safety and accessibility. These resiliency improvements include energy efficiency upgrades and improved stormwater infrastructure.

Strategies

- ▶ **7.2-1:** Continue to seek funding through Green Communities competitive grants to accomplish energy efficiency measures in town buildings and facilities.
- ▶ **7.2-2:** Maintain MS4 compliance and upgrade stormwater infrastructure and practices described in permit and planning documents.
- ▶ **7.2-3:** Advertise the location of community shelters that provide relief from intense storms and extreme heat or winter events. Clearly mark and advertise roadway evacuation routes.
- ▶ **7.2-4:** Pursue improvements and new locations for municipal facilities reaching the end of their lifespan, including the Fire Department Headquarters and Senior Center.
- ▶ **7.2-5:** Coordinate facility improvements with the creation of a new Social Services Center.

Strategy 7.2-1

Continue to seek funding through Green Communities' competitive grants to accomplish energy efficiency measures in town buildings and facilities.

The Green Community Designation and Grant Program is offered by the Green Communities Division of the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and provides technical support to communities that:

1. Pledge to cut municipal energy use by an ambitious and achievable goal of 20% over 5 years; and
2. Meet four other criteria established in the Green Communities Act.

North Attleborough was designated as a Green Community in 2020 and has been awarded \$366,613 in grants to date, most recently in the Block Two 2021 Competitive Grant Round to fund various energy conservation measures. The Town should continue to pursue funding from the program to further energy efficiency efforts throughout town.

Associated Strategies

- 8.2-2

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Green Communities Coordinator

Performance Measures

1. Continue to pursue funding through Green Communities for future projects on a rolling basis.
2. Track progress of ongoing projects and continue to prioritize important energy efficiency upgrades.

Associated Strategies

- 6.1-3
- 6.2-1
- 8.2-1

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Department of Public Works
- Conservation Commission
- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Implement “High-Priority” recommendations of the 2019 Stormwater Management Plan to the greatest extent possible.

Strategy 7.2-2**Maintain MS4 compliance and upgrade stormwater infrastructure and practices described in permit and planning documents.**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates stormwater runoff that is transported through municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s), and then is often discharged into local water bodies. The EPA’s MS4 Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) classifies the Town of North Attleborough as a Phase II MS4, and therefore requires the Town obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) MS4 permit.

North Attleborough produced a Stormwater Management Plan in 2019 and should continue to pursue the strategies outlined within the report and adopt best management practices when applicable.

Strategy 7.2-3**Advertise the location of community shelters that provide relief from intense storms and extreme heat or winter events. Clearly mark and advertise roadway evacuation routes.**

Often, folks do not know their local evacuation route or where the nearest community shelter is. Furthermore, not all households have a plan or toolkit prepared in the event of an emergency. The Town can prepare a series of resources to assist families in emergency preparedness planning, including producing an online resource page, adding roadside signage along evacuation routes, and distributing information via mailers, text messages, or social media posts.

Additional Resources

FEMA’s Ready.gov website, CDC’s Emergency Preparedness and Response page

Associated Strategies

- 6.1-1
- 7.1-2

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Health Department
- Department of Public Works
- Fire Department
- Town Manager

Performance Measures

1. Establish a working group to gather information on local evacuation routes and community shelter information
2. Create a dedicated page on the town website with relevant information regarding extreme weather event safety and emergency preparedness.
3. Advertise the updated information on the front page of the town website and on social media according to the appropriate seasonal weather events/hazards (i.e., cooling centers and hurricane preparedness in the summer months).

Associated Strategies

- 6.1-1
- 7.2-5
- 8.2-1

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Town Manager
- Council on Aging
- Fire Department

Performance Measures

1. Utilize feedback from the ongoing feasibility study to determine a new location for the town's Fire Department and Senior Center.
2. Acquire funding to implement capital improvements.
3. Solicit an RFP for design and engineering services.
4. Review and select a project. Begin construction.

Strategy 7.2-4**Pursue improvements and new locations for municipal facilities reaching the end of their lifespan, including the Fire Department Headquarters and Senior Center.**

Aging town-owned buildings and infrastructure can pose problems for residents and staff due to accessibility limitations and increased maintenance needs. It is important to consider how these issues affect day-to-day operations and, for buildings reaching the end of their useful lifespan, how to implement key upgrades.

Currently, North Attleborough maintains a 63-person fire department, which responds to over 5,000 calls for service each year. Operating out of three strategically placed stations in Town, the department relies on having up-to-date equipment and facilities for emergency responses. The current fire headquarters, located at 50 Elm Street, is 100 years old and in need of replacement.

The Town is currently in the preliminary stages of a feasibility study to identify land on which it could locate a new fire station, evaluate potential new station locations, and evaluate response tactics. As the Town continues this study, it should prepare to implement its findings. The Town should plan to pursue funding through programs such as Massworks, FEMA, and the Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant to finance the development of a new fire station and augment the funding already approved by Town Council. Additionally, the Town should prepare an RFP to hire design and engineering firms to plan the station. Preparing these services in conjunction with the ongoing locational study will allow the Town to work expediently towards this goal.

North Attleborough's Council on Aging, located at 204 Elm Street and built in 1859, is also in need of new facilities and more space. The number of seniors utilizing the Town's Council on Aging has grown substantially, well beyond the current capacity of the existing structure. The Town should explore the creation of a new, expanded site with upgraded facilities (i.e., fitness rooms, computer rooms) and increased programming options (i.e., gardening, wood working, sports).

The Town is currently exploring future locations for a new facility, including the underutilized Allen Avenue site. North Attleborough could pursue various grants and funding opportunities to support these efforts, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and MassWorks.

Image 13: The existing North Attleborough Senior Center [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Associated Strategies

- 7.2-4

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Town Manager
- Health Department
- Veterans Services

Performance Measures

1. Inventory sites in town that would be suitable for a Social Services Center (including the Allen Avenue site), paying attention to accessibility and prioritizing a central location.
2. Apply for funding through MassWorks or another grant program.
3. Solicit an RFP for design and engineering services.
4. Review and select a project. Begin construction.

Strategy 7.2-5

Coordinate facility improvements with the creation of a new Social Services Center.

North Attleborough should work to create a new Social Services Center as they pursue upgrades to their existing facilities. Currently, key social services are scattered throughout town, which can cause difficulties for residents in need of multiple forms of assistance. The Health Department is located within Town Hall and coordinates with the Lenore’s Pantry to provide food to families and seniors experiencing food insecurity. Additionally, the Veterans Services Department also resides in Town Hall, which is increasingly in need of additional space. Centrally locating these departments will be especially important to allow residents to access these critical services. The Town could explore locating these departments in the same area as a new Council on Aging facility.





Chapter 8

Transportation & Circulation

Most residents and visitors in North Attleborough travel by car. However, during the Plan's public feedback process, participants identified a desire for walking, biking, and additional access to public transit. Public feedback focused on increasing access to shopping, food, retail and service areas, medical care, and open spaces. This feedback revealed important connections the Town can make when considering the input from the planning process.

North Attleborough has an opportunity to improve transportation access along many of its major thoroughfares including Route 1, Route 106, Route 152, Elm Street, and Route 120. Most intersections with a high rate of crashes occur along Route 1 (some of these intersections are amongst the most dangerous in the Southeast Region); however, intersections such as Route 106 and 152 represent an opportunity to improve traffic conditions while also producing streetscape changes that can improve walkability – adding a neighborhood assisting in the creation of some foundational neighborhood elements, which participants also identified as important. As the Town considers important zoning changes, it will be important to complement these with appropriate street modifications to provide safety, increase navigability, and enhance the Town's environment.

Goals

- * **8.1:** Improve pedestrian access and safety.
- * **8.2:** Create resilient transportation networks.

Goal 8.1: Improve pedestrian access and safety.

Improving pedestrian access and safety provides increased access for those who live in town and do not have access to a car; expands the viability of commercial and mixed-use areas in town; and can have a transformative effect on single-use, auto-centric portions of town. Route 1 and its surrounding area would benefit the most from the strategies outlined in this goal. The Downtown, in recent decades, is experiencing increased popularity and economic development. Transportation improvements can help plan for future success in this area. Conversely, public feedback identified the area south of Downtown on Route 1 as needing transportation in need of more significant transformation, as it transitions away from the auto-centric, 'big box' store style fabric, endemic to the period in which this part of town developed. Matching the appropriate level of transportation improvements to the types of land use strategies the Town is considering for these areas will ensure that the Town manages change in a manner that aligns with the desires outlined during the public feedback process.

Strategies

- ▶ **8.1-1:** Conduct a Downtown Parking and Access Study to determine the most efficient and flexible use of parking for the Downtown throughout various times of the day/year.
- ▶ **8.1-2:** Work with MassDOT to conduct Road Safety Audits (RSAs) on state-owned roadways and intersections with a high number of crashes and safety concerns; implement items previously identified through RSAs.
- ▶ **8.1-3:** Coordinate with MassDOT to study and implement changes to Route 1 in anticipation of future mixed-use development and to create a cohesive corridor that is more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly.
- ▶ **8.1-4:** Continue to construct high-priority "Complete Streets" improvements in Partnership with MassDOT.
- ▶ **8.1-5:** Prioritize the creation of new biking connections and improve the safety of existing connections to enhance "bikeability" for residents, particularly for underserved and vulnerable populations.

Strategy 8.1-1

Conduct a Downtown Parking and Access Study to determine the most efficient and flexible use of parking for the Downtown throughout various times of the day/year.

The lack of parking represents a significant concern for those visiting North Attleborough's downtown. However, despite this concern, South Washington Street maintains street parking on both sides of the road; cross streets, such as Church Street, Orne Street, and Grove Street can accommodate street parking on one side of the road; and parallel streets maintain similar capacity, at certain stretches. This area also contains a nexus of municipally and privately-owned parking facilities. Much of the available parking remains vacant during off hours and do not typically reach full capacity during peak times.

Densely settled, mixed-used areas must often navigate the tension between providing sufficient parking and the desire to repurpose land that is occupied by parking facilities – land that is often in high demand and scarce supply – for other active uses. While numerous communities have enacted a mix of solutions to address parking, there is no one-size fits all approach. This Master Plan therefore recommends that North Attleborough conduct a specialized parking study. Numerous engineering and planning firms are capable of creating the necessary analysis, which should include: data collection (such as a current, accurate inventory of existing parking); an assessment of current and future parking demand; identification of potential barriers to downtown visitors' use of parking spaces and areas of potential conflict between residents and visitors); analysis of parking signage, wayfinding,

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-1
- 2.2-1
- 3.1-2
- 3.1-3
- 8.1-3

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board
- Department of Public Works
- Town Council

Performance Measures

1. Hire a consultant to conduct a parking study for Downtown.
2. Coordinate the collaboration of the Planning Board and DPW to draft policy changes and investments (through MassDOT Complete Streets and other funding sources) necessary to implement the study's recommendations.

and existing pavement markings and conditions; a literature review of existing zoning and parking policy; a survey that gathers input from residents and business owners; and additional parking considerations for those with physical impairments who wish to visit the Downtown. Using the results of the above analysis as a guide, the study can propose implementation strategies that draw from specific precedents and general best practices to address and influence both existing and future parking demand in North Attleborough's Downtown

Image 14: Directional signage to a municipal parking lot in Downtown [Taylor Perez/SRPEDD]



Strategy 8.1-2

Work with MassDOT to conduct Road Safety Audits (RSAs) on state-owned roadways and intersections with a high number of crashes and safety concerns; implement items previously identified through RSAs.

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) owns and maintains jurisdiction over Route 1, portions of Route 1A, and the portions of interstate highways Route 95 and 295 that run through North Attleborough. The agency's ownership of these roadways means that MassDOT is responsible for identifying and resolving issues with these roadways to ensure the safety of the traveling public. During the public feedback process, respondents identified portions of Route 1 south of Downtown as a safety concern. Many of the intersections in this area appear in SRPEDD's most dangerous intersections in Southeastern Massachusetts, including Route 1 and the Emerald Square Mall entrance; Route 1, 1A and Elmwood Street; Route 1, 1A, and Hoppin Hill Road; and Route 1 and Chestnut Street; and Route 1 / East Washington Street and Orne Street/Landry Avenue.

To improve conditions at these locations, North Attleborough should pursue a Road Safety Audit (RSA) – a multi-disciplinary team-based assessment of the intersection that identifies a wide variety of potential improvements. The Town should work with MassDOT to conduct these Road Safety Audits (RSAs) in the near term. RSAs are an important part of the State's Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and are required for HSIP funding. Recommended safety improvements typically vary from low-cost measures to significant improvement projects, which are completed with input from the Town.

Associated Strategies

- 3.2-1

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Department of Public Works

Performance Measures

1. Hire a consultant to conduct a parking study for Downtown.
2. Coordinate collaboration between the Planning Board and DPW to draft policy changes and investments (through MassDOT Complete Streets and other funding sources) necessary to implement the study's recommendations.

Associated Strategies

- 1.1-3
- 1.1-4
- 3.2-1
- 3.2-2

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Department of Public Works
- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Initiate conversations with MassDOT to assess feasibility of updating and expanding the 2019 Route 1 Corridor Study.
2. Update the Study to include a stronger emphasis on land use, multi-modal transportation, and placemaking.
3. Work in partnership with MassDOT and SPREDD to place eligible projects in the TIP funding pipeline.

Strategy 8.1-3

Coordinate with MassDOT to study and implement changes to Route 1 in anticipation of future mixed-use development and to create a cohesive corridor that is more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly.

While the RSA's listed in the above goal cover the breadth of roads under MassDOT's jurisdiction, the Town has identified Route 1 as a candidate for zoning changes to produce mixed-use development. Changes to the streetscape of Route 1 would substantially complement and amplify the effect North Attleborough aspires to achieve with any future zoning changes. However, while the zoning change itself may take place primarily on the local level, alterations to the Route 1 streetscape will require significant coordination with MassDOT, as initially explored in the 2019 Route 1 Corridor Study. Revisiting, updating, and expanding the scope of this work can result in the successful navigation of zoning and streetscape improvements and a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly road that aligns with the overall vision of future zoning changes.

Strategy 8.1-4

Continue to construct high-priority “Complete Streets” improvements in Partnership with MassDOT.

Throughout the public feedback process, participants identified a desire for a more safe, walkable, and bikeable street network during public workshop sessions.

Fortunately, the Town adopted a Complete Streets Policy (Tier1) and Prioritization Plan (Tier 2) in December of 2016. The projects identified in North Attleborough's Complete Streets Plan identify a range of the issues addressed above, expand access for pedestrians and cyclists around the downtown nexus, provide corridors of bicycle and pedestrian access throughout town, and improve transportation safety throughout North Attleborough.

In 2021, North Attleborough received its first Tier 3 Project Construction Award for the roughly \$400,000 “Arnold Road Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements.”¹ The Town can build on this success by continuing to fund projects outlined in this Plan through the MassDOT Complete Streets Funding Program – and by coordinating regional-scale projects with SRPEDD.

¹ The project “install[ed] a new 5-foot wide asphalt sidewalk with granite curbing on the right side of the road (Westside Avenue to High Street). Add[ed] ADA/AAB compliant curb ramps with tactile warning panels and high visibility crosswalks at all intersecting streets. [And] Add[ed] sharrows and bicycle signage (R4-11) to address sidewalk gaps in heavily populated adjacent to two elementary schools.” <https://gis.massdot.state.ma.us/completestreets/Map/>

Associated Strategies

- 8.1-5

Priority

High

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Police Department
- Fire Department
- Department of Public Works

Performance Measures

1. Hire a consultant to conduct a parking study for Downtown.
2. Coordinate collaboration between the Planning Board and DPW to draft policy changes and investments (through MassDOT Complete Streets and other funding sources) necessary to implement the study's recommendations.

Associated Strategies

- 4.2-1
- 8.1-4

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Department of Public Works
- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Partner with MHP and Plainville through Complete Neighborhoods to link transportation to housing production near Route 106 and 152.
2. Identify key measures to augment ongoing Complete Streets planning (open space, equitable access).
3. Collaborate with neighboring communities, non-profits, and transportation groups on the planning and implementation of regional bike and trail systems.

Strategy 8.1-5

Prioritize the creation of new biking connections and improve the safety of existing connections to enhance “bikeability” for residents, particularly for underserved and vulnerable populations.

Building from the previous strategy, when implementing the Town’s current Complete Streets projects and identifying new locations, it is important to consider the needs of underserved and vulnerable populations when planning non-motorized transportation projects. In addition to identifying the general need for safe, walkable, and bikeable environments, participants, during public workshops, pointed out a need for this network to provide connections to key, quality of life resources in town, such as grocery stores, recreation, major shopping areas (outside of opportunities located Downtown, which have strong pedestrian access), and medical care as an area for improvement.

The Town should also consider new, ongoing, and future transportation planning in conjunction with the Complete Streets priority projects. North Attleborough should coordinate with Plainville, and other neighboring communities regarding any biking and pedestrian changes that might affect transportation in town. Examples of this include collaborative planning at key intersections on the border of town, such as Route 106 and Route 152; connections between North Attleborough’s and Plainville’s downtown; or any other corridor projects that might extend beyond Massachusetts and into a neighboring community. Additionally, when planning offroad biking connections, the Town should consider open and natural spaces at the regional scale.

By considering access for all populations in town, key open space and natural resources, as well as plans in neighboring communities, North Attleborough can successfully expand its bike infrastructure around a series of connections that build from the ongoing and successful work from its Complete Streets initiative while further responding to public feedback from this Plan’s process.

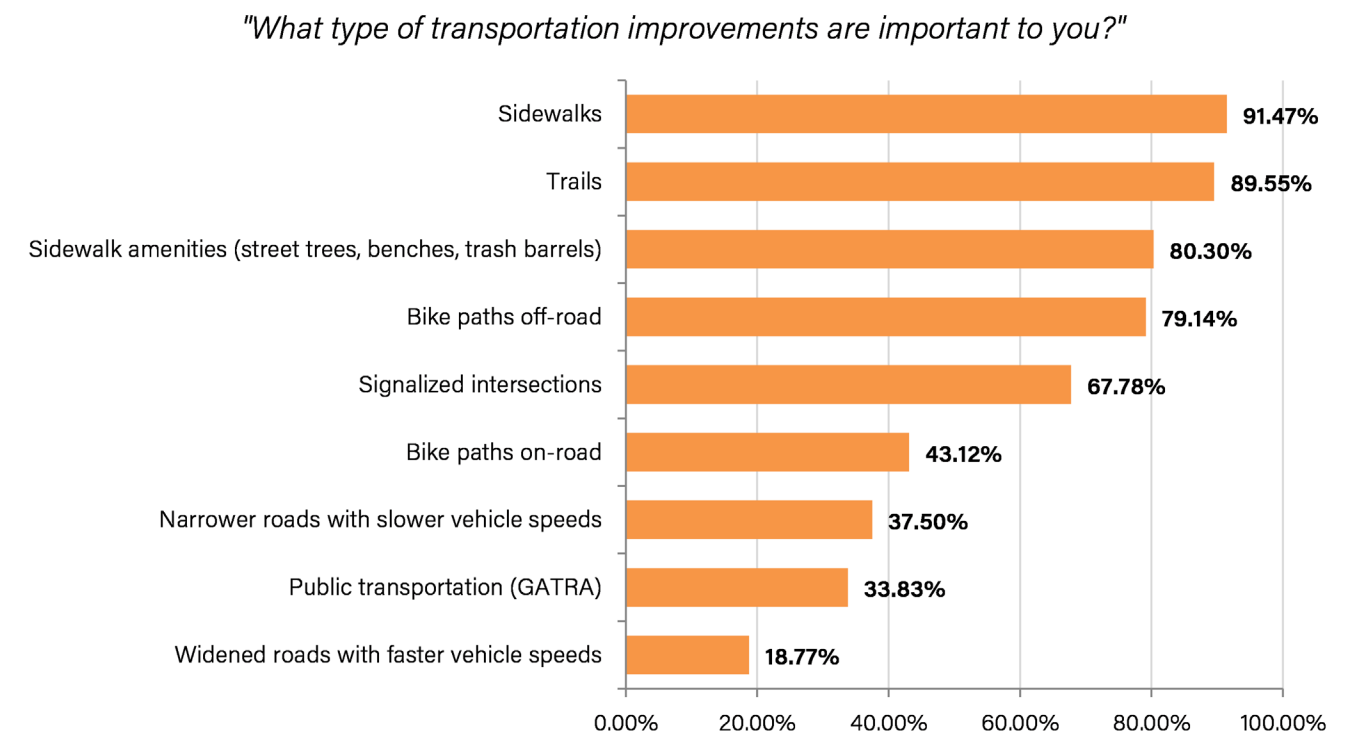


Figure 19: Survey responses to “What type of transportation improvements are important to you?”; Master Plan Survey.

Goal 8.2: Create resilient transportation networks.

Infrastructure and transportation networks must adapt as energy sources shift and climate-resilient technology becomes more prevalent. Some of North Attleborough's main focuses should include installing additional electric vehicle charging infrastructure as EV uptake increases and ensuring adequate stormwater recapture to prevent roadways from flooding during heavy rain.

Strategies

- ▶ **8.2-1:** Encourage new developments to install permeable surfaces and stormwater recapture measures (green infrastructure elements such as bioswales, curb cuts into rain gardens, etc).
- ▶ **8.2-2:** Pursue electric and hybrid options for town vehicle fleets and install additional electric vehicle charging stations along high-traffic routes.

Strategy 8.2-1

Encourage new developments to install permeable surfaces and stormwater recapture measures (green infrastructure elements such as bioswales, curb cuts into rain gardens, etc).

North Attleborough enjoys adjacency to several local water bodies and sensitive ecosystems. From Whittings and Falls Ponds to the Fish Hatchery, to several tributary streams throughout town, it is important to acknowledge the town's connection to the Ten Mile River watershed. Because of this, North Attleborough's current and future developments impact the water running through town and downstream throughout the watershed.

In order to address this, the Town could encourage all new developments to install permeable surfaces and implement stormwater infiltration and recapture measures as part of the development review process, applying for stormwater projects funding through the Commonwealth, or through making funding sources accessible and available to all developers. Typical strategies include implementation of permeable pavers in parking lots or other large-surface-area (and otherwise impervious) surfaces; as well as the construction of bioswales. Deploying these strategies in tandem helps to infiltrate water on-site, recharge groundwater, and eliminate harmful particulates before they reach important waterbodies or habitats in town.

Additional Reading

[Massachusetts Stormwater Projects Funding Resources](#)

Associated Strategies

- 5.1-3
- 6.1-2
- 6.1-3
- 6.2-1
- 7.2-2

Priority

Low

Responsible Parties

- Planning Board

Performance Measures

1. Work with developers to emphasize importance of permeable surfaces and green infrastructure on new projects.
2. Implement a pilot project incorporating best management practices for stormwater management through a developer partnership or on a Town-owned property.

Associated Strategies

- 7.2-1
- 8.1-1

Priority

Medium

Responsible Parties

- Town Council
- Town Manager
- Green Communities Coordinator

Performance Measures

1. Pursue grant opportunities to expand EV fleet and provide EV charging in Town.
2. Engage in pilot program to explore electrifying portion of the Town's vehicle fleet.
3. Continue to convert Town vehicle fleet to electric while providing EV charging throughout North Attleborough.

Strategy 8.2.-2

Pursue electric and hybrid options for town vehicle fleets and install additional electric vehicle charging stations along high-traffic routes.

Many communities are currently converting significant portions of their Town-owned vehicle fleets to hybrid or electric as older vehicles age out of use. From Green Communities to the Massachusetts EVIP program, communities across the Commonwealth have been successful in leveraging funding to expedite this transition. Building from the Town's recent and successful implementation of electric vehicle charging stations (EV) at Town Hall, North Attleborough should pursue further investment in electric vehicle technology through energy efficient town vehicles and the installation of additional charging stations throughout town. In particular, the downtown, high traffic routes, schools, and Town facilities are strong candidates for EV charging station locations.

Case Study

The Town of Dighton applied for and received two EV charging stations through the Commonwealth's Green Communities program, which currently serve the public when visiting Town Hall.

Additional Reading

[Mass.gov's resource page for MassEVIP Workplace & Fleet Charging Incentives](#)





Chapter 9

Implementation

This Plan recommends numerous actions across many different plan elements. Making these recommendations a reality depends largely on the town's capacity to dedicate resources to the work and the capabilities needed to complete the recommendations. Many of these recommendations call on the same Town positions (as well as Boards and Commissions) to implement the plan in addition to their other, day-to-day responsibilities.

Additionally, in some cases, the Town may lack certain expertise to fulfill a recommendation without assistance from a partner agency or consultant. In order to fully implement this Master Plan, the Town should look at options to boost its capacity and capabilities, such as increasing staffing, hiring consultants where appropriate, and partnerships with stakeholders.

The Implementation element summarizes the strategies, complementary actions, priorities, and potential funding sources in a table. Each of these elements contains a priority level: High, Medium, or Low, based on its importance, determined through meetings with stakeholders and public feedback. Each of these elements should be completed within the lifespan of this Master Plan – which is roughly ten years. The matrix of goals and strategies can be found on the following pages.

North Attleborough Goals and Strategies Matrix

		Complementary Action	Priority	Potential Funding/Technical Assistance Opportunities	Potential Funding Sources
1	Land Use				
1.1	Review zoning bylaws for clarity and revise where necessary to improve growth outcomes and to encourage mixed-use development in key areas in town.				
1.1-1	Hire a consultant to review existing zoning bylaws and regulations for clarity and to update site plan review, dimensional, and use regulations where necessary.	1.1-2, 1.1-4, 1.1-5, 3.2-1	High	*	CCC, DLTA, Community One Stop for Growth
1.1-2	Modernize zoning bylaw access by implementing a digital solution, such as eCode360, while also updating and simplifying planning applications, fees, and the application process.	1.1-1, 3.1-1	Medium	*	CCC
1.1-3	Examine the feasibility of establishing a 40R Smart Growth Overlay District in key areas in town.	1.1-1, 1.1-4, 1.1-5, 2.1-1, 2.1-2, 2.1-3	High	*	CCC, Funding from 40R, DLTA
1.1-4	Implement mixed-use zoning with clear design guidelines in key areas in Town where a 40R would otherwise not be eligible.	1.1-1, 1.1-3, 2.1-3, 2.2-2, 3.1-3	High	*	CCC, DLTA, Community One Stop
1.1-5	Investigate and implement multi-family zoning changes to achieve compliance with M.G.L. c. 40A Section 3A "Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities."	1.1-3	High	*	CCC, Massachusetts Housing Partnership, DHCD, DLTA, Community One Stop
2	Housing				
2.1	Continue to produce SHI-eligible units to achieve the Commonwealth's required amount and to support communities in need.				
2.1-1	Implement high priority strategies from the Town's 2023 Housing Production Plan.	2.1-2, 2.1-3, 2.1-4	High	*	CCC
2.1-2	Pursue "friendly 40Bs" and/or developers with the intent to produce affordable housing units in appropriate locations.	2.1-4	High	*	CCC
2.1-3	Create Design and Site Plan Guidelines to ensure that the look and location of new housing development reflect community standards and neighborhood feel.	1.1-3, 1.1-4	High	*	CCC, DLTA, Community One Stop
2.1-4	Investigate opportunities for adaptive reuse to redevelop underutilized municipally-owned land and buildings, including the Courtois Site.	2.1-2	High	*	CCC, Community One Stop, U.S. EDA (if the project[s] also create jobs)
2.2	Produce housing options for older adults to support aging in place and for adults with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses.				
2.2-1	Examine methods to provide direct assistance to help preserve housing for vulnerable communities, including senior residents.	2.1-2	High	*	HUD Home, CDBG, MassHousing
2.2-2	Implement strategic zoning amendments with the goal of encouraging higher density development, reducing barriers for accessory or multi-family units, or actively pursuing development for populations without existing housing options (including older adults and those with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses).	1.1-1, 1.1-4, 1.1-5, 2.1-3	High	*	CCC
3	Economic Development				
3.1	Continue to foster economic activity and improve amenities in the Downtown to support existing and new small businesses.				
3.1-1	Create a user-friendly Development and Permitting Guide to facilitate business development.	1.1-2, 3.1-2, 3.1-4	Medium	*	CCC, DLTA
3.1-2	Consider creating a permanent outdoor dining policy to provide restaurants more flexibility and to help enliven the public streetscape in Downtown.	3.1-1, 3.1-3	Low	*	CCC, Community One Stop (Massachusetts Downtown Initiative)
3.1-3	Coordinate with small businesses and residents to create a Downtown Revitalization Plan, including pedestrian-oriented transportation recommendations, new design guidelines, signage, wayfinding, and outdoor seating plans.	1.1-1, 1.1-4, 3.1-2, 3.1-4, 5.2-2, 6.1-2	High	*	CCC, MassDevelopment, Community One Stop, Business Improvement District (BID)
3.1-4	Implement a Facade Improvement Program to assist business owners with improving the quality and look of storefronts, signage, and building facades in Downtown.	3.1-1, 3.1-2, 3.1-3, 5.2-1	Medium	*	CCC, MassDevelopment, Community One Stop, BID, CDBG
3.2	Focus economic development to areas in town that are suitable for mixed-use, commercial, and industrial growth.				
3.2-1	Create a Route 1 Economic Development Plan to craft a vision for future development and revitalization of the Mall and surrounding commercial areas along the corridor.	1.1-1, 1.1-3, 1.1-4, 3.2-2, 8.1-3	High	*	CCC, U.S. EDA

3.2-2	Partner with a developer to revitalize the Emerald Square Mall into a walkable, mixed-use village-style center.	1.1-3, 1.1-4, 3.2-3, 8.1-3	Medium	*	CCC
3.2-3	Inventory and begin remediation efforts of Brownfield sites and underutilized parcels in town that are suitable for new commercial development or repurposing into a community asset, including, but not limited to, 35 Robinson, Webster Mill, Benson Trust Site, Ferrara Property, and Handy and Harman.	1.1-3, 1.1-4, 2.1-1, 2.2-2, 2.1-4	High	*	CCC, U.S. EPA, U.S. EDA, MassDevelopment, One Stop
4	Open Space and Recreation				
4.1	Implement the town's 2021-2028 Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) and its Seven-Year Action Plan.				
4.2	Improve access to natural areas, parks, and water bodies.				
4.2-1	Work to develop a local multi-use trail system and, where feasible, a regional trail system in collaboration with local partners and municipalities.	Goal 3 OSRP, Goal 4.1, 4.2-2, 4.3-2, 4.4-1, 8.1-5	Medium	*	PARC, MassTrails
4.2-2	Develop a town-wide water access master plan to clarify allowed activities and improve parking, walking, and watercraft access at key fishing, swimming, and boating sites in town.	Goal 4.1, 4.2-1, 4.4-1	Medium	*	PARC, Local non-profits, DLTA
4.3	Preserve open space and manage growth in key areas of Town.				
4.3-1	Adopt the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to fund the acquisition of open space and community development projects.	2.1-1, Goal 4.1, 4.3-2	Medium	*	CPA, DLTA
4.3-2	Explore parcels eligible for the creation of small, neighborhood-focused uses, such as dog parks, community gardens, skate parks, playgrounds, and pocket parks.	Goal 4.1, 4.3-1, 4.4-1	Medium	*	PARC
4.4	Expand and support recreational opportunities.				
4.4-1	Provide additional recreation opportunities at existing underutilized open spaces and recreation sites in town for individuals of all ages and abilities and as cited in the 2021 OSRP, including ADA accessibility.	Goal 4.1, 4.2-1, 4.2-2, 4.3-2	Medium	*	PARC
4.4-2	Inventory and address maintenance concerns, including lighting, drainage, and parking at key recreational and athletic fields in town.	Goal 4.1, 4.3-1, 4.4-1, 6.1-2, 7.1-1	High	*	PARC
5	Natural and Cultural Resources				
5.1	Preserve lands with flood- and climate-resilience, agricultural, and habitat value.				
5.1-1	Explore conserving parcels in the town's western "Greenbelt" and in other areas that are consistent with the town's Priority Protection Area mapping.	2013 Community Priority Areas, OSRP Goal 2, Goal 4.1, 5.1-2	High	*	PARC, SNEP, APR, Chapter 61A
5.1-2	Establish an Agricultural Commission that can proactively plan for agricultural preservation and assist local farmers in maintaining the lands and practices of agriculture, particularly with accessing resources to farming under climate change paradigms.	5.1-1	Low		
5.1-3	Protect the quality and quantity of the town's water resources (water bodies and groundwater). Work to address impaired water resources in need of a total maximum daily load (TMDL) by planning improvements at the watershed and subwatershed scale.	OSRP Goal 1, Goal 4.1, 5.1-4, 6.1-2, 6.1-3, 6.2-1, 8.2-1	Medium	*	MVP Action Grant, EPA 319 Grant, SNEP
5.1-4	Establish group of volunteers to document species habitat records for the town and the NHESP database in order to preserve biodiversity, variety of habitat, and intact ecosystems	Goal 2 OSRP, Goal 4.1, 6.2-1	Low		
5.2	Explore placemaking additions and new event opportunities for Downtown and all of North Attleborough.				
5.2-1	In partnership with local residents and business owners, identify building facades and areas in town that would benefit from art installations and murals.	3.1-4	Low	*	CPA (if adopted), Community One Stop, Business Improvement District (BID)
5.2-2	Coordinate with the Cultural Council, Fire Department, and downtown businesses to explore new event opportunities that highlight cultural features of North Attleborough and support community gathering.	3.1-1, 3.1-2, 7.1-2	Low	*	Mass Cultural Council
6	Climate and Resilience				
6.1	Develop Town facilities and infrastructure to increase climate resilience				
6.1-1	Ensure vulnerable populations, including older adults/senior residents, have access to air conditioning during heat events.	2.2-1, 7.1-2, 7.2-3, 7.2-5	High	*	Green Communities, MVP Action Grants

6.1-2	Identify locations eligible for green infrastructure improvements including street trees and stormwater management.	6.1-3, 6.2-1, 7.2-2, 8.2-1	Medium		SNEP
6.1-3	Address flooding and flood storage concerns described in the 2019 MVP Plan and 2019 Stormwater Management Program, including flooding along the Ten Mile River and in Downtown, new development, and redevelopment.	6.1-2, 6.2-1, 7.2-2, 8.1-2	High	*	MVP Action Grant, EPA 319 Grant, SNEP
6.2	Institute Climate Resilient Bylaws and Plans				
6.2-1	Adopt Low-Impact Development (LID) strategies into land use bylaws to mitigate effects and reverse damage caused by development in the Town's ecosystems or watershed. Start with an audit of existing bylaws using the MassAudubon Low Impact Development Bylaw Review tool.	1.1-1, 6.1-2, 6.1-3, 7.2-2	Medium	*	SNEP
7	Services and Facilities				
7.1	Improve town-wide accessibility and services				
7.1-1	Create an ADA Self-Evaluation & Transition Plan to identify important accessibility concerns in existing open spaces and town-owned facilities.	4.2-2, 4.4-1, 3.1-4	High	*	MOD
7.1-2	Continue to update the North Attleborough town website and social media by improving the availability of information regarding town regulations, local events, parks, conservation areas, and cultural assets.	1.1-2, 5.2-2	Low		
7.2	Create resilient and responsive community facilities				
7.2-1	Continue to seek funding through Green Communities competitive grants to accomplish energy efficiency measures in town buildings and facilities.	8.2-2	Medium	*	Green Communities
7.2-2	Maintain MS4 compliance and upgrade stormwater infrastructure and practices described in permit and plan documents.	6.1-3, 6.2-1, 8.2-1	Medium	*	SNEP
7.2-3	Advertise the location of community shelters that provide relief from intense storms and extreme heat or winter events. Clearly mark and advertise roadway evacuation routes.	6.1-1, 7.1-2	High	*	MVP Action Grant
7.2-4	Pursue improvements and new locations for municipal facilities reaching the end of their lifespan, including the Fire Department Headquarters and Senior Center.	6.1-1, 7.2-5, 8.2-1	High	*	CDBG, MassWorks
7.2-5	Coordinate facility improvements with the creation of a new Social Services Center.	7.2-4	High	*	CDBG, MassWorks
8	Transportation and Circulation				
8.1	Improve pedestrian access and safety				
8.1-1	Conduct a Downtown Parking and Access Study to determine the most efficient and flexible use of parking for the Downtown throughout various times of the day/year.	1.1-1, 2.2-1, 3.1-2, 3.1-3, 8.1-3	Medium	*	SRPEDD's UPWP
8.1-2	Work with MassDOT to conduct Road Safety Audits (RSAs) on state-owned roadways and intersections with a high number of crashes and safety concerns; implement items previously identified through RSAs.	3.1-2	High	*	SRPEDD's UPWP
8.1-3	Coordinate with MassDOT to implement changes to Route 1 in anticipation of future mixed-use development to create a cohesive corridor for residents and visitors that is pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly.	1.1-3, 1.1-4, 3.2-1, 3.2-2	High		
8.1-4	Continue to construct high-priority "Complete Streets" improvements in Partnership with MassDOT.	8.1-5	High	*	MassDOT Complete Streets
8.1-5	Prioritize the creation of new biking connections and improve the safety of existing connections to enhance "bikeability" for residents, particularly for underserved and vulnerable populations.	4.2-1, 8.1-4	Medium	*	MassDOT Complete Streets
8.2	Create resilient transportation networks				
8.2-1	Encourage new developments to install permeable surfaces and stormwater recapture measures (green infrastructure elements such as bioswales, curb cuts into rain gardens, etc).	5.1-3, 6.1-2, 6.1-3, 6.2-1, 7.2-2	Low	*	SNEP
8.2-2	Pursue electric and hybrid options for town vehicle fleets, and install additional electric vehicle charging stations along high-traffic routes.	7.2-1, 8.1-1	Medium	*	Green Communities