

Shrewsbury Comprehensive Master Plan

Staff Interview Summary

Overview

As part of the background information gathering phase of the Comprehensive Master Plan update, the consultant team of Barrett Planning Group and Kimley-Horn conducted virtual interviews with Town staff in July 2026. These virtual 1.25 hour sessions gathered local knowledge and perspectives on current conditions, recent changes, and emerging issues in Shrewsbury. The interviews provided an opportunity to hear directly from those involved in topics included in the Master Plan: land use, housing, economic development, historic, cultural, and natural resources, open space and recreation, transportation, municipal services and facilities including sustainability. The consultant team will use the information gathered during these interview sessions to inform the existing conditions report, discussion of key issues, and the development of goals and an implementation plan.

Attendees

In total, 21 people representing a diverse range of town staff participated.

Who's missing?

- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Veteran's Services
- Assessor

Historic, Cultural & Natural Resources, Open Space & Recreation	
Laurel Rossiter	Recreation Director
Eleah Caseau	Conservation Agent & Tree Warden
Sharyn Thomas	Town Clerk
Louise O'Neill	Asst. Director, Planning and Economic Development
Christopher McGoldrick	Director, Planning and Economic Development
Griffin O'Neill	Asst. Town Planner, Planning & Economic Development
Economic Development; Transportation & Circulation	
Patty Sheehan	Building Commissioner & Zoning Enforcement Officer
Louise O'Neill	Assistant Director, Planning & Economic Development
Justin Richardson	Town Engineer
Christopher McGoldrick	Director, Planning & Economic Development

Griffin O'Neill	Asst. Town Planner, Planning & Economic Development
Kushal Raghuram	Asst. Town Planner, Planning & Economic Development
Housing	
Patty Sheehan	Building Commissioner & Zoning Enforcement Officer
Louise O'Neill	Assistant Director, Planning & Economic Development
Hollie Lucht	Director, Council on Aging
Christopher McGoldrick	Director, Planning & Economic Development
Griffin O'Neill	Asst. Town Planner, Planning & Economic Development
Kushal Raghuram	Asst. Town Planner, Planning & Economic Development
Municipal Services & Facilities; Sustainability	
Patty Sheehan	Building Commissioner & Zoning Enforcement Officer
Eleah Caseau	Conservation Agent & Tree Warden
Amy Li	Town Accountant
Annette Garcia	Regional Health Director
Priya Rathnam	Library Director
Rick Maksian	Director, Broadband Services & Technologies, SELCO
Patrick Collins	Integrated Resources Manager, SELCO
Louise O'Neill	Assistant Director, Planning & Economic Development
Christopher McGoldrick	Director, Planning & Economic Development
Griffin O'Neill	Asst. Town Planner, Planning & Economic Development
All Topics w/ Town Manager	
Kevin Mizikar	Town Manager
Keith Baldinger	Asst Town Manager - Public Works
Louise O'Neill	Assistant Director, Planning & Economic Development
Christopher McGoldrick	Director, Planning & Economic Development
All Topics w/ Department of Public Works	
Keith Baldinger	Assistant Town Manager of DPW

John Hamilton	Public Buildings Manager
Tom Maroney	Water and Sewer Superintendent
Gosia Stolarska	Solid Waste & Recycling Program Manager
Vincent Thai	Stormwater Coordinator
Peter Lamoureux	Highway Manager

Discussion Key Takeaways by Master Plan Topic

Housing

- The Town has made real progress on housing, but is now taking a more cautious approach to growth.
 - Shrewsbury has established an Affordable Housing Trust, reached the 10% affordable housing threshold, and used zoning and 40B projects to support housing growth.
 - At the same time, residents are increasingly concerned about the impacts of new development on schools, services, taxes, and neighborhood character.
- There is strong demand for more housing options, especially housing that allows people to stay in Shrewsbury.
 - Seniors and young families are having difficulty finding housing they can afford.
 - There is a need for smaller, accessible, and more modest homes, including “missing middle” housing, townhouses, and opportunities for aging in place.
- ADUs are gaining interest and could provide another way to add housing.
 - Applications for ADUs have increased, and most interest so far has come from homeowners.
 - ADUs could help families accommodate relatives or create rental opportunities, although the Town is still working through some building code and permitting questions.
- The Town is trying to balance housing production with neighborhood scale and character.
 - Larger multifamily and duplex projects are generating concerns about massing, tree removal, traffic, and changes to established neighborhoods.
 - There is interest in smaller-scale development that fits better within the community while still providing additional housing.
- Development pressure is affecting both housing and municipal capacity.
 - Continued interest in housing, including ADUs, is putting additional demands on planning and zoning staff and volunteer boards.
 - The challenge is not simply creating housing, but managing increasingly complex development proposals while maintaining community character.
- Affordability remains a major gap.
 - While the Town has reached the 10% threshold, much of the new housing is still considered expensive by local standards.
 - The Affordable Housing Trust is becoming more active, but has limited resources. Expanding funding opportunities and looking at deeper levels of affordability will be important going forward.

Open Space and Recreation

- Implementation of the 2020 OSRP has been limited by funding, staffing, and capacity.
 - The plan identified priorities, but there has not been enough dedicated staff time or funding to consistently move projects forward.

- There is a need to step back and look at park and recreation planning more holistically as the population grows and facilities become increasingly stretched.
- Accessibility remains a significant need across the town's parks and recreation facilities.
 - There is ongoing community interest in improving accessibility, but many facilities—including playgrounds, the concert area, and picnic areas—still have significant barriers.
 - A town-wide assessment found that all 17 playgrounds need work, but the cost of addressing these needs is substantial.
- The town has funding opportunities and identified needs, but needs a clearer path from planning to implementation.
 - There is frustration that studies and assessments do not always lead to visible improvements. Better coordination between planning, budgeting, CPC funding, and ongoing maintenance could help turn identified priorities into projects and build public confidence in the process.

Natural Resources

- Shrewsbury has a lot of well-used parks, recreation opportunities, and natural resources, but the town is struggling to keep up with demand.
 - Dean Park is a major community asset, but many parks, fields, and facilities have a significant maintenance backlog and are not keeping pace with the growing population.
- There is strong community interest and volunteer support, but limited staff capacity makes it difficult to turn that interest into action.
 - There are many active volunteers, coaches, and community groups, including people interested in trails, invasive species, and climate issues.
 - The challenge is having enough staff time to coordinate and support these efforts.
- The town needs to think more strategically about how to protect and incorporate natural resources as conditions change.
 - Wetlands, forests, ponds, and other resource areas are changing quickly, creating new challenges for residents and development.
 - There is interest in bringing natural resource protection more directly into planning, design, and development decisions.
- There are opportunities to strengthen policies and regulations related to open space, trees, wetlands, low-impact development, and water resources.
 - Some guidelines and bylaws are already in place, but there may be opportunities to expand them, improve implementation and enforcement, and better connect them to current planning and development practices.
- The Master Plan can help the town balance growth and change with stewardship of its natural and historic resources.

- There is a recognition that Shrewsbury cannot remain static as the community grows, but future growth should be thoughtful and support the resources and places that make the town special.

Historic & Cultural Resources

- Funding and capacity issues
 - CPC helpful but stingy - trying to be custodians of the funds, but aren't pursuing funds' objective if they're just sitting on funds
 - Planning gets done but funding, operational needs aren't there
 - Difficulty conveying issues to the public so they understand and are willing to commit to funding
- Is there interest in historic preservation?
- New populations demanding new features (dog park, splash pad, etc.)
- Historic preservation in Shrewsbury has largely been driven by CPA funding, private property owners, and local nonprofits, rather than a strong municipal preservation program.
 - There are active groups and some interest in pursuing Certified Local Government status, but the Historic Commission is currently inactive and there are limited resources dedicated specifically to preservation.
- There appears to be interest in Shrewsbury's history, but it is somewhat niche and not always visible.
 - People tend to connect strongly with places and stories that they remember personally (such as Jordan Pond, Dean Park Pond, or Spag's) while less attention has been given to the town's Indigenous, colonial, and broader historical layers.
 - There may be an opportunity to build greater awareness and interest through education and storytelling.
- Preservation is not necessarily about saving every historic building or recreating the past.
 - The conversation pointed to an opportunity to better understand *why* places have changed, what aspects of their history are meaningful to residents, and what is worth carrying forward.
 - Historic preservation could be incorporated into redevelopment and future planning in ways that recognize both the past and the town's future.
- CPA provides an important funding opportunity, but there are challenges with both the process and the town's capacity to move projects forward.
 - There are potentially more projects and community ideas than are currently making it through the process, while some applicants may not have the time or knowledge to navigate CPA requirements.
 - Stronger partnerships between residents, nonprofits, and town staff could help move worthwhile preservation projects forward.
- The Master Plan is an opportunity to bring historic preservation more into the broader conversation about Shrewsbury's future.

- Rather than treating preservation as a stand-alone issue, there is an opportunity to connect it with redevelopment, parks and public spaces, cultural resources, community identity, and the stories that residents want to carry forward.

Economic Development

- The Town is taking a more proactive approach to economic development.
 - The new Town-Wide Economic Plan started with a focus on redevelopment along Route 20 and expanded to look at the Town's major commercial corridors, including Routes 9 and 140 and the Town Center.
 - A key goal is to maintain a healthy balance between the residential and commercial tax bases.
- There are opportunities to strengthen and diversify the local business base.
 - The Town is seeing growth in restaurants and other businesses, but there is interest in attracting more entertainment, breweries, small businesses, and other uses that give residents more reasons to stay in Shrewsbury rather than travel to Worcester.
- The Town is working to make commercial areas more attractive and easier to navigate.
 - Signage and wayfinding remain important, and the Town has made some progress through zoning updates, design guidelines, and the façade improvement program.
 - Updating the existing signage bylaw could be another opportunity.
- Parking, traffic, and market conditions continue to be challenges for businesses.
 - Concerns about parking can create opposition to new commercial projects, while traffic and access remain important issues along the major corridors.
 - There are also challenges in attracting small, locally owned businesses, which may face higher costs and greater difficulty securing financing than larger or franchise businesses.
- Infrastructure investment is directly supporting economic development.
 - The expansion of sewer service along Route 20 has helped unlock commercial development and contributed to growth in the commercial tax base.
 - This creates an opportunity to think strategically about where additional infrastructure investment could support desired economic development.
- There is an opportunity to focus more on placemaking and the needs of younger residents.
 - Teens have limited places to gather outside of home, school, parks, and places like Dunkin'.
 - Creating more welcoming gathering spaces, coffee shops, entertainment, or other activities could support both local businesses and the community.
 - Engaging students directly could help identify what types of businesses and spaces would be most useful.

Community Services & Facilities

- The Town is facing significant facility needs over the next 10–20 years.

- The DPW facility needs renovation or replacement, the high school is over capacity and under a feasibility study for expansion, and several older school and municipal buildings will need repairs or replacement.
 - There is a continuing need to plan for these costs rather than address facilities one project at a time.
- Water and sewer infrastructure is aging and will require continued investment.
 - The Town is working to better understand the condition and age of its infrastructure and develop long-term replacement plans.
 - Expanding access to the Upper Blackstone system has helped address wastewater capacity concerns, but the Town still faces aging infrastructure and a significant challenge with unaccounted-for water.
- The Town is moving toward a more comprehensive approach to asset management.
 - Shrewsbury is building an asset management system that brings together information on roads, sidewalks, stormwater, water and sewer infrastructure, fleet, and other assets.
 - Better access to this information should help the Town prioritize projects, plan for replacement, and make more informed funding decisions.
- Town facilities and administrative space are also becoming a concern.
 - Town Hall is overcrowded, and the Town is looking at opportunities to consolidate municipal operations, including a potential new headquarters for the electric and internet utilities.
 - The future use of properties that could become available will need to be considered as part of the broader facilities planning process.
- Technology and digital services are a strength and an opportunity.
 - SELCO's fiber-to-the-home project is expanding access across the community, and the Town is looking at ways to use technology to improve permitting, asset management, communication, and access to information.
 - There is also interest in creating a more integrated online communication hub and dashboard for residents.
- Long-term capital planning is an ongoing need.
 - Several municipal buildings and major building systems are aging and will require significant investment over the next 10–20 years.
 - The Town is beginning to strengthen asset management and identify future replacement needs.
- Staffing and funding are important considerations for maintaining services.
 - Public Works is managing a range of programs and responsibilities, including buildings, solid waste and recycling, water, and stormwater, with staffing and financial resources influencing the capacity to expand programs and maintain infrastructure.
- Solid waste and recycling services are changing.
 - The Town is planning a new recycling center and considering expanded recycling, trash, and composting programs.

- Residents have expressed interest in additional services, while rising disposal and recycling costs present an ongoing financial consideration.
- Stormwater management needs are increasing.
 - More intense rainfall events are placing additional demands on existing stormwater infrastructure.
 - The Town is rehabilitating existing systems and exploring additional improvements, although land availability, wetlands constraints, and ongoing maintenance requirements present challenges.
- Municipal sustainability efforts are underway.
 - The Town has used Green Communities funding for energy audits, LED lighting, HVAC improvements, and other efficiency measures.
 - Future opportunities include additional building electrification, renewable energy, and energy storage.
- Coordination and communication across departments could continue to improve.
 - Departments are coordinating on projects and shared needs, but staff identified opportunities for stronger communication and a more coordinated approach to communicating municipal priorities and investments to the public.
- Limited Town-owned land affects future municipal needs.
 - Public Works, stormwater, recreation, housing, and other municipal priorities may compete for a limited supply of suitable Town-owned property, highlighting the importance of coordinated consideration of existing and future municipal land needs.

Transportation & Circulation

- Shrewsbury benefits from strong regional road connections, but north-south travel is more challenging.
 - Routes 9, 20, and 140 provide important east-west connections to surrounding communities, employment areas, and commercial districts.
 - North-south routes, particularly along the Quinsigamond corridors, have more limited capacity and carry a lot of regional traffic.
- The Town has made good progress on Complete Streets and transportation grants.
 - Projects have added sidewalks, bike lanes, and other pedestrian improvements, including along North Quinsigamond Avenue.
 - The Town has also been successful in using Complete Streets and Shared Streets and Spaces grants to make improvements.
- There is an opportunity to better coordinate roadway improvements with other infrastructure work.
 - The Town is working toward a five-year paving plan for roads and sidewalks, but water, sewer, drainage, and utility projects often need to happen at the same time.
 - Better coordination could help avoid repeatedly disturbing recently paved roads and make the most of limited funding.

- Traffic safety and speeding remain major concerns for residents. Complaints about speeding, difficult crossings, and pedestrian safety continue to come up, particularly in the Town Center and along major corridors.
 - The Town is using tools such as traffic counters, radar stations, and GPS-based traffic data to better understand where problems occur.
- Truck and regional traffic are putting additional pressure on the local road network.
 - Route 140, Main Street, and Maple Avenue carry significant truck traffic, including traffic associated with major distribution and employment centers.
 - Future growth in Shrewsbury and surrounding communities could increase regional and peak-hour traffic, making it important for the Town to plan for these impacts.
- Walking and biking are supported in principle, but the Town is balancing improvements with cost, maintenance, and community concerns.
 - There is interest in making it easier for people, particularly students, to walk or bike to school and adding bike and pedestrian facilities when road improvements provide an opportunity.
 - At the same time, some residents are concerned about the cost and maintenance of new infrastructure, so the Town is looking for improvements that are appropriate for a suburban community and can be maintained over time.
- The transportation issues identified in the Town Center study are still relevant.
 - Truck traffic, congestion on Maple Avenue and Route 140, pedestrian and bicycle connections, and the potential for improved transit service remain concerns.
 - The Town may want to revisit earlier recommendations as development and conditions in the Town Center change.
- Transit may become more important as the Town Center grows.
 - The Town has explored changes to bus routes and expanded Via service, but traditional bus service has not changed significantly.
 - Additional population in the Town Center could create more demand for transit.
- E-bikes and e-scooters are becoming a new transportation and safety concern.
 - They are increasingly used by young people, particularly around Maple Avenue and the schools, and the Town and schools are beginning to respond to safety concerns.
- The Master Plan can help the Town think more strategically about connectivity and future development.
 - Larger developments should be evaluated not only for their traffic impacts but also for how they connect to surrounding roads, sidewalks, bike routes, transit, and nearby businesses.
 - There is also an opportunity to improve circulation within older, auto-oriented commercial areas and create better connections that allow people to make multiple trips without getting back in their cars.

General/Overarching

- Infrastructure and land use planning are increasingly interconnected.
 - Decisions about sewer, roads, schools, and other public facilities directly influence where development can occur and what type of development is feasible.
 - The Master Plan can help the Town consider these issues together rather than as separate decisions.
- Shrewsbury is experiencing continued development pressure, and the Town needs to plan for how remaining land will change over time.
 - The conversation is shifting from simply asking when the Town will be “built out” to asking what land is likely to be developed or redeveloped and what that development should look like.
 - Sites that were once considered too difficult to develop are now becoming viable because of market conditions and infrastructure investments.
- The complexity of development is increasing.
 - Development proposals are becoming more technically complicated because of topography, wetlands, infrastructure, traffic, environmental requirements, and changing state regulations.
 - This is putting additional demands on Town staff and volunteer boards such as the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals.
- The Town is trying to balance growth with community concerns.
 - Shrewsbury continues to attract residents, businesses, and development because of its location, schools, transportation connections, and quality of life.
 - At the same time, residents are increasingly concerned about the scale and impacts of development, particularly larger housing and mixed-use projects.
- Community engagement has become more intentional, but timing and communication remain important.
 - The Town has had success using surveys, public forums, social media, and even childcare to make engagement more accessible.
 - There is a strong desire for residents to be involved earlier in the process so that projects and planning decisions do not feel like they appeared “out of nowhere.”
- The Town has an opportunity to better connect Master Plan goals with annual priorities and implementation.
 - Departments already establish annual goals through the Town's performance-based management approach.
 - The Master Plan could build on this system by identifying measurable priorities and creating a way to regularly track and communicate progress to residents.

Existing Conditions Information Noted in Interview Sessions

Housing/Land Use/Residential Development

- Development activity has remained significant since approximately 2016.
- Lakeway Commons was identified as an early mixed-use redevelopment project.
- Edgemere Crossing is a major redevelopment area.
- Additional development interest exists around South Street, Sigmond Avenue, and Route 20.
- Several mixed-use and multifamily projects are in various stages of permitting or construction.
- Many proposed projects contain approximately 150–200 residential units.
- The Elmwood project includes 193 residential units.
- The Elmwood project also includes approximately 11,000 square feet of commercial space.
- A project at 525 Hartford Turnpike includes approximately 250 apartments.
- A proposal at the former Chelmsford Factory site on Route 9 includes approximately 270 apartments.
- Point Hills Farm is a 40B project.
- The Town is tracking multiple development projects through permitting and construction.
- Some development projects have included Community Benefit Agreements.
- Development along Route 20 has been supported by available sewer capacity and zoning changes.
- Development projects have included requests for additional building height through zoning relief.
- Some projects have included land set aside for open space.
- The Stony Hill neighborhood is experiencing traffic impacts associated with development activity.
- The Town has applied for funding to address an intersection serving the Stony Hill neighborhood.
- The Town is operating under an administrative consent order related to sewer connections.
- Under that order, connections can be made but sewer extensions are limited.
- Public Works, stormwater, recreation, and housing interests are all evaluating the limited supply of Town-owned land.
- Much of the land historically acquired by the Town consists of wetlands, limiting its potential use for facilities, stormwater improvements, recreation, or housing.
- A townwide vacant property analysis has been used to consider opportunities for affordable housing, recreation, stormwater improvements, and municipal facilities.

Economic Development/Land Use/Commercial Development

- Older commercial properties have higher vacancy rates than newer commercial spaces.
- Some commercial plazas experience frequent tenant turnover, particularly restaurants.
- Newer commercial space has attracted interest from warehousing and biotechnology-related businesses.
- Lakeway Commons has experienced additional reinvestment following its redevelopment.
- The Town has a Lakeway Business Association.

- The Town has a Shrewsbury Business Association associated with the Town Center.
- BID feasibility studies have been conducted or explored.
- A BID has not yet been established.

Municipal Services & Facilities

- Shrewsbury has fully digitized Planning Board records.
- The Building Department has also digitized its records.
- Planning Board and ZBA permitting is available online through OpenGov.
- The Town is connecting planning and building permitting processes through OpenGov.
- The Planning Department has added staff in recent years.
- Human Services departments collaborate and coordinate their services.
- The Town uses digital and print methods for public outreach.
- Some municipal departments do not have enough physical space for existing or additional staff.
- Scheduling public meetings and program spaces requires significant coordination.
- The highway garage remains an outstanding facility need and was not funded at Town Meeting.
- SELCO operates from two primary facilities and two satellite locations.
- SELCO has identified a need to consolidate its operations into one facility.
- The library is approximately 38,000 square feet.
- A portion of the library dates to 1903.
- The library was substantially renovated in 2016.
- The library includes meeting rooms and group study spaces.
- Library staff are looking at ways to repurpose existing space to accommodate staff and patron needs.
- The library's HVAC system serves both historic and renovated portions of the building.
- The library is reportedly the second busiest library in Central Massachusetts after Worcester.
- The library attracts visitors from Worcester and surrounding communities.
- The library parking lot is frequently full.
- Public schools have capacity concerns, including at the high school.
- The Town tracks school enrollment and capacity data.
- The Town's last townwide facility condition assessment was completed about 10 years ago. Staff indicated that conditions have changed significantly since that assessment.
- Several major building systems are reaching or exceeding their typical useful life. For example, Town Hall's rooftop and air-handling units are approximately 25 years old, and the lighting system at Sherwood Middle School is about 13 years old and considered obsolete.
- Coolidge Elementary School will be 100 years old in 2027. The High School is currently receiving priority attention because of significant overcrowding.
- The Town is considering future improvements to the DPW, water, sewer, and recycling facilities on South Street, including a potential new or renovated water/sewer garage and a new recycling center.

- The Town received an EPA SWIFR grant to support development of a new recycling center and implementation of expanded recycling, trash cart, and curbside composting programs.
 - The new programs are expected to add approximately 3–6 positions.
- The Town currently has a small drop-off composting program with approximately 160 participating residents.
 - Curbside composting is being considered as part of the expanded program.
- The Town is beginning to use an asset management system for public buildings to track building components and equipment, from HVAC systems to classroom lighting.

Water, Sewer & Stormwater

- The Route 20 sewer system was rerouted toward Worcester.
- The sewer rerouting opened additional capacity.
- Shrewsbury currently has sufficient water capacity.
- Sewer capacity is a more significant infrastructure constraint than water capacity.
- The Town is conducting a townwide study related to sewer capacity.
- Shrewsbury has a stormwater bylaw.
- The Town's stormwater requirements include requirements associated with the state's MS4 permit.
- The Town completed a project to map its stormwater system.
- The mapping project included geolocating manholes and documenting grades and other system information.
- The Town is updating its maintenance program for older stormwater basins.
- Some stormwater basins are maintained by Town staff, while others require contractors.
- Residents have reported concerns about the condition or operation of some stormwater basins.
- Some reported flooding issues have been associated with beavers and wetlands rather than the municipal stormwater system.
- The Town manages approximately 120 stormwater basins. Staff reported that approximately 40–50 have been rehabilitated, while others have limited maintenance because of staffing capacity.
- The Town is implementing stormwater improvements such as infiltration trenches and rehabilitation of existing stormwater basins to increase their capacity and allow more water to infiltrate into the ground.
- The Town has a stormwater utility that provides a funding source for stormwater improvements, although staff noted that additional staffing is needed to properly maintain some stormwater facilities and best management practices.

Broadband & Electric Infrastructure

- Nearly all Shrewsbury homes now have access to fiber-to-the-home broadband.
- Remaining multifamily broadband connections are expected to be completed by 2027.
- SELCO has made significant electric distribution upgrades along the Route 20 corridor.

- SELCO is upgrading portions of its system to a higher voltage.
- The higher-voltage upgrade is nearly complete.
- Most new smart meters and associated line deployments are complete.
- Smart meters continuously communicate with SELCO.
- SELCO is planning a substation repowering project.
- The substation project is intended in part to improve reliability in areas that experience outages.
- SELCO reports adequate distribution capacity to accommodate current electrification needs, including EVs and heat pumps.
- Some areas on the outskirts of town have less electric service capacity than other areas.
- SELCO owns some electric infrastructure while National Grid owns most of the high-voltage transmission system serving the area.

EVs & Energy

- Shrewsbury has been identified as the second-highest EV-adoption ZIP code in Massachusetts.
- SELCO provides rebates for EV purchases.
- SELCO provides rebates for residential EV charging equipment.
- Shrewsbury has more than 30 public Level 2 EV chargers.
- Public EV chargers are located at facilities including the library and schools.
- The Building Code requires EV charging to be incorporated into applicable development.
- SELCO electric rates are significantly lower than rates charged by investor-owned utilities in neighboring communities.
- SELCO markets its electric rates as an economic development advantage.
- SELCO is exploring battery energy storage facilities.
- Up to three battery storage facilities of up to approximately 10 MW each are being considered.
- The Town is working on electrifying its municipal vehicle fleet.
- Some municipal vehicles are aging.
- The Town participates in the Green Communities program.
- The Building Department pursues grants related to sustainable and resilient municipal buildings.
- Shrewsbury has a Municipal Climate Action Plan with goals and performance measures.
- SELCO is a significant participant in the Town's climate and energy initiatives.
- The Town has used Green Communities funding for energy improvements, including HVAC audits, lighting audits, LED conversions, and other energy-efficiency projects. Approximately \$190,000 in Green Communities funding was used in the previous year.
- The Town's two most recently constructed municipal buildings are fully electric or nearly fully electric, reflecting a move toward reducing reliance on natural gas.

Open Space & Recreation

- Parks and Recreation has historically received limited funding.
- Parks and Recreation is working with the Community Preservation Committee on additional funding.

- CPC funding is being used to support parks, recreation, and capital projects.
- The Town receives requests for both active and passive recreation opportunities.
- Town staff manage open spaces and natural areas.
- Staff identified limited capacity to manage some of these areas.
- The Town has an aging tree population that requires ongoing management.
- The Town owns relatively little property compared with the amount of land in the community.
- Some wooded areas are privately owned and therefore not protected as Town-owned open space.

Emergency Services & Resilience

- The library and Senior Center are used as cooling centers.
- The Town has designated overnight cooling, warming, and sheltering locations.
- Some designated emergency locations are not regularly used or practiced.
- The Town does not currently have public splash pads.
- The Town has limited public outdoor spaces specifically designed for cooling.
- The Town operates a food pantry program through the Senior Center.
- The food pantry is described as well-used and well-managed.

Traffic and Circulation

- The Town has a Complete Streets program and recently completed improvements on Quinsigamond Avenue. South Quinsigamond Avenue has been identified as a potential next project.
- Staff identified the Market Basket, car wash, refueling station, and nearby industrial/retail properties as an area where additional roadway improvements may be needed as traffic and development increase.
- Development is creating additional traffic considerations in some areas.
 - Staff identified the area around Market Basket, the car wash, refueling station, and nearby industrial/retail properties as an area where roadway improvements may be needed as development and traffic increase.
- South Quinsigamond Avenue is identified as a potential future Complete Streets project.
 - The Town recently completed improvements on Quinsigamond Avenue.
- Shared-use paths are being incorporated into some roadway projects to accommodate bicycle travel and improve connections for different modes of transportation.
- There are gaps in the sidewalk network associated with recent development.
 - Staff noted a gap where a sidewalk was not provided as part of a Chapter 40B development.
- The proposed recycling center on South Street will have traffic and access considerations.
 - The site will need to accommodate public access while also maintaining separate access for DPW operations.

- Staff noted the importance of having a dedicated public entrance/exit that does not interfere with DPW vehicles and operations.

Grants and Municipal Capacity

- The Planning and Economic Development Department actively pursues grant funding.
- The Town uses grants to supplement local funding for municipal initiatives.
- Shrewsbury has recently experienced several unsuccessful grant applications as grant programs have become more competitive.
- The Town has generally been able to fund some initiatives through other sources when grants are unsuccessful.
- The Community Preservation Committee is a relatively newer funding area for some departments.
- Town staff have experience with grant writing and grant administration.