



# The Wellesley Unified Plan

MARCH 2019

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Town of Wellesley

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### BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Ellen F. Gibbs  
Jack Morgan  
Marjorie Freiman  
Beth Sullivan Woods  
Thomas H. Ulfelder

### PLANNING BOARD

Deborah Carpenter  
Catherine Johnson  
Harriet Warshaw  
Jim Roberti  
Kathleen Woodward

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## Wellesley Unified Plan Steering Committee

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*Throughout the course of the Unified Plan's development,  
the following individuals participated on the Steering Committee  
and worked with Town staff and the consultant team to guide the planning process.*

Kathleen Woodward, Advisory Committee	Ann-Mara Lanza, Library Trustees	Miguel Lessing, Trails Committee	Demian Wendrow, At-large
Marcia Testa-Simonson, Board of Health	Ann Howley, Library Trustees	Denny Nackoney, Trails Committee	David Himmelberger, At-large
Carol Hannenberg, Board of Health	Dave Donohue, Municipal Light Plant Board	Don Kelley, Wellesley Housing Authority	KC Kato, At-large Thomas Ulfelder, At-large
Owen Dugan, Board of Public Works	Lise Olney, Natural Resources Commission	Maura Renzella, Wellesley Housing Authority	Heather Sawitsky, At-large
Paul Criswell, Board of Public Works	Raina McManus, Natural Resources Commission	Bob Kenney, Wellesley Housing Development Corp	Hans Fischmann, At-large
Ellen Gibbs, Board of Selectmen	Larry Shind, Permanent Building Committee	Dona Kemp, Wellesley Housing Development Corp	Michael Tartamella, At-large
Marjorie Freiman, Board of Selectmen	Suzu Littlefield, Permanent Building Committee	Richard Howell, Wetlands Protection Committee	William Giezentanner, At-large
Barbara McMahan, Community Preservation Committee	Deborah Carpenter, Planning Board	Peter Jones, Wetlands Protection Committee	Marlene Allen, At-large
Ann Marie Gross, Council on Aging	Harriet Warshaw, Planning Board	Chris Cavallerano, Youth Commission	Dennis DiSchino, At-large
Diane Campbell, Council on Aging	Tripp Sheehan, Playing Fields Task Force	Derek Redgate, Zoning Board of Appeals	Susan Pinto, At-large
Amir Kripper, Design Review Board	Mark Wolfson, Recreation Commission	Hal Marcus, At-large	Kathleen Nagle, At-large
David Smith, Historic District Commission	Bettina Eikeboom, Recreation Commission	Chris Shedd, At-large	Laura Rodormer, At-large
Diogo Teixeira, Historical Commission	Michael D'Ortenzio, School Committee	Regina LaRocque, At-large/Natural Resources Commission	Bongani "Bobo" Musikavanhu, At-large
Robert Carley, Historical Commission	Tony Bent, School Committee	Joellen Toussaint, At-large	Steve Yang, At-large
John Roslansky, Human Resources Board	Katy Gibson, Sustainable Energy Committee		Michelle Chalmers, At-large

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### **Project Management Group**

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*The Project Management Group worked closely with the consultant team overseeing the planning process.*

Ellen Gibbs,  
Board of Selectmen

Marjorie Freiman,  
Board of Selectmen

Deborah Carpenter,  
Planning Board

Harriet Warshaw,  
Planning Board

Michael Zehner,  
Planning Director

Meghan Jop,  
Assistant Executive Director

James Ryan,  
Finance and Budget Analyst

### **Consultant Team**

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Stantec's Urban Places • Institute for Excellence in Government • Community Circle

- Executive Summary [foldout mini-poster]

## Part I. Setting the Stage

- Chapter 1—The Unified Plan and Wellesley’s Vision for the Future
- Chapter 2—The Community Speaks
- Chapter 3—Wellesley Today

## Part II. Our Natural and Cultural Heritage

- Chapter 4—Natural Resources and Conservation
- Chapter 5—Historic and Cultural Resources
- Chapter 6—Parks, Trails, and Recreation

## Part III. How We Live

- Chapter 7—Housing and Neighborhoods
- Chapter 8—Public Health and Wellness
- Chapter 9—Economic Development

## Part IV. Sustainable Systems and Networks

- Chapter 10—Mobility and Circulation
- Chapter 11—Public Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure
- Chapter 12—Sustainability, Resilience, and Green Practices

## Part V. From Plan to Action

- Chapter 13—Land Use, Zoning, and Urban Design
- Chapter 14—Town Government Strategic Concepts
- Chapter 15—Implementation Priorities

## Appendices

- Appendix A—Wellesley Public Health Plan  
*prepared by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council*
- Appendix B—Town Government Best Practices Resources

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PART I

# *Unified Plan: The Big Picture*

CHAPTER

1

**WELLESLEY'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

CHAPTER

2

**THE COMMUNITY SPEAKS**

CHAPTER

3

**WELLESLEY TODAY**

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# *The Unified Plan: Wellesley's Vision for the Future*

**W**ellesley is a thriving, mature suburban community, incorporated in 1881, that owes much of its success over the last century to its commitment to planning. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, as Wellesley became an affluent residential suburb, many attractive planned neighborhoods were created from farms and estates. The town's leaders took care to direct and shape development. In 1912 the town instituted a Town Building Law, which specified the size and location of homes to protect against fire. The town passed a zoning law in 1925 and was a pioneer in developing a planning board, a board of survey, and a billboard bylaw. The community's attention to planning for the future is one of the reasons it has remained appealing and attractive for more than 100 years. As a journalist commented in the 1920s, the reason Wellesley was such a nice place to live was that they "planned it that way."

Wellesley has adopted four comprehensive plans, in 1965, 1981, 1994, and 2007. The 1965 plan, like many plans of that era, took a pro-growth approach to future development. Subsequent plans have sought a more balanced, growth-management approach, including conservation of open space and town character. While once viewed as primarily focused on land use decision making, contemporary comprehensive plans increasingly include a broad range of topics

## MASSACHUSETTS STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMUNITY COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLANS

MGL, Chapter 41, Section 81D requires Massachusetts municipalities to prepare and adopt a master plan including these elements at a minimum:

- Goals and policies statement, based on an interactive public process.
- Land-use plan element, current and proposed distribution of land use.
- Housing element, existing and projected housing needs and objectives.
- Economic development element, for the expansion or stabilization of the local economic base and the promotion of employment opportunities.
- Natural and cultural resources element, with an inventory of the significant natural, cultural, and historic resource areas and strategies for the protection and management of such areas.
- Open space and recreation element, with an inventory of recreational and open space areas and strategies for the management and protection of such areas.
- Services and facilities element to analyze existing and projected needs for public facilities and services.
- Circulation element, with an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation systems.
- Implementation program element, which defines and schedules the specific municipal actions necessary to achieve the objectives of each element of the master or study plan.

A comprehensive master plan is adopted by a planning board vote after a public hearing and can be amended by the planning board after a public hearing. There is no state requirement that zoning or other regulations be consistent with the community's master plan.

and issues that affect the physical development and economic well-being of the community, such as health, sustainability and resilience. A comprehensive plan is both a process and a framework for future decision making. The planning process provides the opportunity for community residents and others to articulate and review their values and goals through public discussion, agree on what they want the town to be like in the future, and identify the key areas where the town must act to preserve enduring character and to seize opportunities to shape change. The framework is a guidance document that sets out a set of strategies, tools, and specific actions to make the plan a reality. Recommendations can include zoning amendments, design and development standards, programs, management plans, neighborhood plans, and similar initiatives.

## Why a “Unified Plan?”

In 2015, Wellesley's Town Meeting authorized the creation of a Town Government Study Committee to study the then-current status of town government. One and a half years later the TGSC published its recommendations, including that the Board of Selectmen undertake creation of a strategic plan to articulate a town-wide vision and priorities. The timing coincided with the Planning Board's process to update the 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan. Recognizing that the processes to gather input, develop a needs assessment, and conduct rigorous analysis would be similar in the two initiatives, and that they should be interrelated in methodology and results, the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board agreed to create an innovative, consistent, and visionary Unified Plan, which would then serve as one of the Town's principal planning documents.

The Unified Plan is intended to articulate the Wellesley community's core values, establish a vision for the future, set town-wide priorities and goals, and devise implementation strategies needed to achieve them. It is intended to serve as an umbrella framework under which all public bodies will operate and establish work plans and budget priorities moving forward. The Unified Plan includes state-required comprehensive plan elements as well as attention to strategic concepts for town government.

Work on the Unified Plan commenced with the creation of a vision for Wellesley's future. The vision is an opportunity to describe an aspirational and positive view of a shared future for the entire community. The UP thus includes a vision for the future as well as a set of agreed-upon community values that guided the planning process and will also shape the implementation of the plan. The vision and values were developed through an extensive public engagement process and lively discussion by the Unified Plan

Steering Committee (SC), comprising representatives of town boards, commissions, and committees, and citizen members who applied to participate.

The Town of Wellesley has a decentralized form of government, which empowers boards, commissions and many committees (“Public Bodies”) to hire staff and prepare budgets and work plans independently. These budgets are reviewed by both the Advisory (Finance) Committee and the Board of Selectmen during the annual budget process, where the board or departmental budget requests are negotiated within a town-wide process to arrive at and present a balanced budget to Town Meeting.

The Unified Plan will function alongside the Town’s Town-Wide Financial Plan and Five-year Capital Budget Program. A few departments and public entities have developed strategic plans independently. These departmental strategic plans and others to be developed will be aligned with the priorities identified by the Town in the Unified Plan and the two financial documents, and sequenced as appropriate to work within the Town’s personnel and financial resources.

One of the first tasks the Unified Plan Steering Committee undertook was identification of beloved town assets and locations, as well as those that require attention and improvement. The Unified Plan intentionally focuses on the latter; it reviews existing conditions, summarizes findings, identifies challenges, and makes implementation recommendations. The Unified Plan recognizes that all existing Town services are central to the care of residents and

#### **WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR GOVERNMENT?**

“Strategic planning is a comprehensive and systematic management tool designed to help organizations assess the current environment, anticipate and respond appropriately to changes in the environment, envision the future, increase effectiveness, develop commitment to the organization’s mission and achieve consensus on strategies and objectives for achieving that mission. Strategic planning is about influencing the future rather than simply preparing or adapting to it. The focus is on aligning organizational resources to bridge the gap between present conditions and the envisioned future. While it is important to balance the vision of community with available resources, the resources available should not inhibit the vision. The organization’s objectives for a strategic plan will help determine how the resources available can be tied to the future goals. An important complement

to the strategic planning process is the preparation of a long-term financial plan, prepared concurrently with the strategic plan. A government should have a financial planning process that assesses the long-term financial implications of current and proposed policies, programs, and assumptions. A financial plan illustrates the likely financial outcomes of particular courses of actions. Strategic planning for public organizations is based on the premise that leaders must be effective strategists if their organizations are to fulfill their missions, meet their mandates, and satisfy their constituents in the years ahead. Effective strategies are needed to cope with changed and changing circumstances, and leaders need to develop a coherent and defensible context for their decisions.

“Best Practice: Establishment of Strategic Plans”  
Government Finance Officers Association, [www.gfoa.org/establishment-strategic-plans](http://www.gfoa.org/establishment-strategic-plans)

meeting their needs; however, the plan also focuses on addressing needs and strengthening Town government operations where short-term action plans are most needed. Through the annual budget process, each department, board, commission and committee has the opportunity to refine and present its work plan, request funding for the coming year and propose future capital projects.

As a combination of a comprehensive plan and an approach to a town strategic plan, the Unified Plan includes state-required comprehensive plan elements as well as attention to strategic concepts for town government. In addition, the Wellesley Board of Health received a grant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission (MAPC) for MAPC to prepare a Public Health element for the Unified Plan. The Town engaged a consultant team led by Stantec, with the Institute for Excellence in Government and Community Circle as subconsultants.

## **Wellesley's Vision for the Future**

The Unified Plan Vision was created by the Unified Plan Steering Committee and guided by the results of a community visioning forum and comments on a draft vision from precinct meetings and the project website. The visioning process provides an opportunity to describe a desired, positive future of shared destiny for the whole community. The Unified Plan also includes a set of values to guide the planning process and the implementation of the plan. The vision functions as a “constitution” for the plan as a whole.





***This is a Vision and Values Statement for Wellesley over the next 20 years.** It serves as the “constitution” of the Wellesley Unified Plan, intended to guide the town as it makes decisions about activities, operations, programs, and capital investments in the future. Specific ways to achieve the Vision and implement the Values appear in the goals and strategies of the Unified Plan.*

## Our Vision for Wellesley

### *In 2040...*

**Wellesley is a town recognized for its welcoming community culture and exemplary town services; commitment to education and life-long learning; a quality of life that enhances the health and social well-being of its residents; respect for the environment and support for sustainability, conservation, and protection of physical and historical assets; and for its dynamic and thriving business community. Wellesley is recognized for its fiscally sound, well-managed, innovative, and accessible town government that has strong citizen participation and a highly-motivated, collaborative and talented professional staff.**



## Our Values guide the plan and its implementation



**Diversity:** Establish, implement and support ongoing initiatives to maintain Wellesley as a community that welcomes a diversity of people and households.



**Sense of Community:** Foster a sense of community and community-building through support for inclusive services and facilities, town-wide events, multi-generational activities, and community gathering places.



**Town Character:** Establish policies, practices and criteria for the preservation of the character of the town's residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and open spaces.



**Excellence in Service Delivery:** Provide a broad array of services to residents and other users of town services; maintain a strong customer service orientation that strives for excellence in every aspect of service delivery.



**Education:** Support best-in-class public education, library, recreational and senior services.



**Healthy Lifestyles:** Enhance the health and wellness of residents through public health initiatives, educational, social and recreational opportunities; create the conditions for healthy lifestyles through easy access to healthful food, medical and psychological care, support systems, non-motorized transportation options, and town facilities.



**Connectivity of People and Places:** Provide safe, accessible, and efficient transportation choices including public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle pathways, to connect people to town destinations and the region.



**Conservation and Sustainability:** Make resource-efficient choices to conserve energy, water, and materials; improve water and air quality and reduce carbon emissions; develop and implement sustainable practices to adjust to changing environmental conditions.



**Town Asset Management:** Maintain, protect, preserve, and enhance the Town's physical assets including facilities, infrastructure, parks, open space, and natural resources.



**Business-Friendly:** Support existing and new businesses in commercial areas that complement and enhance our community, while protecting quality of life and environmental resources.



**Collaboration:** Leverage resources and expertise of local private businesses and institutions, as well as neighboring towns and regional agencies, to achieve mutual goals.



**Best-Practice Implementation:** Establish best practices and priority-based resource allocation systems to support town services, infrastructure and capital investments in a fiscally-prudent manner; conduct long-range fiscal/financial planning that includes appropriate metrics for evaluating progress and adjustment to changing financial conditions.

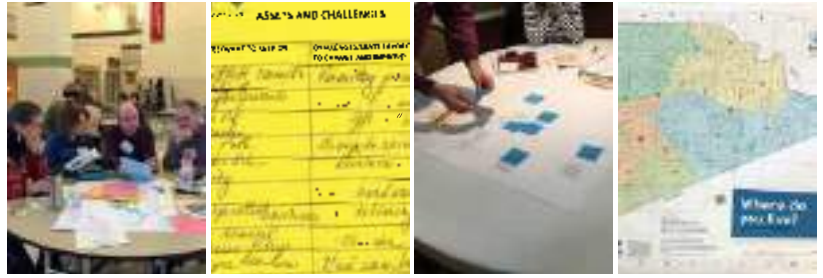


**Democratic Government and Citizen Participation:** Promote participation and engagement in town governance and decision-making.



**Transparency:** Facilitate public access to information, making it easy to understand how town government works, how decisions are made and how to get involved; encourage input from and effectively communicate with residents and other stakeholders.

(THE SEQUENCE IN WHICH THE VALUES APPEAR DOES NOT REFLECT A RANKING OF THEIR IMPORTANCE)



## Our Voice, Our Town

Beginning in fall 2016, the planning team for the Wellesley Unified Plan interviewed members of the Steering Committee and town department heads; worked with the Steering Committee to identify priorities; developed a draft existing conditions report, *Wellesley Today*; held a town-wide visioning forum; and tallied more than 1,500 responses to community surveys.

### VISIONING FORUM

On Saturday, December 10, 2016, **more than 65 Wellesley residents** attended a workshop at Wellesley High School. They came to share



their hopes and aspirations for the future of the town as part of the Wellesley Unified Plan planning process.

Participants were asked to write their **personal vision** for Wellesley, imagining the best, most positive future

for the Town. People responded with a powerful outpouring of ideas, thoughts, challenges, inspirations, and insights.

### PRIORITIES

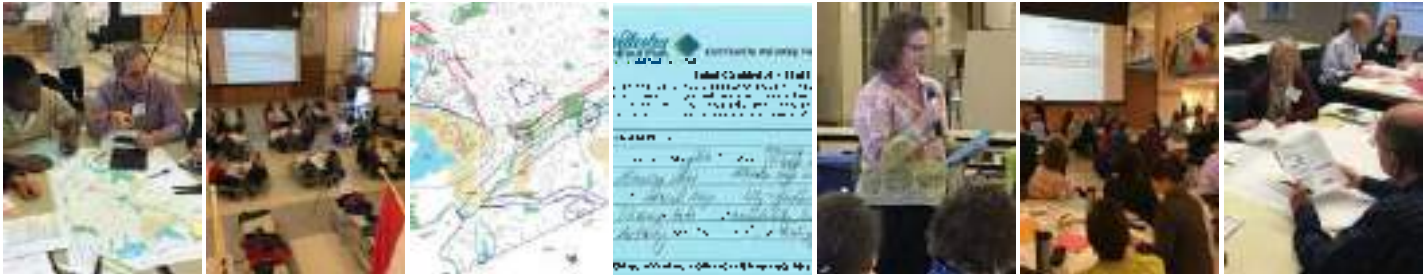
The participants worked in small groups to identify their top five priorities for Wellesley's future. The top categories were:

- **MORE DIVERSITY** (of people, housing, affordability, incomes)
- **OPTIMIZING TOWN GOVERNMENT** (transparency and communications, taxes, inclusion)
- **MOBILITY** (traffic, alternatives to the car)
- **EDUCATION** (maintain quality school system)
- **COMMERCIAL VILLAGES** (more retail diversity, more vibrancy)
- **OPEN SPACE AND SUSTAINABILITY** (preserve open spaces, promote sustainability)

### *Hopes for Wellesley's future from the personal visions:*

More diverse (racial, ethnic), inclusive and welcoming community... dynamic commercial areas... more diverse housing... maintain high standards for education... preserved open space... town government that is managed more efficiently, with continued citizen involvement... increase transparency of town government processes... safety for all who walk and bike... work to decrease noise and light pollution... improve zoning to decrease mansionization... town centers where people can walk to and gather... zero waste community... small business shopping areas... strong neighborhoods-people working together... more connected, more inclusive... better traffic management... good public transportation... increased affordable housing.





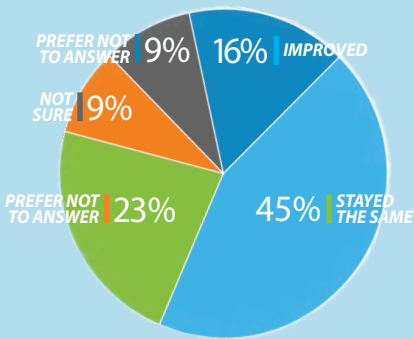
# Sources of the Vision and Values

## TWO COMMUNITY SURVEYS

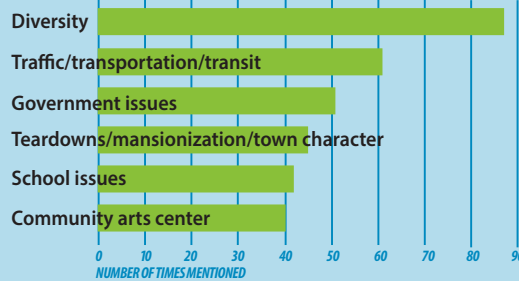
Additional sources of community thinking on elements to be included in Wellesley's Vision and Values emerged from three workshops organized by precinct groupings and two online surveys. 92 participants took part in the three precinct workshops; 464 participants responded to Survey One, and 1,056 participants responded to Survey Two.

### FROM SURVEY ONE

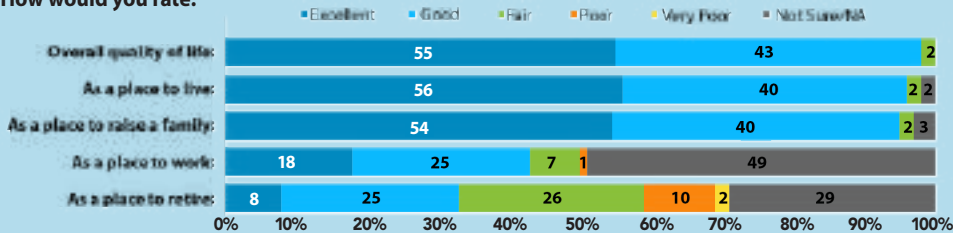
Has the quality of life in Wellesley improved, stayed the same, or gotten worse over the last five years?



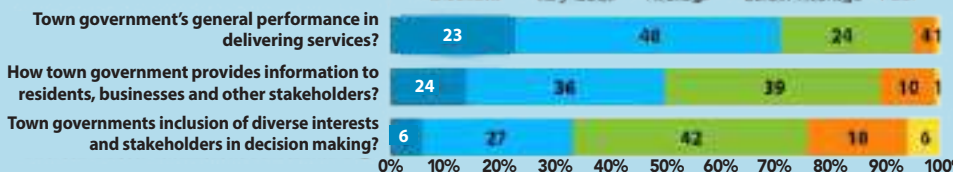
One thing you would change about Wellesley:



How would you rate:

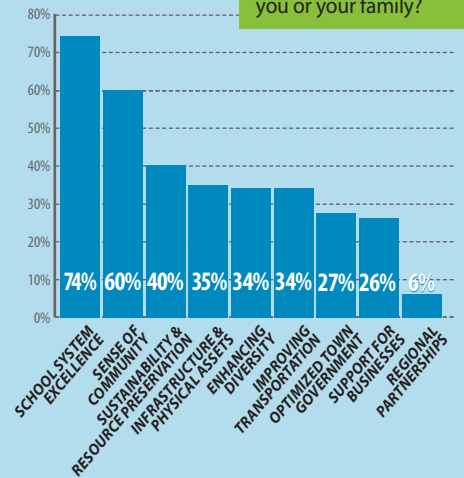


How would you rate:

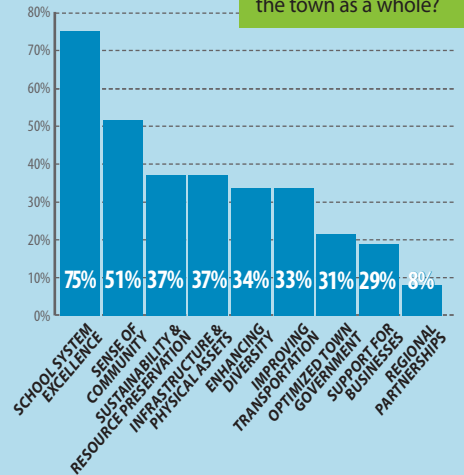


### FROM SURVEY TWO

Which of these issues is most important for you or your family?



Which of these issues is most important for the town as a whole?





# The Community Speaks

## TOWN ENTITIES REPRESENTED ON THE UNIFIED PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Advisory Committee  
Board of Health  
Board of Public Works  
Board of Selectmen  
Community Preservation Committee  
Council on Aging  
Design Review Board  
Historic District Commission  
Historical Commission  
Human Resources Board  
Library Trustees  
Municipal Light Plant Board  
Natural Resources Commission  
Permanent Building Committee  
Planning Boards  
Playing Fields Task Force  
Recreation Commission  
School Committee  
Sustainable Energy Committee  
Trails Committee  
Wellesley Housing Authority  
Wellesley Housing Development Corp.  
Wetlands Protection Committee  
Youth Commission  
Zoning Board of Appeals

The Wellesley Unified Plan is based on an engagement process designed to elicit the Wellesley community's values, aspirations and concerns for the future. The representatives of boards, commissions, and the public at large who served on the Steering Committee, as well as staff, were committed to outreach and public engagement. The public process incorporated a variety of outreach techniques and activities, allowing residents to participate in ways that worked best for them. Residents provided feedback to the consultant planning team by attending town-wide, precinct-level, or topic-focused public meetings, as well as participating in online surveys. The planning team used the community's feedback and guidance to shape all aspects of the plan, from drafting the Vision and Principles statement to the strategies and actions needed to achieve that vision. The individual chapters of the plan include the results of the process for specific topics.

## A. Ongoing Engagement

### Steering Committee

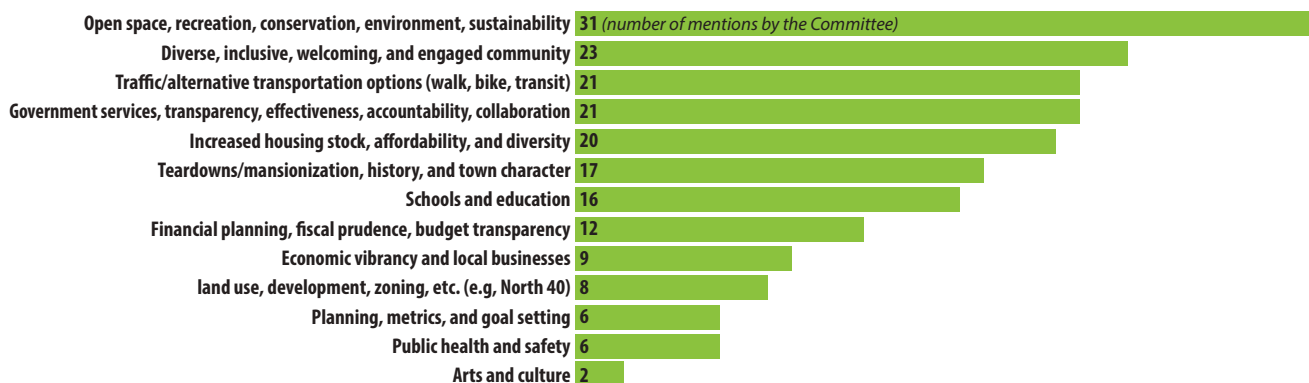
In August 2016, before selection of a consultant to assist the Town in creating the plan, the Board of Selectmen and Planning Board established a Steering Committee to guide the Unified Plan process. The Committee was designed to include representatives of elected and appointed boards, commissions, and committees, as well as residents from the community at large who applied for membership

on the Steering Committee. Sixty people were appointed to the committee, including alternates for most boards and commissions and twenty at-large members who had applied for membership. The Town’s Planning Director and Assistant Executive Secretary also participated in Steering Committee meetings.

The Steering Committee met nine times between late 2016 and early 2018. In addition, committee members participated in focus groups and working groups, attended public workshops, and informed the boards, commissions, and other groups that they represented about the planning process. Committee members promoted public outreach and reviewed draft documents and the draft plan.

At the second Steering Committee meeting, members took part in several exercises in small groups to begin identifying priorities. This graphic shows the members’ top priorities, as represented by the number of mentions for each topic:

▶ EXHIBIT 2.1 **STEERING COMMITTEE PRIORITIES FOR THE PLAN**



### Website and Digital Outreach

The consultant team created a project website, [www.wellesleyunifiedplan.com](http://www.wellesleyunifiedplan.com). The planning team posted information and interim documents on the website. In addition, several online surveys were made available to the public. E-blasts and flyers were used to publicize meetings and survey opportunities.

## B. Phase 1 Public Participation: October 2016–March 2017

During the first phase of public engagement for the Unified Plan process, activities included interviews, a town-wide public meeting, precinct-based public meetings, and multiple online surveys. The results of these activities informed the existing conditions and needs assessment and the development of the Vision and Values statement to guide the plan.

## Interviews and Focus Groups

During October 2016, the consultant team conducted 22 individual interviews with staff and other stakeholders, both in person and by telephone, and 10 focus groups with members of the Steering Committee. Participants in these interviews and focus groups were asked to discuss the issues and challenges in their areas of interest and expertise, opportunities for the future, and their overall views on what Town government does well and where there is room for improvement.

## Public Meetings and Online Engagement: December 2016–January 2017

A total of 646 people participated in face-to-face and digital engagement during the first phase of public participation. The group was predominantly older (58% over 50 years of age) and female (64%). The majority (71%) have lived in Wellesley at least 10 years and the majority (65%) have not held elected or appointed office in town government. Underrepresented groups included non-white residents (6% vs. 12% in the town populations); Hispanics (4% vs. 3%); renters (5% vs .19%); couples with children under 18 (35% vs 44%); and one-person households (7% vs 20%).



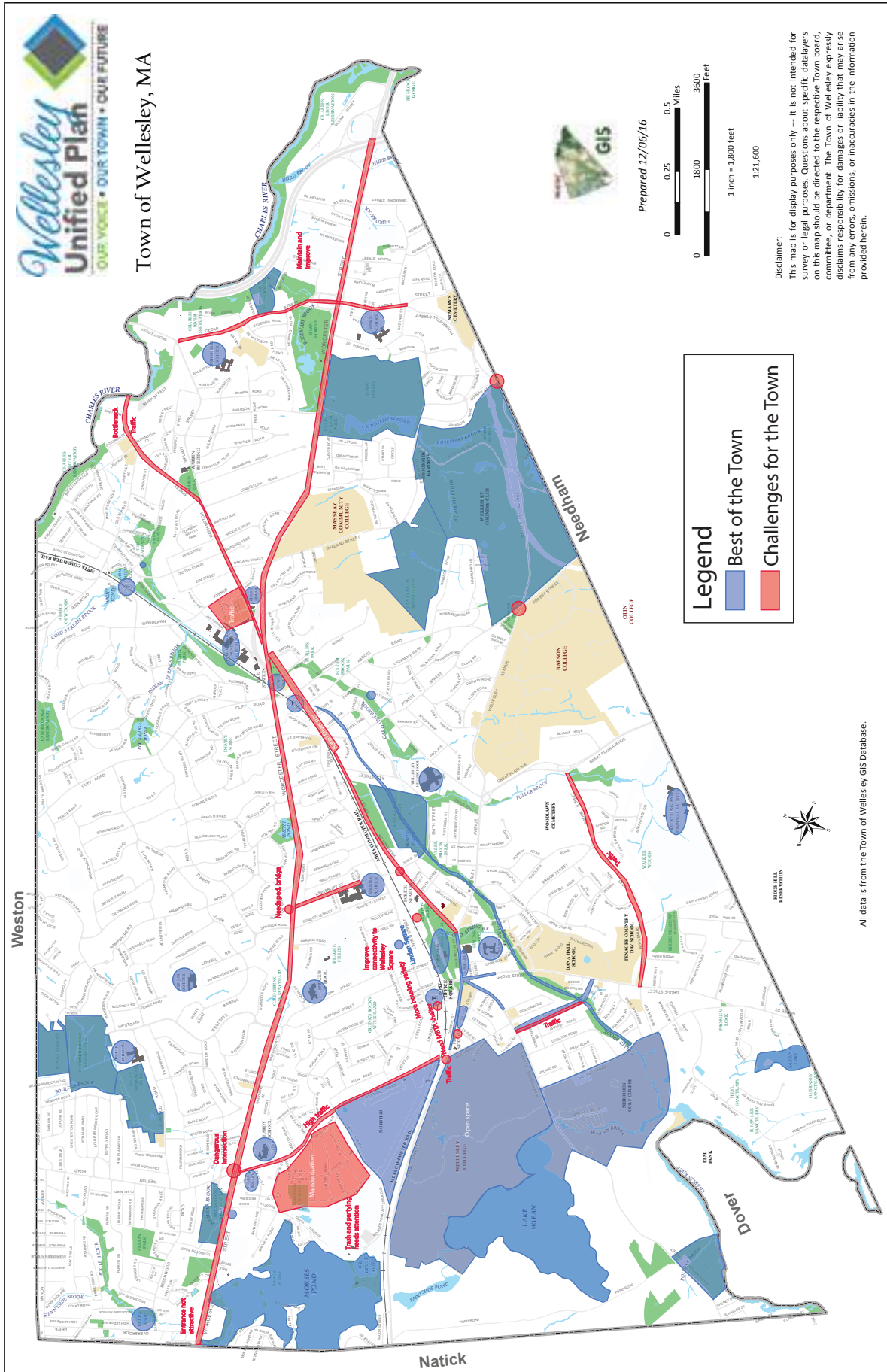
## Visioning Forum

On Saturday, December 10, 2016, 68 Wellesley residents spent the morning in an interactive workshop at Wellesley High School. Participants received a folder with an information sheet about the Unified Plan process, a summary of existing conditions information (“Wellesley At A Glance”), and a set of worksheets to complete for a series of exercises. They worked in small groups at tables with a base map of the town. Participants viewed exhibits of analytical maps and the forum began with a brief presentation on existing conditions and trends, including information on demographics, housing, jobs and employment, economic development, transportation, land use and zoning, and community facilities.



During the remainder of the workshop, a series of exercises guided participants through discussions to reveal town values and concerns. Activities included identifying the best of Wellesley and the challenges facing the town on worksheets and a base map at each table; writing personal visions and sharing them with the group; and identifying the top five elements or values that they would like to see represented in a vision statement for Wellesley’s future. In addition, smartphone polling was used to identify socio-demographic characteristics of the participants and to ask them about town character and values. At the end of the meeting, a volunteer table leader from each table reported back to the entire group on their priorities for Wellesley’s future.





Major priority themes that emerged from the visioning forum table groups were:

**Diversity**

- Diversity in housing—increased diversity of housing stock and affordability, especially for seniors, controlled demolitions and mansionization
- Diversity—racial, socio-economic, ethnic, age
- Diversity in neighborhoods; housing, schools, open space (village model)
- Diversity of retail

**School excellence**

- Maintain strong, high-quality education system
- Excellence in schools (e.g., keeping up with society and technology)

**Transportation**

- Manage traffic
- Improve and create alternatives to cars: public transit; more walkability and bikeability
- More efficient inter-town transportation
- Support safe, low-impact biking and pedestrian areas

**Open space and sustainability**

- Preserve/enhance open space: trails, parks, conservation land, waterways, community gardens
- Preserve green space to protect the environment and natural resources
- Incorporate sustainability into decision making by promoting open space; bicycling; energy efficiency;

life cycle approach; renewable energy, zero waste, natural open space, reduced light and noise pollution, wildlife habitat

**Government issues**

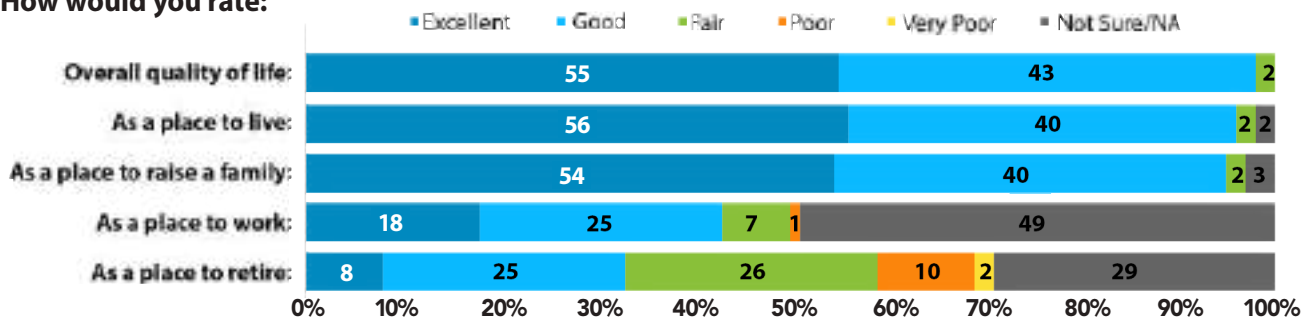
- Control spending and lower taxes
- Provide outcomes analysis of expenditures
- Maintain citizen-led, inclusive government
- Improve government communications
- Balance service delivery with focus on schools
- Maintain public participation in town government while promoting professional management/delivery of services

**Online Community Survey One: December 2016–January 2017**

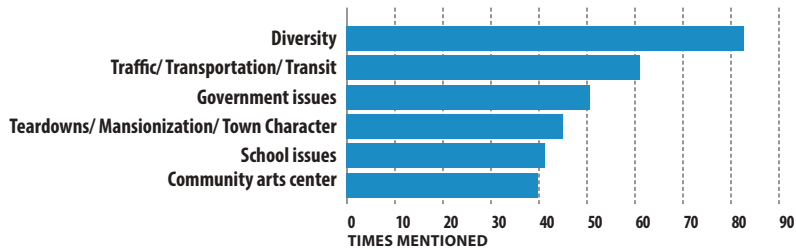
The first online survey conducted soon after the Visioning Forum had 464 respondents. Respondents were asked about their general satisfaction with Wellesley. Overwhelming majorities found the town to be an excellent or good place to live, raise a family, and for overall quality of life. Many felt they did not know enough about it as a place to work, and there was also some uncertainty about Wellesley as a place to retire.

▶ EXHIBIT 2.3 ONLINE SURVEY: SATISFACTION WITH WELLESLEY (n=464)

How would you rate:



▶ EXHIBIT 2.4 ONLINE SURVEY: ONE THING YOU WOULD CHANGE



### Precinct-Based Meetings—January 2017

Three geographically-based public meetings were held for residents of Precincts A, B, G; Precincts C and D; and Precincts E, F, and H. The meetings were designed to encourage participants to identify assets and any issues that they saw in their neighborhoods and to comment on the initial draft Vision and Values statement. A total of 93 people participated in these meetings.



### Vision and Values Community Survey Two: February-March 2017

The results of the initial public meetings and online survey guided development of a draft vision statement for the Unified Plan, which the Steering Committee reviewed and modified. The Steering Committee wanted additional participation in another online survey, which offered participants a chance to comment on the draft vision statement. This survey attracted 1,058 respondents who were somewhat more representative in age and years lived in Wellesley than the first survey's respondents. The topic-related chapters of this plan include the relevant results from this survey

## C. Phase 2 community engagement: May-June 2017

During May and June 2017, five public workshops took place:

- **How We Live/Prosperity & Opportunity:** discussion on housing and neighborhoods; and economic development
- **Public Health:** discussion on public health issues in Wellesley
- **Sustainable Systems & Networks:** discussion on transportation; public services and infrastructure; and sustainability and resilience
- **Natural and Cultural Heritage:** discussion on natural resources; open space and conservation; recreation; historic preservation; and arts and culture
- **Town Government Strategic Concepts:** discussion on potential improvements to town government

Results from these discussions appear in the relevant chapters of the plan.

### Working Groups

Unified Plan Working Groups mixed members of the Steering Committee and town staff. The five Working Groups reviewed preliminary drafts of the plan's chapters. The five groups were:

- How We Live and Prosperity & Opportunity
- Sustainable Systems and Networks
- Natural & Cultural Heritage
- Town Government Strategic Concepts
- Public Health

Each Working Group met twice—once before the public topic workshop and once after the public workshop. The purpose of the Working Groups was to give guidance to the consultants on draft content for the Unified Plan

chapters. At the first meeting, the Working Groups reviewed preliminary draft plan chapters and discussed questions that they would like the public workshop to address. At the second meeting, the Working Groups reviewed a revised draft that was informed by the discussions and results of the public meetings.

The results of Working Group discussions were integrated into the plan chapters.

## **D. Phase 3 public engagement: November 2017–March 2018**

During the summer and fall of 2017, the consultant team prepared the draft plan and made it available for review and comment by members of the Steering Committee and town staff. Steering Committee meetings followed to identify priorities among the goals and strategies, as well as a public open house that asked participants to review and comment on the priorities.

### ***Planning Directions Open House: November 2017***

The Planning Directions public open house took place on a weekday evening. Participants were invited to view seven boards identifying key goals and strategies, and then to fill out a comment sheet on related planning recommendations, with the choices of “yes,” “no,” or “maybe.” The comment materials included opportunities for open-ended comments and/or questions.

Following the open house, the materials were posted online with the opportunity to complete the comment sheet digitally and email it to the planning team. In addition, a group of students from the Wellesley High School Evolutions took the boards and comment sheets into public places around Wellesley on December 15 to elicit additional responses. The seven topics were:

- Housing Choice
- Transportation and Mobility Choice
- Proactive Economic Development
- Environment and Open Space
- Modernizing Zoning and Design Guidelines
- Town Government Coordination/Strategy

The results of this activity are discussed in Chapter 15.



### ***Final (Approval) Draft Unified Plan Public Meeting and Public Review of the Plan: March 2018***

A public meeting was held to present the Final Draft of the Unified Plan and the draft was simultaneously put online for public comment, using the CiviComment platform allowing direct comment on a PDF document.

## **E. Phase 4 public hearings and annual town meeting: March–April 2018**

In March 2018, the final draft, with public comments, was submitted to the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen. The Boards reviewed comments from the public and from other boards and commissions. Ultimately, the boards decided to extend the time for submission of comments and deliberation, and continued consideration of adoption of the Plan into early 2019.



# Wellesley Today

**T**his chapter provides a succinct overview of conditions in Wellesley based on information collected from existing plans, data, interviews, and initial surveys when the Unified Plan project began in fall 2016. Every effort was made to find the most recent reliable and consistent data, but in some cases data are not available after 2014 or even 2010, depending on the topic

## A. Accomplishments of the 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan Update

The Town of Wellesley has been using planning for nearly 100 years to maintain and enhance the town's quality of life, and the Town has a good track record of implementation. The planning process for the 2007 Comprehensive Plan Update included a Steering Committee and an extensive program of public communication and participation. The plan covered all of the required elements of a Massachusetts comprehensive plan, but the planning work was strategically focused on the most difficult and complex issues facing the town.

These included the impact of tear-downs and mansionization on neighborhood character; identification of development opportunities to diversify housing types and provide affordable housing; continued preservation of village commercial districts; preservation of open space; and improved management of traffic and parking. The plan identified three potential sites for redevelopment and nine mixed-

use development scenarios; laid out a detailed affordable housing plan; and included an inventory of open space.

In many respects the Town did a good job in implementing the 2007 Plan. The Town completed or continued ongoing projects included in the plan. Successful implementation is particularly evident in the categories of natural resources and open space, public facilities and services, and transportation. Under the categories of housing and residential character, and economic development, there were some important implementation efforts, but other recommended actions were not studied or undertaken. Recommendations to clarify zoning, design standards, and other land use regulations, as well as initiatives to make it easier to navigate the regulations, were generally not addressed.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF IMPLEMENTATION

**Housing and Residential Character.** The Town took some action on seven out of seventeen recommended implementation actions, such as the establishment of Large House Review, authorizing Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs) and establishing one NCD, authorizing local historic preservation status for single buildings, adding some affordable housing units to the town's inventory, and approving multifamily housing in certain areas such as the Grossman's site (Waterstone). The Town's adoption of inclusionary zoning in 2005 and the Community Preservation Act has resulted in incremental increases in affordable housing. Although the Town did not adopt an Affordable Housing Production Plan, over the course of the last ten years, the affordable housing inventory as defined under the State's Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit Law has risen from 4.6% of housing units to 6.2%.

**Economic Development.** For most people who live in Wellesley, "economic development" means that the town's commercial villages have successful and useful retail and other small businesses. Most residents do not think about the office park located off I-95 as part of Wellesley's economic and commercial tax base. Implementation included a study of the Natick Line commercial area and a cost-benefit study of a split (commercial-residential) tax rate. After the study, the Board of Selectmen decided not to establish a split rate. During the recession, residents became concerned

about empty storefronts in Wellesley Square and a committee was formed, but the end of the recession attracted new businesses. Other economic development recommendations were not implemented, such as: improved communications with the business and institutional community, targeted recruitment of businesses to serve residents, or actions to promote redevelopment and modernization of the Wellesley office parks.

**Land Use.** Some land use actions were implemented under other plan elements, such as Housing or Natural and Cultural Resources. The one major goal in the land use element focused on strengthening zoning regulations and design guidelines and their enforcement. The plan recommended five zoning actions to clarify language and provide more flexibility, including a recommendation to recodify the Zoning Bylaw within ten years, none of which were implemented. A recodification project was begun but never completed. The plan also recommended that informational materials be created about the land use system to inform residents and others about land use issues and permitting procedures in Wellesley, and that this information be made widely available on the web site, in Town offices, and so on. Except for Design Review Board documents, these recommendations were not implemented.

**Natural and Cultural Resources.** The 2007 Plan provided information, analysis, and recommendations to help advance the preparation of an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan, which was completed in 2015. The Town implemented many actions recommended in the Natural and Cultural Resources element, which included many long-term initiatives in progress. Natural resources accomplishments include: review of stormwater and watershed-protection regulations; continued implementation of pond restoration and the Morses Pond management program; implementation of the Fuller Brook Park Restoration Master Plan; and development of a public shade tree inventory and an annual tree-planting program. Cultural resources accomplishments included: partial completion of the historic property inventory from the 1990s; enabling single-property historic districts; passage of the Neighborhood Conservation district bylaw.

**Open Space and Recreation.** As was the case with other elements, CPA funding supported some of the Open Space and Recreation actions implemented by the Town. Implementation actions included: expansion of the trail system.; permanent protection of park and conservation land with conservation restriction or zoning; mandatory cluster zoning (Natural Resources Protection Zoning) for remaining private open space; implementation of the playing field and playground improvements capital plan; state approval of the Open Space and Recreation Plan; and identification of a potential aquatic facility project.

**Transportation and Circulation.** Improving traffic flow and mitigating congestion, better parking options in the commercial villages, and offering more transportation alternatives were the focus of this element. Implementation included: creation of advisory groups or committees to look at transit and intersection improvements; updated traffic signals to optimize traffic flow; participation in regional transportation groups; addition of MWRTA bus service to Wellesley; sidewalk improvements.

**Public Facilities and Services.** The plan focused on catching up with deferred maintenance on Town facilities and creating new systems to keep the Town's facilities in good conditions. Accomplishments included: school renovations; construction of a new High School; updating of the main library; creation of the Facilities Management Department (FMD) and incorporation of asset management systems by FMD and DPW; new Public Works building and Municipal Light Plant; continued rehabilitation of the sewer system and lift stations.

## B. Wellesley at a Glance

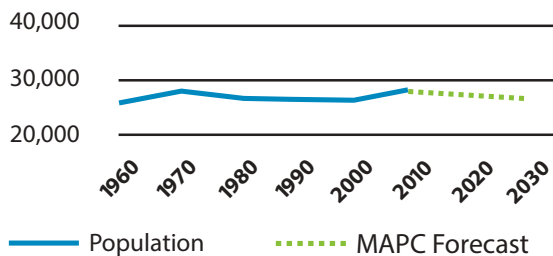


# Wellesley at a Glance

## Who we are

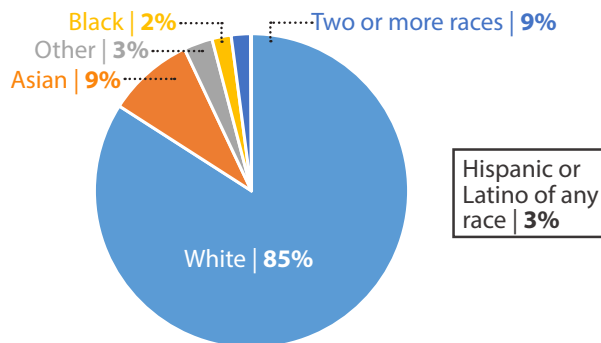
- Wellesley's population in 2016 was estimated at 28,940, including approximately 4,000 people living in group quarters like dormitories.
- Wellesley has grown slightly since 1990 but the population has remained relatively stable since the 1960s.
- 86% of Wellesley residents have at least a bachelor's or associate's degree, the highest rate in the country.
- Wellesley had the fourth-highest median income in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 2014, according to the U.S. Census.

### POPULATION TRENDS IN WELLESLEY



Source: U.S. Census, ESRI Business Analyst, MAPC

### POPULATION BY RACE/ETHNICITY



Source: U.S. Census, 2016



### HOUSEHOLD TYPES

TYPE	% OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
Family households (related by blood, marriage, adoption)	77%
Households with children under 18	44%
Households without children under 18	56%
Single person living alone	22%

Source: U.S. Census 2010-2014 ACS

### HIGHEST MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN MASSACHUSETTS, BY TOWN, 2014

Town	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
Weston	\$201,200
Dover	\$176,250
Sudbury	\$169,505
Wellesley	\$159,615
Carlisle	\$157,500

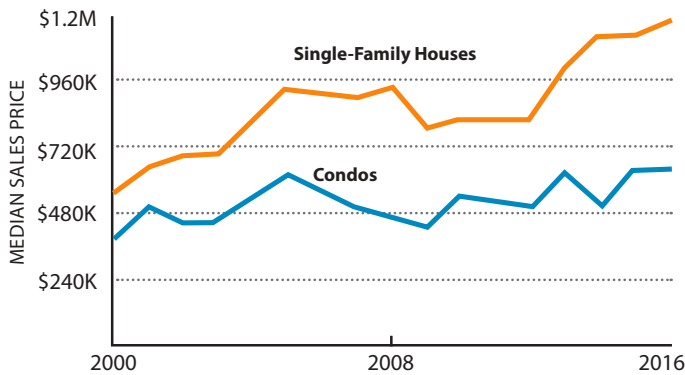
Source: U.S. Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

# Our home, environment and health

## Housing

- There were 9,189 housing units in Wellesley according to the 2010 U.S. Census. Town data show a decline in the number of total units to 9,079, due to replacement of small multi-unit buildings with single-family homes.
- Most Wellesley residents live in single-family houses and 77% of Wellesley houses are owner-occupied.
- 76% of Wellesley residents moved into their home after 2000.

### ▶▶ MEDIAN SALES PRICE BY YEAR



Source: The Warren Group

- The median sales price of single-family houses in Wellesley has increased over the past 10 years, from \$976,500 in 2006 to \$1,252,500 in 2016.
- According to 2014 data, nearly one-quarter of Wellesley homeowners and one-third of renters pay more than 30% of their income for housing costs.
- The median tax bill for single-family houses is approximately \$12,000, while the average tax bill is about \$14,000.
- The number of residential demolition permits in 2015 was 95; in 2016, 85; and in 2017, 57.

### ▶▶ HOUSING BY UNITS IN STRUCTURE

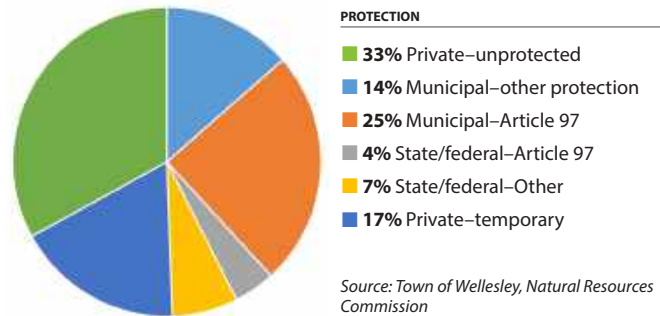


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

## Natural, Cultural, and Recreational Resources

- Wellesley has 6 streams, 14 wetland systems, 2 large ponds, and 10 small ponds.
- 33% of Wellesley is undeveloped.
- Approximately 1,000 acres (about 15% of the Town's land area) have some kind of protection against development.

### ▶▶ UNDEVELOPED LAND



Source: Town of Wellesley, Natural Resources Commission

- The Town has a total of 43 miles of trails of which 26 miles are marked with directional medallions.
- The Town offers around 1,000 recreation programs each year. The Recreation Department generates more revenue from program fees than it spends on program expenses.
- Wellesley has 3 National Register Historic Districts (2 of which are aqueducts), 7 individual properties listed on the National Register, 4 local Single-Building Historic Districts and 1 Local Historic District.



Photo of Morses Pond by Suzy Littlefield

## Public Health

- Wellesley performs better on key indicators of health than the state, Norfolk and Middlesex counties, as well as comparable communities.
- Health issues of concern in Wellesley are social isolation, particularly for elderly people who live alone, and stress and mental health issues for teenage youth.

# Where we work and how we get around

## Economic Development

- Wellesley is an employment center, with 16,710 jobs in town in 2016 according to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development.
- Employed Wellesley residents tend to work in knowledge-worker positions in education, health care, professional services, finance and management.

### TOP SIX EMPLOYERS

BUSINESS	NATURE OF BUSINESS	EMPLOYEES
Town of Wellesley	Government	1,232*
Sun Life Assurance	Insurance	1,158
Wellesley College	Higher education	1,100
Babson College	Higher education	975
Harvard Pilgrim Health Care	Insurance	398
Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates	Healthcare	352
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,215</b>

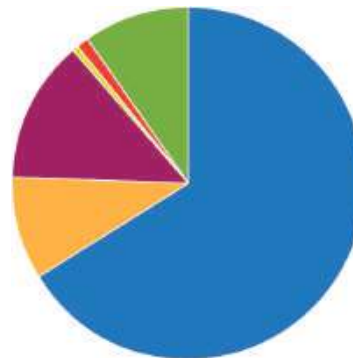
Source: Town of Wellesley, Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Wellesley local employers

\* Including 804 employees of Wellesley Public Schools

## Transportation

- Two-thirds of Wellesley working residents drive to work, mostly alone. Almost 10% take public transportation, 13% walk to work, and less than 1% bike to work. Nearly 10% work at home.
- Route 9 and Washington Street are the busiest corridors, with over 50,000 daily trips near the I-95 intersection.
- Wellesley has one marked bicycle lane on a limited segment of Washington Street.
- According to 2014 estimates, there are approximately 1.9 vehicles per household (or around 16,000 cars) in Wellesley.
- There are 3 MBTA commuter rail stations in Wellesley; two MWRTA bus lines serve the town.
- An estimated 45% of Wellesley residents work in Wellesley, while 21% commute to Boston
- Nearly one-third of the people who work in Wellesley also live there.

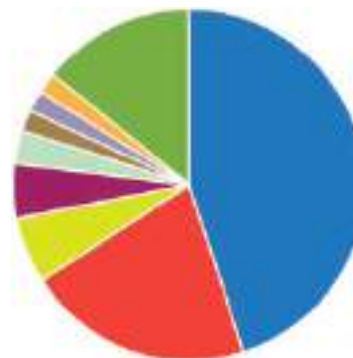
### HOW RESIDENTS GET TO WORK



- 66.4% Car, truck, or van
- 9.4% Public transportation (excluding taxicab)
- 13.1% Walking
- 0.6% Bicycle
- 1.0% Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means
- 9.6% Work at home

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

### WHERE RESIDENTS WORK



- 45% Wellesley
- 21% Boston
- 6% Cambridge
- 5% Newton
- 3% Needham
- 2% Waltham
- 2% Framingham
- 2% Brookline
- 14% Other

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

## Wellesley's Commercial Centers

Wellesley has three traditional commercial villages:

- Wellesley Square
- Wellesley Hills
- Lower Falls
- In addition, Linden Square and the Fells area on Weston Road offer shopping, and the Worcester Street/ Cedar Street area offers some consumer services and businesses.



# Our public services and Town government

## What infrastructure is the Town focusing on now?

- The Facilities Management Department has resolved deferred-maintenance issues and is now developing a comprehensive maintenance/replacement program, as well as working on new projects.
- The Town is preparing to update and upgrade its stormwater management policies and activities. DPW is beginning to implement green infrastructure, such as bioswales and permeable pavement.
- The town has an effective recycling program.

## What future projects are on the agenda?

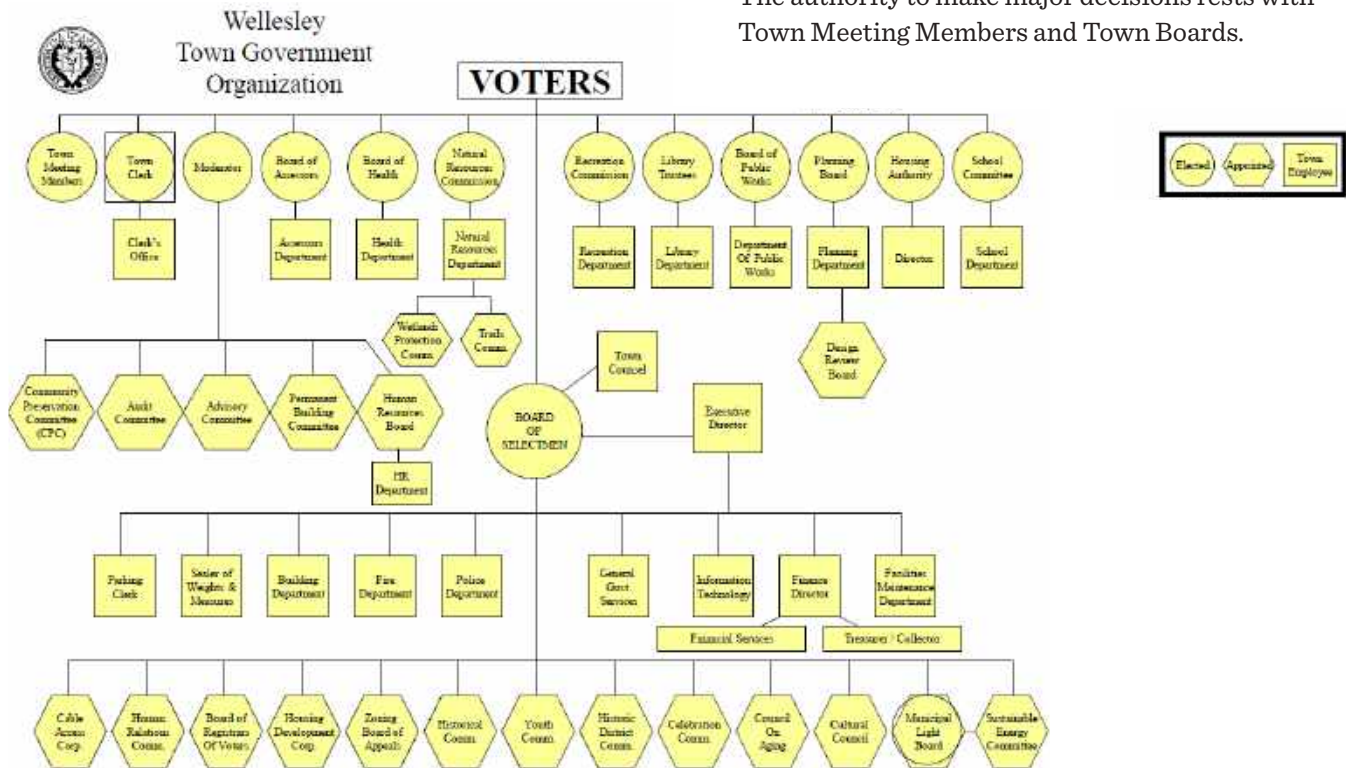
- Potential renovation, consolidation or new construction to serve students in the Hardy, Hunnewell and Upham (HHU) Elementary Schools.
- 900 Worcester Street aquatic and ice rink facility.
- “North 40” land uses.
- Town Hall projects including restoring the building envelope and a visioning and space-utilization study.

## Schools and Libraries

- Wellesley has 10 public schools (seven elementary, one middle school, one high school, and a pre-school) and enrolls approximately 5,000 students each year.
- There are six private elementary, middle and/or high schools in Wellesley with a total enrollment of 1,166 students, the largest of which is Dana Hall School.
- The Wellesley Free Library is open seven days a week, and 17,452 residents have library cards.

## Town Government

- Wellesley has a very democratic, participatory government system led by citizen volunteers.
- The Town is generally well run with highly professional staff.
- There are 58 entities on the Wellesley Town Government organizational chart (shown below) and 42 line items in the town budget.
- Typically, 18% of the registered voters in Wellesley (approximately 3,000 out of 16,000 people) participate in the March annual town elections.
- There is no one entity, office, or person with overall accountability for performance.
- The authority to make major decisions rests with Town Meeting Members and Town Boards.



# *Understanding Wellesley Today*

**FOR A BETTER WELLESLEY TOMORROW**

## **CONTENTS**

2	<b>Introduction</b>
3	<b>How did Wellesley implement the 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan?</b>
8	<b>Wellesley Today</b>
8	• Population
11	• Housing
18	• Natural, Cultural and Recreation Resources
27	• Economic Development
30	• Transportation
34	• Public Services and Facilities
36	• Public Health
38	• Town Government
43	<b>The Big Picture: Future Trends</b>

## Introduction

### **What is the Wellesley Unified Plan?**

The Wellesley Unified Plan is an innovative initiative to combine an update of Wellesley's 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan with a citizen-based holistic vision for the future and a strategic analysis and recommendations for Town government to enhance implementation of the plan. Through the Unified Plan process, Wellesley residents are invited to participate in creating a vision for the town as a whole: what kind of place should Wellesley be in the next ten to twenty years, both as a social and a physical community? What are the values and principles that should guide Wellesley in achieving that vision? With the vision, values and principles in mind, the plan will identify goals, strategies and actions designed to achieve the vision, including best practices and recommendations that can help Wellesley's highly democratic and decentralized town government implement the plan in order to achieve the citizens' vision.

### **What is the purpose of this document?**

Understanding Wellesley Today is a document designed to provide a succinct overview of conditions in Wellesley today and the way that a diverse group of people interviewed and surveyed for the plan perceive conditions in Town. This document, which will be accompanied by a short summary, Wellesley At A Glance, puts a wide range of information in one place that can serve as a foundation for the visioning process.

In addition to interviews, this document is based on research and analysis of socio-economic and other data. Every effort was made to find the most recent reliable and consistent data, but in some cases data is not available after 2014 or even 2010, depending on the topic. Sources and dates are provided, but because of the 2007-2009 Great Recession and subsequent recovery in the Boston area, numbers from earlier years may not fully represent conditions today.

In each of the "Wellesley Today" sections, key data and maps are presented. Quotes from the interviews and survey are also provided under the heading "Wellesley Voices." Interviewees were promised anonymity to encourage frank discussion. Each section ends with "Findings" and "Challenges." Findings are key data or information for thinking about the future and the Challenges call out issues that are difficult to resolve or require complex trade-offs.

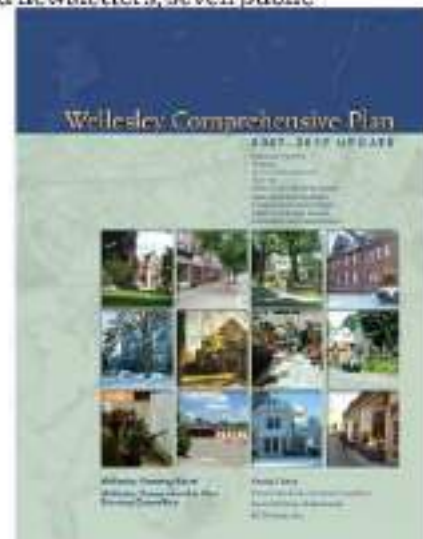
## How did Wellesley implement the 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan?

The Town of Wellesley has been using planning for nearly 100 years to maintain and enhance the town's quality of life. Updates to the Town's comprehensive plan have been created approximately every ten years (including 1965, 1981, 1994 and 2007), and the Town has a good track record of implementation.

### Accomplishments of the 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan Update

The planning process for the 2007 Comprehensive Plan Update included a Steering Committee made up of the Planning Board and Town Meeting members, an extensive program of public communication and participation including a project website and newsletters; seven public meetings—town wide and by precinct; a meeting with business and institutional stakeholders; Steering Committee member visits to Town boards and commissions to report on the plan; reports to Town Meeting and the Board of Selectmen; and public review of the draft plan before adoption.

The plan encompasses all the required elements of a Massachusetts comprehensive plan, but the planning work was strategically focused on the most difficult and complex issues facing the town. These included the impact of tear-downs and mansionization on neighborhood character; identification of development opportunities to diversify housing types and provide affordable housing; continued preservation of village commercial districts; preservation of open space; and improved management of traffic and parking. The plan identified three potential sites for redevelopment and nine mixed-use development scenarios; included a detailed affordable housing plan; an inventory of open space; 19 maps; and an implementation chapter coordinated with the Town's capital plan.



### Overview

In many respects the Town did a good job in implementing the 2007 Plan. Over the last ten years the Town completed or continued several ongoing projects included in the Plan. Successful implementation is particularly evident in the categories of natural resources and open space, public facilities and services, and transportation. For housing and residential character, and economic development, some important implementation efforts did take place, but other recommended actions were not studied or undertaken. Recommendations to clarify zoning, design standards, and other land use regulations, as well as initiatives to make it easier to navigate the regulations, were generally not addressed.

## HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER

The 2007 Plan included an element on housing and neighborhoods and a framework for Affordable Housing Planned Production that met State criteria for approval. “Mansionization” and its effect on town character and some diversification of housing types and affordability were central to the planning discussion. The housing element was organized by three goals:

- Maintain the primarily single-family character of Wellesley’s housing stock.
- Maintain the physical form of Wellesley’s residential neighborhoods by balancing community standards with individual interests.
- Promote the creation of housing units other than single-family homes to provide housing options for people across a range of income, age, family size, and needs, while complementing town character and meeting the state goal of 10% affordable housing.

The Town took some action on seven out of seventeen recommended implementation actions, such as the establishment of Large House Review, authorizing Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs) and establishing one NCD, authorizing local historic preservation status for single buildings, adding some affordable housing units to the town’s inventory, and approving multifamily housing in certain areas such as the Grossman’s site (Waterstone). The Town’s adoption of inclusionary zoning in 2005 and the Community Preservation Act has resulted in incremental increases in affordable housing. Although the Town did not adopt an Affordable Housing Production Plan, over the course of the last ten years, the affordable housing inventory as defined under the State’s Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit Law has increased from 4.6% of housing units to 6.2%.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

For most people who live in Wellesley, “economic development” means that the town’s commercial villages have successful and useful retail and other small businesses. Most residents do not think about the office park located off I-95 as part of Wellesley’s economic and commercial tax base.

Economic development goals in 2007 included:

- Maintain a diverse array of independent businesses.
- Create mixed-use environments in commercial areas.
- Fund an economic development specialist to work more closely with business and institutional property owners.
- Create a system of regular communication among Town government, the business community, and local institutions in support of the Town’s economic goals.
- Support and enhance the buildout potential of non-resident property for the purpose of increasing the Town’s tax revenue by studying the potential impact of allowing additional development capacity in Wellesley’s office park.

Implementation included a study of the Natick Line commercial area and a cost-benefit study of a split (commercial-residential) tax rate. After the study, the Board of Selectmen decided not to establish a split rate. During the recession, residents became concerned about empty storefronts in Wellesley Square and a committee was formed, but the end of the recession attracted new businesses. Otherwise, there were no additional efforts to improve communications with the business and institutional community, to attract specific types of businesses to serve residents, or to promote redevelopment and modernization of the Wellesley Office Park.

## LAND USE

Some land use actions were implemented under other plan elements, such as Housing or Natural and Cultural Resources. The one major goal in the land use element encompassed several strategies and actions:

- Strengthen Town zoning regulations and design guidelines and their enforcement to ensure continuity of town character and quality of life.

The plan recommended five zoning actions to clarify language and provide more flexibility, including a recommendation to recodify the Zoning Bylaw within ten years, none of which were implemented. A recodification project was begun but never completed. The plan also recommended that informational materials be created about the land use system to inform residents and others about land use issues and permitting procedures in Wellesley, and that this information be made widely available on the web site, in Town offices, and so on. Except for Design Review Board documents, these recommendations were not implemented.

## NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

The 2007 Plan provided information, analysis, and recommendations to help advance the preparation of an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan, which was finally completed in 2015. The Town implemented many actions recommended in the Natural and Cultural Resources element, which included a number of long-term initiatives in progress. Adoption of the Community Preservation Act prior to the comprehensive plan helped provide funding for open space, recreation, and historic preservation projects, in addition to the affordable housing projects mentioned earlier. The element had two main goals:

- Restore, preserve and enhance open space and sensitive natural resources for protection of water resources, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and enrichment of community character.
- Preserve cultural resources, including cultural landscapes, to maintain and enrich community character.

Accomplishments include:

- Review of the 2005 Stormwater Bylaw, implementation of Phase II Stormwater Regulations, and minimizing of erosion and nonpoint pollution through zoning and subdivision regulations.
- Review of the Watershed Protection Overlay District and Wetlands Protection Bylaw, currently being undertaken by Mass Audubon.
- Continued use of Best Management Practices to mitigate the impacts of local and regional development through zoning, stormwater, and wetlands regulations.
- Continued public awareness campaigns on the harmful effects of nonpoint source pollution.
- Continued implementation of the Pond Restoration Program.
- Completion and implementation of the Morses Pond Management Study.
- Monitoring and management of restored ponds.
- Development of a public shade tree inventory to identify all shade trees by size and species and implementation of an annual tree planting program.
- Completion of the historic property inventory from the 1990s.
- Expansion of the voluntary historic plaque program to include properties at least 50 years old.
- Potential protection of individual historic properties through enabling single-property historic districts.
- Passing of the Neighborhood Conservation District bylaw.

## OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

As was the case with other elements, CPA funding supported some of the Open Space and Recreation actions implemented by the Town. One goal encompassed all of the strategies and actions for the Open Space and Recreation element:

- Preserve and enhance the Town's open space system.

Implementation actions included:

- Expansion of the trail system.
- Permanent protection of park and conservation land with conservation restriction or zoning.
- Mandatory cluster zoning (Natural Resources Protection Zoning) for remaining private open space parcels.
- Implementation of the Fuller Brook Park Restoration Master Plan.
- Implementation of the playing field and playground improvements capital plan.
- Update and state approval of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.
- Sharing of institutional recreation facilities (with Babson College).
- Identification of a potential aquatic facility project.
- Continuing wide variety of recreation programs.

## TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

Improving traffic flow and mitigating congestion, better parking options in the commercial villages, and offering more transportation alternatives were the focus of this element. There were four goals:

- Reduce traffic volume, especially during peak hours.
- Seek improvement of traffic flow on regional routes.
- Manage parking to support commercial districts.
- Encourage alternative means of transportation.

Because so much regional traffic impacts Wellesley at peak commute times, the Town has limited options, outside of alternative transportation modes, to influence the amount of regional traffic. Intra-town traffic issues also continue to be difficult. Attempts to reduce the impact of school-related trips to the high school were not successful. Implementation included:

- Creation of advisory groups or committees to look at transit and intersection improvements.
- Incorporation of MassHighway design standards for Town projects.
- Updating of traffic signals to optimize traffic flow.
- Stricter traffic demand management requirements in project permitting.
- Active participation in regional transportation groups.
- Addition of MVRTA bus service to Wellesley.
- Parking improvements, including enhanced lighting.
- Initiation of a program to provide marked bicycle routes.
- Sidewalk improvements.

## **PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

This element was focused on catching up with deferred maintenance on Town facilities and creating new systems to keep the Town's facilities in good conditions. The element had seven goals:

- Maintain school excellence.
- Provide additional community meeting space.
- Create systematic oversight of Town facilities and infrastructure.
- Improve public safety response times and operations.
- Enhance DPW and Municipal Light Plant operations.
- Clarify town policies on private street maintenance.
- Develop a uniform policy for street acceptance.

Implementation actions included:

- Updating of many schools, including renovation of Schofield and Fiske Schools and Middle School.
- Construction of a new High School.
- School budget overrides to address funding shortfalls in the school system.
- Creation of the Facilities Management Department (FMD) and incorporation of asset management systems by FMD and DPW.
- Public safety grants for staff and new fire department pumper truck.
- New DPW building and MLP.
- Continued rehabilitation of the sewer system and lift stations.
- Establishment of a betterment system and acceptance policy for private roads.

# Wellesley Today

## POPULATION

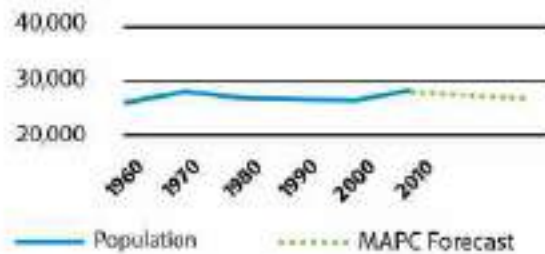
### How many people live in Wellesley today?

- Wellesley's population was estimated at 28,940 in 2016.
- According to 2014 data, 86% of the Wellesley population lived in households and 14% lived in what the U.S. Census calls "group quarters," such as dormitories or nursing homes.

### Is Wellesley growing?

- Wellesley has grown slightly since 1960 but the population has remained relatively stable since the 1960's.
- The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the UMass Donahue Institute project a modest increase in households and population in the next 10 years but a modest decline in population by 2035.

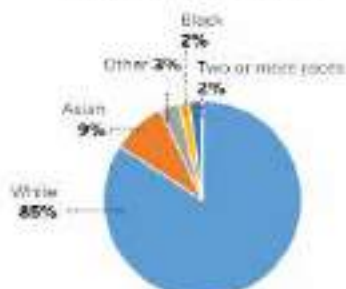
#### POPULATION TRENDS IN WELLESLEY



Source: U.S. Census, ESRI Business Analyst, MAPC

### What kind of household, racial and ethnic diversity exists in Wellesley?

#### POPULATION BY RACE



Source: SuburbanStat.org, U.S. Census, 2016

#### HOUSEHOLD TYPE

TYPE	% OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
Percentages do not add to 100% because not all categories are listed.	
Married-couple family households	68%
Household with children under 18 living with parents	44%
Single occupant	22%
Two occupants	31%
Three or more occupants	48%

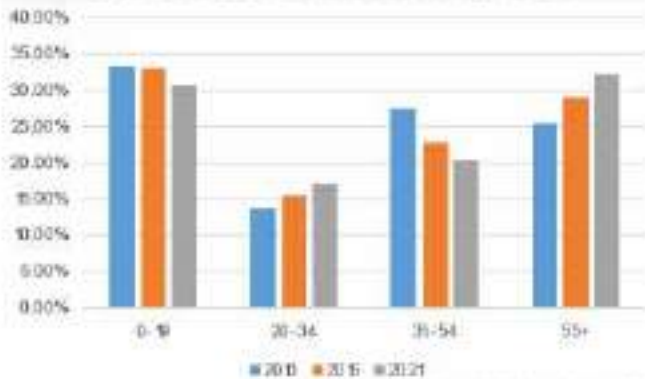
Source: U.S. Census, 2014

3% of residents identified as Hispanic or Latino of any race and less than 1% identified as some other race than those shown above.

## What is the age composition in Wellesley?

Wellesley is aging. The number of very young children (0-9 years old) in Wellesley decreased between 2010 and 2016, while the number of people over 55 years old increased. The median age in Wellesley in 2010 was 37 years. There are relatively few “millennials” (people born 1980-2000) in Wellesley compared to other age groups. Projections show these trends continuing.

**AGE DISTRIBUTION IN WELLESLEY  
2010-2016 CHANGE AND 2021 PROJECTION**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ESRI

## What is the median household income in Wellesley?

**MASSACHUSETTS TOWNS WITH HIGHEST  
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2014**

Town	Median Household Income
Weston	\$201,200
Dover	\$176,250
Sudbury	\$169,505
<b>Wellesley</b>	<b>\$159,615</b>
Carlisle	\$157,500
Sherborn	\$155,564
Southborough	\$149,375
Bolton	\$144,461

Source: U.S. Census 2010-2014 ACS

- Wellesley had the fourth-highest median income in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 2014, according to the U.S. Census.
- Few Wellesley households live below the poverty line—3.5% of households in 2015, compared to 11.6% statewide.

## How many students live in Wellesley?

Wellesley is home to three college campuses: Wellesley College, Babson College and a campus of Massachusetts Bay Community College. Together these three enroll approximately 10,700 students, approximately 40% of whom live on campus. 484 students are enrolled at Dana Hall School, a private school, and 124 of those students live on campus.

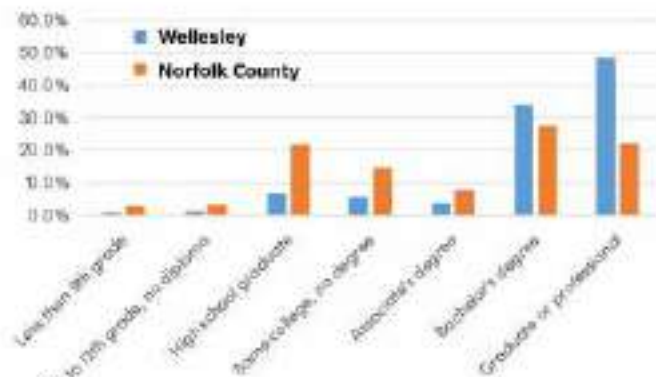


Image: Wellesley College Aerial. Credit: See Lin

## How educated is Wellesley?

86% of Wellesley residents have at least a bachelor's or associate's degree, the highest rate in the country.

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

## Findings

- Wellesley has a relatively stable population that has fluctuated around 27,000 to 28,000 people since the 1970s. The 2016 population was estimated at 28,940. State and regional organizations project that the number of households and the population will increase slightly by 2025, declining thereafter to stable numbers around 28,000. Similarly, the Wellesley Public Schools 2013 Demographic Study forecasts a decline in total school enrollment between 2016-2024.
- The number of households can grow without substantial increases in population because the average household size is getting smaller.
- Wellesley's median age in the 2010 census was estimated at 36 in 2015 by the Census Bureau and is expected to increase as the Baby Boom generation ages. Approximately 4,000 college and boarding students live in Wellesley, which has an effect on the age composition statistics.
- The age composition of Wellesley's population indicates that two age groups are moving out of town. Young adults from Wellesley move to go to college and/or to other cities or metro areas. Adults 70 years old and older are downsizing and moving to other locations.
- The age groups that are moving into Wellesley are adults in the 35 to 44 year old range, with their children.

- Two-earner families with children have less time to devote to volunteer activities in town.
- The majority of Wellesley households (66%) do not include children under 18.
- Wellesley has become more diverse in recent decades. For example, Asians made up 11% of the town's population according to the 2010 census, an increase of 68% since 2000.
- Between 2005 and 2014, Wellesley's GINI indicator (a statistical indicator of the distribution of income) dropped from 0.53 to 0.50. While this indicates that Wellesley has less income disparity than before, this could be due to moderate- and low-income families' leaving Wellesley or a greater proportion of wealthy individuals coming to the community.

## Challenges

- Balancing the needs of all ages and household types
- Welcoming new residents into town government volunteer roles
- Long-term ability to attract enough residents for town elected and appointed positions

# HOUSING

## How many housing units does Wellesley have?

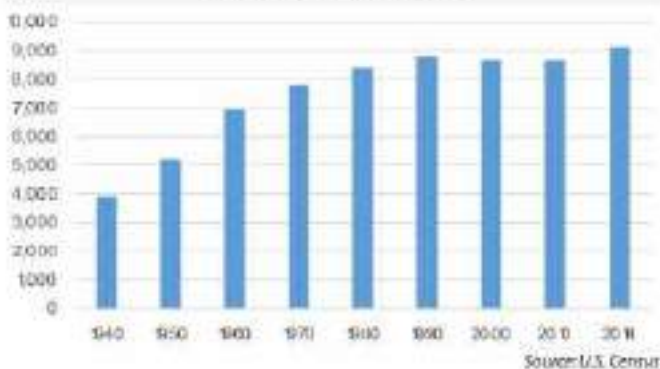
- There were 9,189 housing units in Wellesley according to the 2010 U.S. Census.
- Wellesley is a mature residential community with relatively little open land available for development.
- 83% of Wellesley households are owner-occupied.

### HOUSING VACANCY AND TENURE



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS Estimates 2010-2014

### TOTAL HOUSING UNITS



### HOUSING UNITS BY UNITS IN STRUCTURE



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

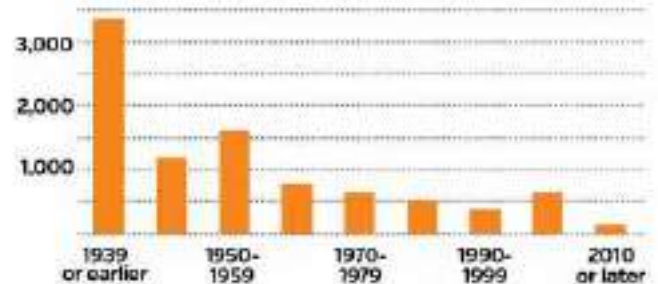
## How long have today's households been in their homes?

Seventy-six percent of Wellesley residents have moved into their homes since 2000. While some may have moved within the town, only 7% of renters and homeowners have lived in the same housing unit in Wellesley since before 1970. The median year that a householder moved into their Wellesley home is 2001.

## How old is Wellesley's housing stock?

- Most of Wellesley homes were built before 1960.
- 36% of Wellesley homes were built in 1939 or earlier.

### TOTAL HOUSING UNITS IN WELLESLEY BY YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT

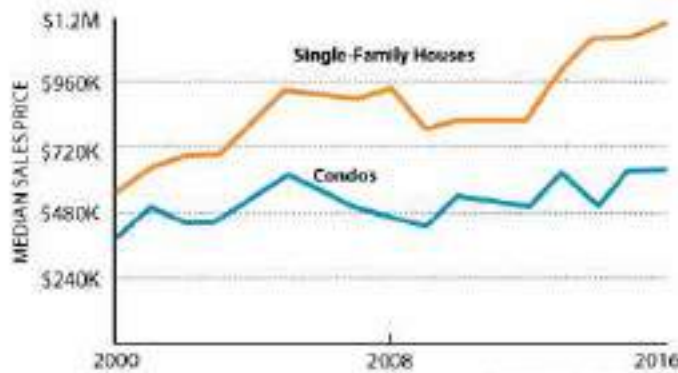


- Older homes in Wellesley tend to be smaller than new ones.

## How much does Wellesley housing cost?

- The median sales price of single family homes in Wellesley has increased over the past 10 years, from \$976,500 in 2006 to \$1,252,500 in 2016. The median means that half of the prices are above this number and half are below it. According to Town data, the median single-family sales price in 2017 had risen to \$1.45 million.
- The price of condominiums has also risen, though at not so steep a rate. Condos in Wellesley are generally too expensive to be considered first time homebuyer opportunities.

**MEDIAN SALES PRICE BY CALENDAR YEAR**



Source: The Women Group

**MEDIAN SALES PRICE—WELLESLEY**

YEAR	SINGLE-FAMILY	CONDO
2016	\$1,252,500	\$680,000
2015	\$1,177,250	\$645,000
2014	\$1,180,000	\$520,000
2013	\$1,068,750	\$639,999
2012	\$897,700	\$532,500
2011	\$880,000	\$529,875
2010	\$900,000	\$560,000
2009	\$856,500	\$452,000
2008	\$1,010,000	\$502,000
2007	\$963,250	\$525,000
2006	\$976,500	\$587,500
2005	\$971,250	\$632,000
2004	\$880,000	\$550,000
2003	\$759,750	\$452,500
2002	\$737,000	\$445,000
2001	\$691,250	\$514,000
2000	\$592,750	\$390,000

Source: The Women Group

## How do Wellesley's property taxes compare to its neighbors?

- Wellesley residents pay more in property taxes than residents in some neighboring towns, and the average single-family tax bill for a Wellesley household rose 33% between 2004 and 2016. While Wellesley's tax rate is lower than that of some nearby towns, the values of homes tends to be higher, leading to a higher average single family tax bill. According to Town data, the average single family home tax bill was \$14,333 and the median tax bill was \$12,167.

**AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY TAX BILLS FOR WELLESLEY AND ITS NEIGHBORS**

COMMUNITY	AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY TAX BILL IN 2004, CORRECTED FOR INFLATION	AVERAGE SINGLE-FAMILY TAX BILL 2016	PERCENT INCREASE	2016 RESIDENTIAL TAX RATE (PER \$1,000 ASSESSED VALUE)
Dover	\$10,767.36	\$14,149.00	24%	\$12.88
Natick	\$5,258.24	\$6,868.00	23%	\$13.57
Needham	\$6,658.56	\$9,587.00	31%	\$11.54
Newton	\$8,743.68	\$10,728.00	18%	\$11.38
Wellesley	\$9,369.60	\$13,971.00	33%	\$11.83
Weston	\$14,384.64	\$18,762.00	23%	\$12.16

Source: Mass. Department of Revenue

### How much affordable housing does Wellesley have?

- According to 2014 data, nearly one quarter of Wellesley homeowners and one third of renters pay more than 30% of their income for housing costs.
- In 2017, 6.3% of housing units in Wellesley meet the State affordable housing goal for the purposes of Chapter 40B, the Comprehensive Permit Law. This percentage includes market rate units in approved mixed-income developments.
- The Wellesley Housing Authority (WHA) has 194 units. The WHA shares an executive edirector with the Needham Housing Authority.
- Since 2006, Wellesley has added 75 subsidized units in non-WHA developments totaling 303 units. The subsidized units include:
  - » 36 age-restricted (55 years and older) units
  - » 57 rental and 18 ownership units
  - » 23 units in chapter 40B projects
  - » 48 units through inclusionary zoning
  - » 4 units funded by the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation

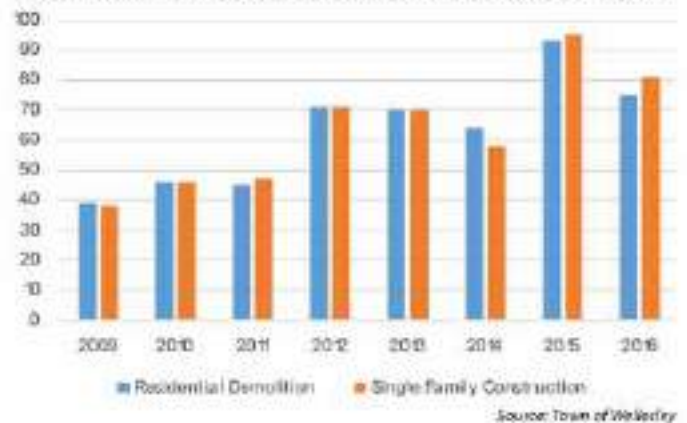
### How many new single-family houses are built each year in Wellesley?

- While annual building permits for new single-family houses have ranged from the 50s to 60s in recent years, the majority are replacement houses. The net gain in single-family housing between 2014 and 2018 is 11 units. New homes do not necessarily represent increased density or net number of housing units in Wellesley, however, as many new-construction permits were issued for new houses replacing existing homes that were torn down.

### How many houses are being torn down to make way for larger replacement houses?

The number of single-family home demolition permits decreased from 95 in 2015 to 57 in 2017. Demolitions tend to be concentrated in the western part of town.

DEMOLITION AND SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION PERMITS, 2009 TO 2016 (THROUGH 11/30)





Residential Demolitions  
2014-2016

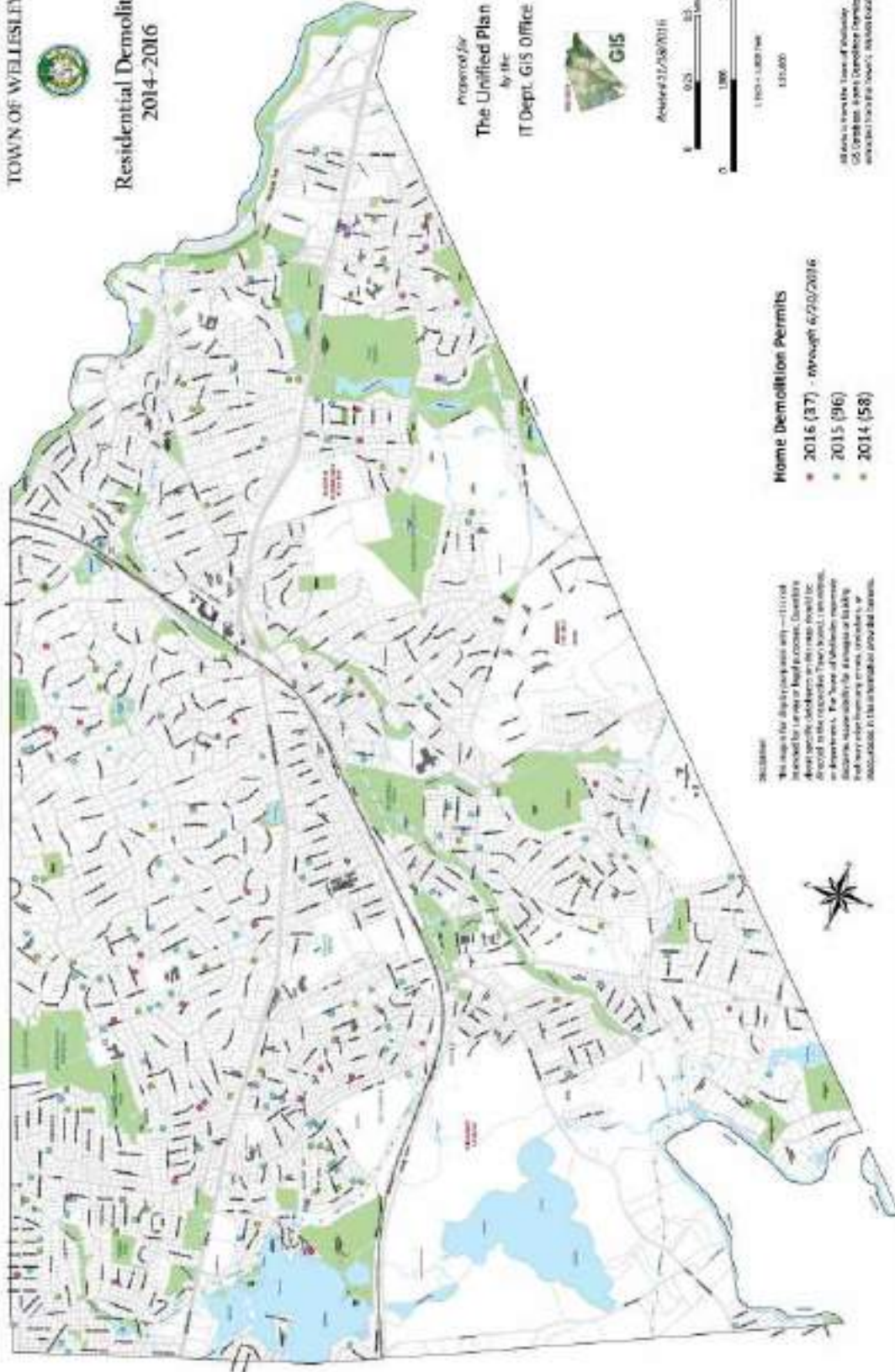
prepared for  
**The Unified Plan**  
by the  
IT Dept. GIS Office



April 4/21/2016



All data is from the Town of Wellesley  
GIS Database. Any Demolition Permits  
submitted to the Town's website for review



**Home Demolition Permits**

- 2016 (37) - through 6/20/2016
- 2015 (96)
- 2014 (58)

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# EXISTING LAND USE

Prepared for  
The Unified Plan  
by the  
IT Dept. GIS Office

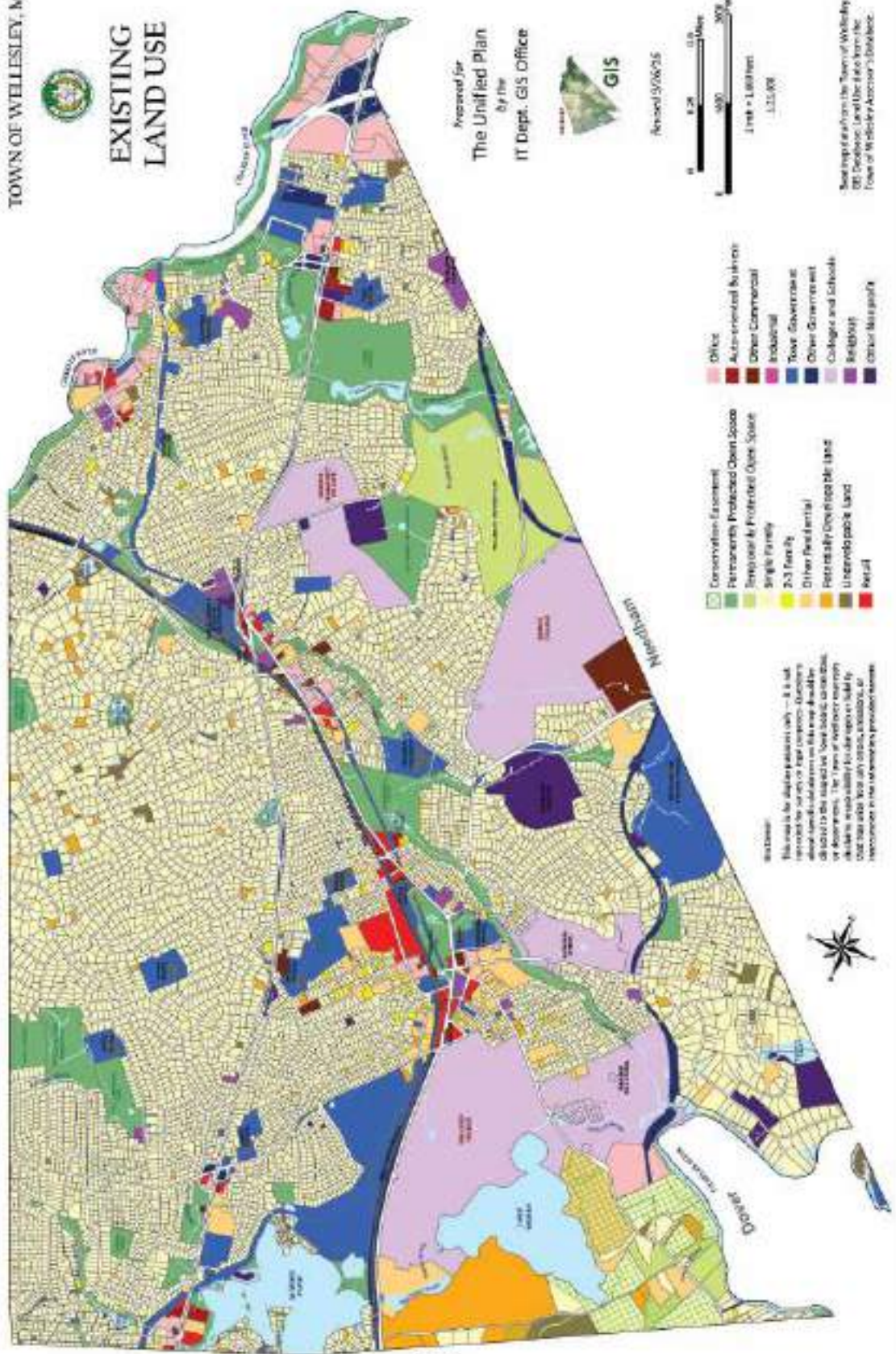


Version 5/06/25



Map prepared from the Town of Wellesley GIS Database. Land Use data from the Town of Wellesley Assessor's Database.

Weston

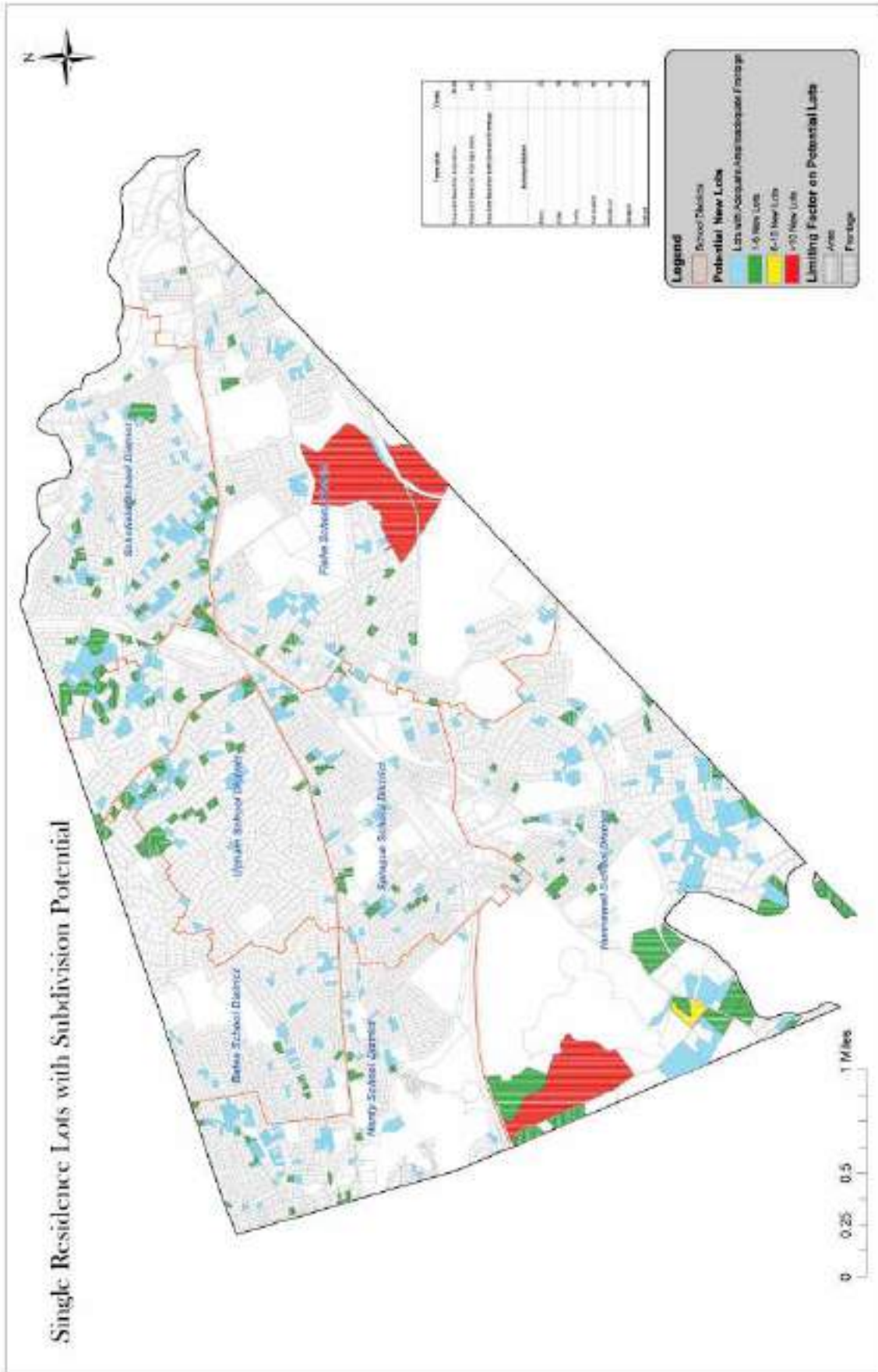


Natick

- Office
  - Auto-oriented Business
  - Other Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Town Government
  - Other Government
  - College and Schools
  - Religious
  - Other Municipal
- Conservation Easement
  - Provincially Protected Open Space
  - Provincially Protected Open Space
  - Single Family
  - 2-3 Family
  - Other Residential
  - Privately Developed Land
  - Unimproved public Land
  - Wetland

**Disclaimer:**  
This map is for informational only. It is not intended for use in legal proceedings. Questions about land use data should be directed to the GIS Office or Assessor's Office. The Town of Wellesley Assessor's Database is not a warranty for the data as shown. The Assessor's Office is not responsible for any errors or omissions in the data as shown.





## Findings

- Single-family, owner-occupied homes will continue to make up the vast majority of housing in Wellesley.
- Wellesley is a mature community with limited options for developing new single family homes other than through redevelopment. According to the Town, under current zoning there is potential for 327 net new single-family lots.
- While Wellesley has established a Large House Review Bylaw since the last comprehensive plan, teardowns and large replacement houses remain a concern for many people.
- Wellesley real estate is among the most expensive in Massachusetts.
- According to state data, 6.3% of Wellesley housing units are considered affordable for the purpose of Chapter 40B, the Comprehensive Permit Law. Communities with 10% of affordable units are not subject to Chapter 40B.
- Wellesley has made considerable progress since 2007, when 4.7% of housing units were affordable.
- Wellesley has a limited inventory of condominiums, rental housing, and multifamily housing units.

- Older residents who wish to downsize to somewhat smaller and less expensive market-rate housing find it difficult to locate suitable housing.

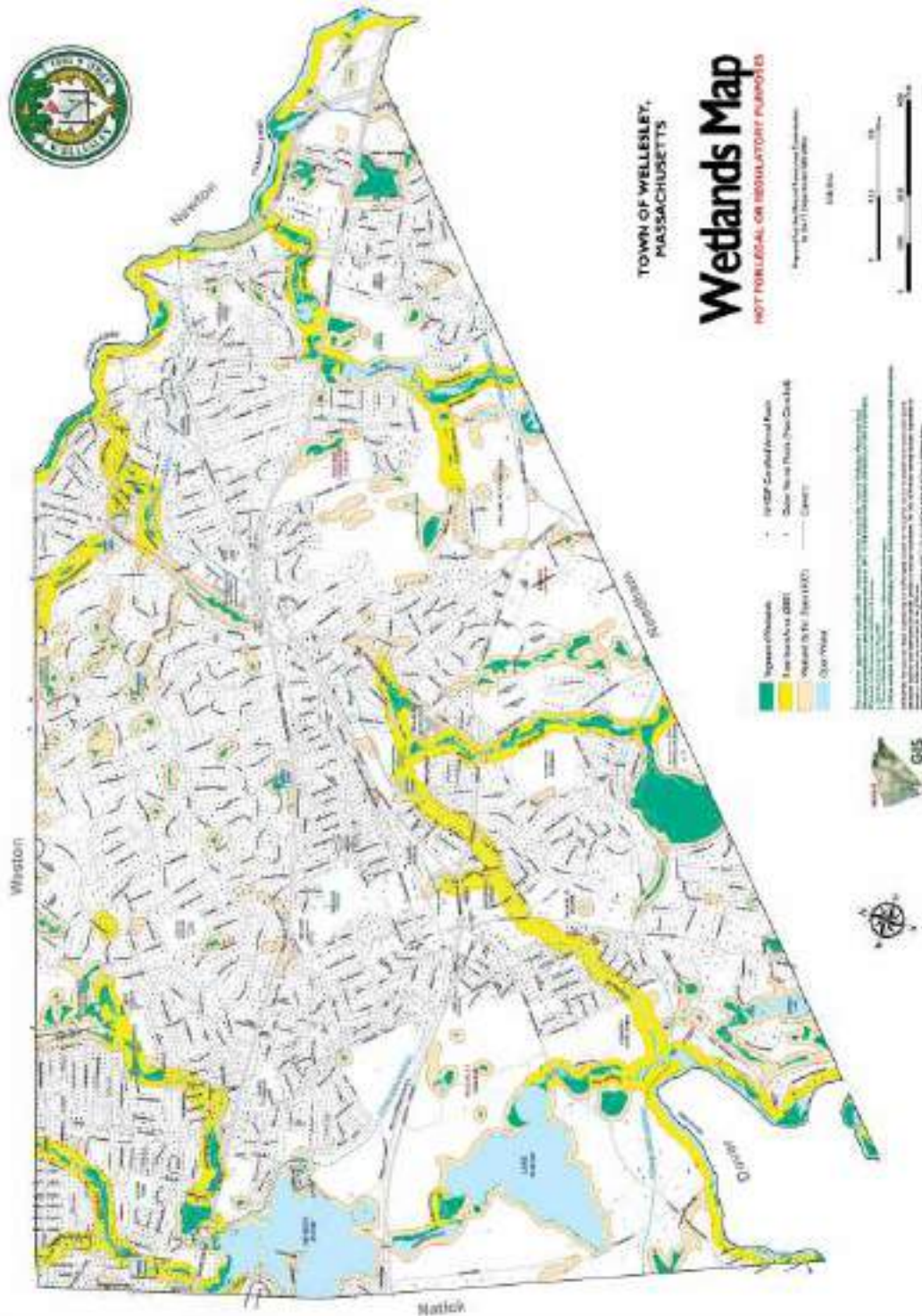
## Challenges

- Very high cost of housing and residential land resulting in:
  - × Tear-downs of smaller houses and small multifamily buildings (such as two- and three-family buildings) and their replacement with larger houses on the lot
  - × Lack of suitable housing for downsizing households
- High cost of producing affordable housing
- Reaching the 10% affordable housing goal
- Mitigating impacts of large replacement housing on neighborhood character, impervious surfaces, and tree canopy
- Aligning zoning with actual and desired use of property

# NATURAL, CULTURAL AND RECREATION RESOURCES

## What are Wellesley's most important natural resources?

There are 6 streams, 14 wetland systems, two large ponds and 10 small ponds in Wellesley. There are 2 major aquifers, 13 certified vernal pools and dozens of potential vernal pools. Stormwater runoff threatens water quality in ponds and streams. The Town has made significant progress in improving water quality in Morses Pond and other water bodies.



# GROUNDWATER RESOURCES



TOWN OF WELLESLEY,  
MASSACHUSETTS



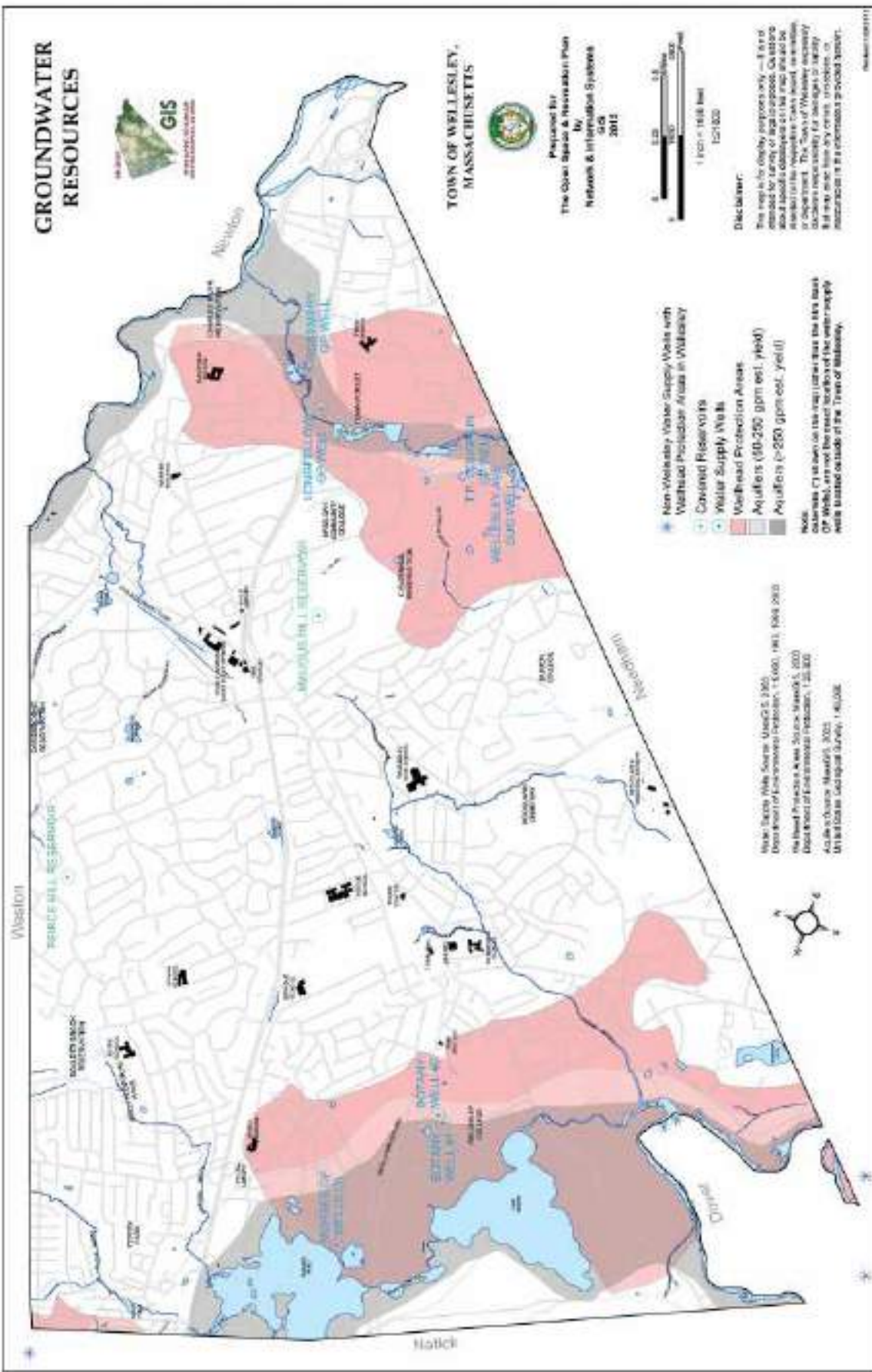
Prepared for  
The Open Space & Recreation Plan  
By  
Network & Information Systems  
GIS  
2012



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Number: 1020111



- Non-Wellesley Visitor Supply Wells with Wellhead Protection Areas in Wellesley
- Covered Reservoirs
- Visitor Supply Wells
- Wellhead Protection Areas
- Aquifers (50-250 gpm est. yield)
- Aquifers (>250 gpm est. yield)

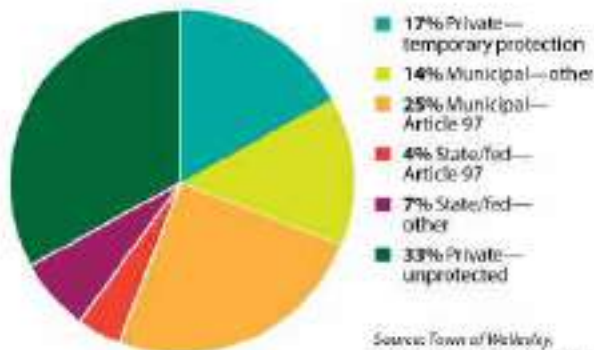
**NOTE:** Older wells (7' or more on the map) that are the direct source of water for the Town of Wellesley are not the exact location of the water supply wells located outside of the Town of Wellesley.

Map Source: Well Source: USGS, 2005  
Data Source: Environmental Protection, 1,000', 1981, 1984, 2003  
Wellhead Protection Areas: State of Massachusetts, 2003  
Data Source: Environmental Protection, 1:25,000  
Aquifer Source: Masarik, 2002  
Wellhead Protection Survey: 1:50,000

## How much park land and open space does Wellesley have?

- Thirty-three percent of Wellesley's approximately 6,624 acres of land are not developed (2,213 acres), including a mix of local, state, federal and privately owned land. Approximately 29% percent of open space (642 acres) is protected under Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution. Of these 642 acres, the Town owns 545.45 (25%) and the remainder of these protected acres 96.15 (4%) are State-owned. Another 255 acres are temporarily protected by the Chapter 61 program.
- A State-approved Open Space and Recreation Plan was completed in 2015.
- The Wellesley Conservation Council, a private non-profit organization, maintains ten sanctuaries totaling 44 acres. Eight of the ten sanctuaries are located entirely within Wellesley, one includes land in both Wellesley and Needham, and one is located within Weston.

### OPEN SPACE BY OWNERSHIP & PROTECTION—2014



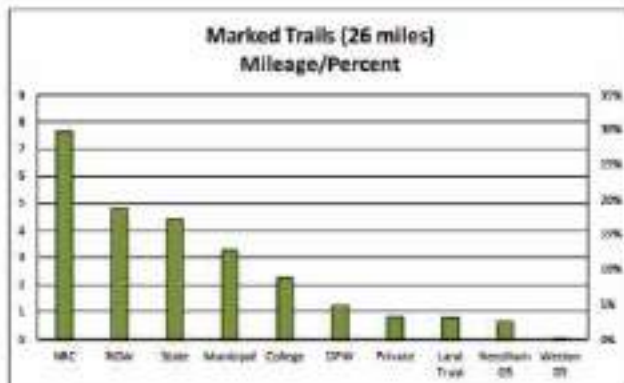
### OPEN SPACE BY SIZE, 2014

CONTROL	PROTECTION	ACRES	
Town-owned	Municipal—other	300	38%
	Municipal—Article 97	545	
Other owners	State/fed—Article 97	96	62%
	State/fed—other	153	
	Private—temporary	388	
	Private—unprotected	730	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,215</b>	

Source: Town of Wellesley, Natural Resources Commission

## How many trails are there in Wellesley?

The Town has a total of 43 miles of trails of which 26 miles are marked with directional medallions. These marked trails are managed by over 10 different entities<sup>4</sup>. Wellesley trails are part of the Charles River Link, a 16-mile, six-town regional trail extending from Newton to Medfield.

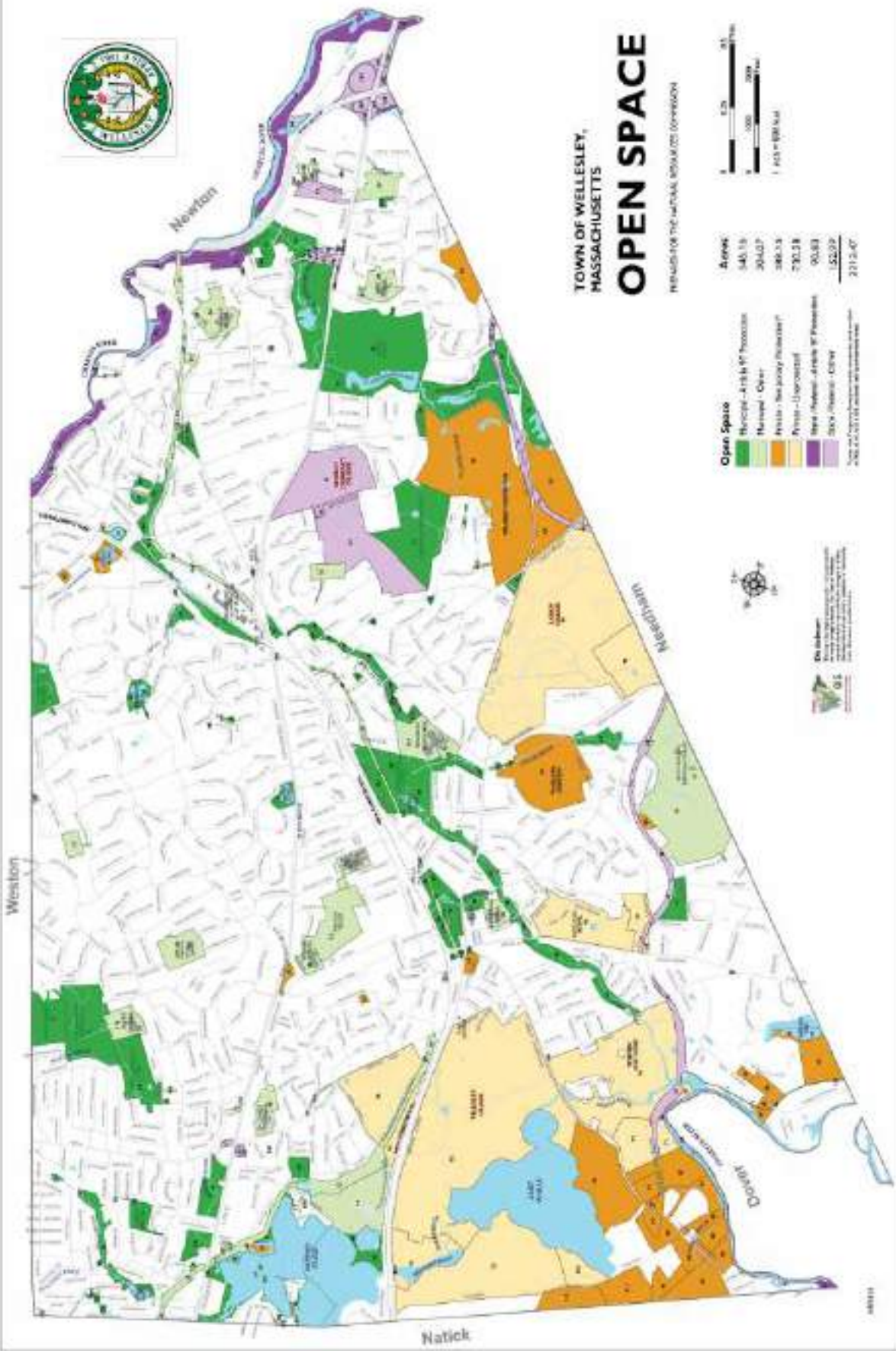


NRC: Conservation Land, Parkland, Playing Fields, Beach  
 NDA: Roadways, Greenways, Shrubbers  
 State: DCR, MARR, MassBay Community College  
 Municipal: Catholicos Aqueduct, Lower Falls Riverway, MLP  
 Colleges: Wellesley, Babson, Cln, Needham Golf Course  
 DPW: Water Department, Utility  
 Private: Volontario, Wellesley Country Club, Homosassa Trail, Sisters of Charity, Residential  
 Land Trust: Wellesley Conservation Council  
 Needham/Weston: Ridge Hill Reservation  
 Weston: George & Nancy Bates Woods

### TRAILS IN WELLESLEY

TRAIL NAME	LENGTH OF TRAIL (MI)
Beard Trail	1.1
Boulder Brook Reservation Trail	1.0
Brook Path	2.3
Carisbrooke Reservation Trail	0.5
Centennial Reservation Trail	1.7
Charles River Path	3.2
Crosstown Trail	5.9
Esker Trail	0.8
Guernsey Path	2.2
Longfellow Pond Trail	0.8
Morses Pond Trail	1.2
Rockridge Pond Trail	0.4
Sudbury Path	4.6
WCC Guernsey Sanctuary Trail	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>26.3</b>

Source: Wellesley Trail Committee

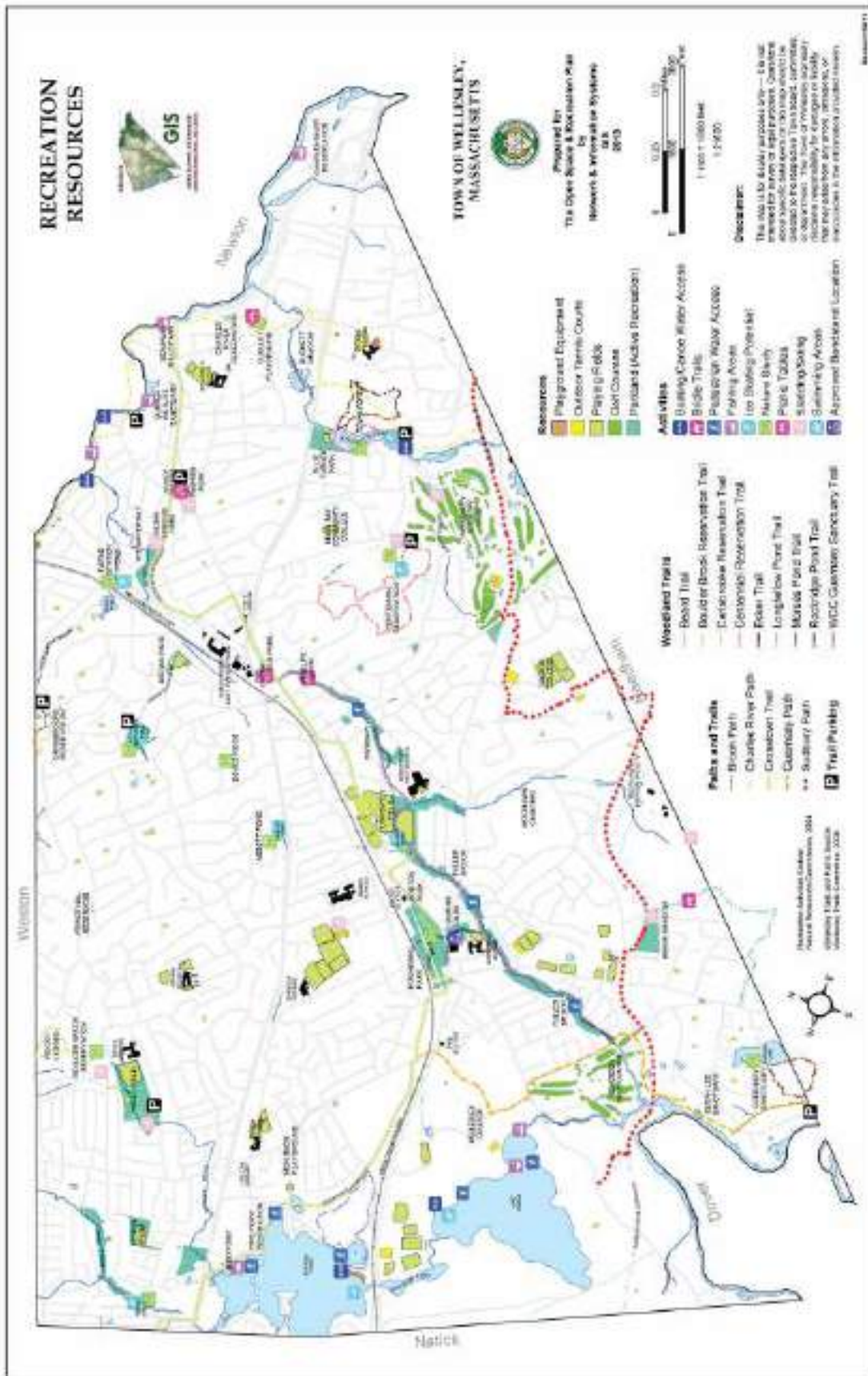


# TOWN OF WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS OPEN SPACE

PREPARED FOR THE TOWNAL BOARD BY GCS CORPORATION

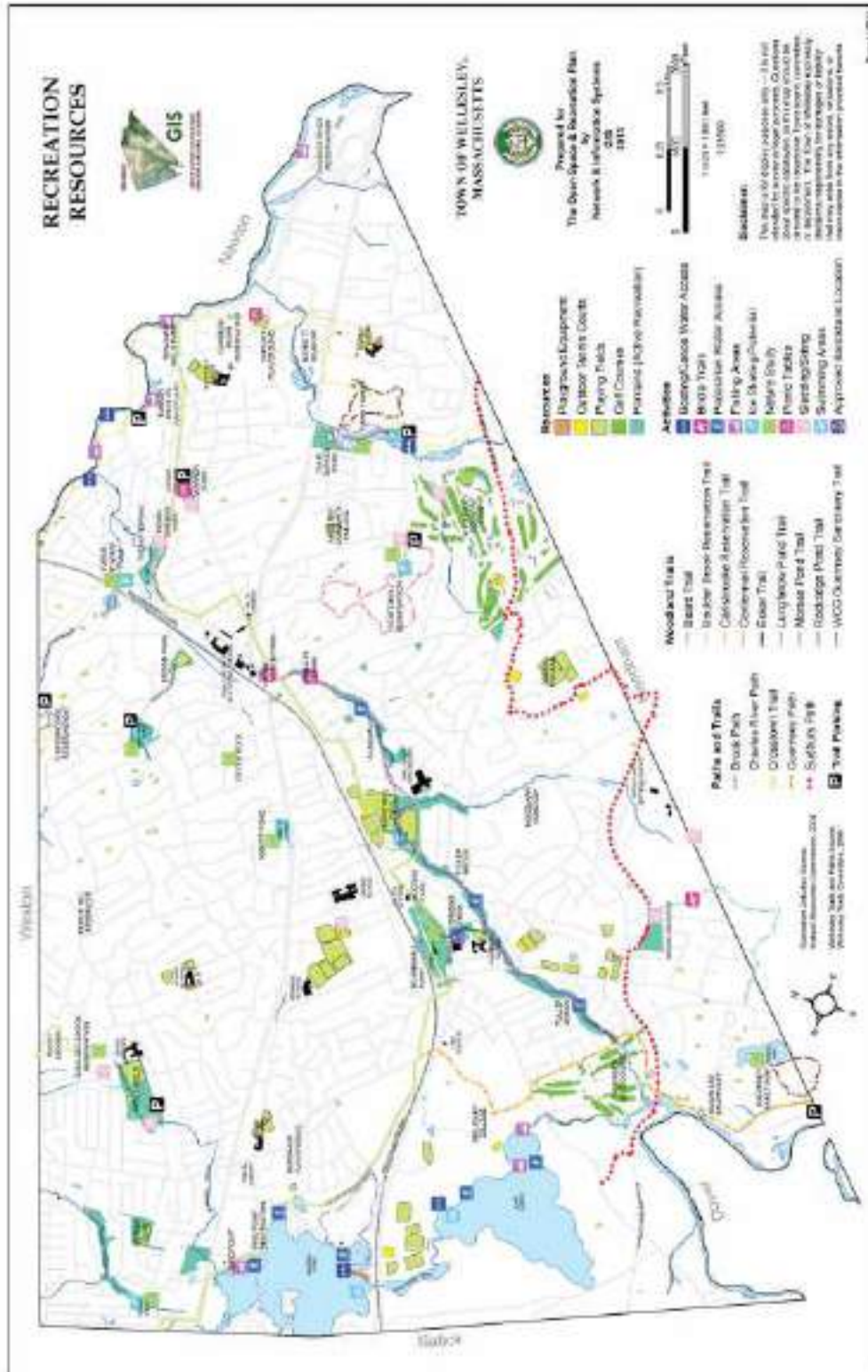
Open Space	Acres
Multiple-Use W/ Protection	545.19
Managed - Open	304.27
Private - Non-Utility (Unshaded)	386.33
Private - Unshaded	735.18
State / Federal - Parks W/ Protection	90.83
State / Federal - Open	52.02
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,112.92'</b>





## What are Wellesley's recreation offerings?

The Town of Wellesley offers 1,086 recreation programs, and 31,210 participants took part in activities offered by the Wellesley Recreation Department in 2015. There are 25 fields available for recreational purposes in Wellesley. In 2015, the Recreation Department generated \$1,191,441 in revenue from program fees, while its program expenses totaled \$1,081,648.



### **How many designated historic districts and structures does Wellesley have?**

Wellesley has three National Register Historic Districts, seven individual National Register properties, four Single-Building Historic Districts and one Local Historic District. Except for buildings in the Single-Building Historic Districts and the Cottage Street Local Historic District, Wellesley's historic properties are not protected in any way from alterations or demolition. Wellesley has one Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD), Denton Road, and another has been proposed for Standish Road. NCDs are created when residents of a specific area vote that they would like to preserve certain aspects of the character of the area.

The historic buildings on the National Register include:

- The Eaton-Moulton Mill, ca. 1853
- Wellesley Farms Railroad Station, ca. 1893
- Wellesley Hills Branch Library, ca. 1927
- Isaac Sprague Memorial Clock Tower, ca. 1928
- Old Wellesley High School ca. 1894
- Wellesley Town Hall ca. 1881-85
- Wellesley Congregational Church and Cemetery, ca. 1918-22

The single-building historic districts include:

- 379 Weston Road
- 38 Lowell Road
- 26 Elmwood Road
- 126 Woodland Road

The historic districts on the National Register include:

- The Hunnewell Estates
- The Cochituate Aqueduct
- The Sudbury Aqueduct

### **What kinds of community groups are there in Wellesley?**

Wellesley has numerous community organizations, 501(c)3 nonprofits and religious institutions including, but not limited to the following selection:

- Wellesley Hills Congregational
- Wellesley Congregational Church
- Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church
- Wellesley Baptist Church
- MetroWest Baptist Church
- Saint Paul's Catholic Church
- Christ Church United Methodist
- Temple Beth Elohim
- Wellesley Weston Chabad Center
- Wellesley Community Children's Center
- Wellesley Community Center
- Wellesley Friendly Aid Associates

### **What is Wellesley's carbon-reduction goal?**

- The Town of Wellesley has a goal to reach a 25% reduction in emissions by 2020 and offers clients of its Municipal Light Plant the option to purchase energy from 100% renewable sources.

# CULTURAL RESOURCES



TOWN OF WELLESLEY,  
MASSACHUSETTS



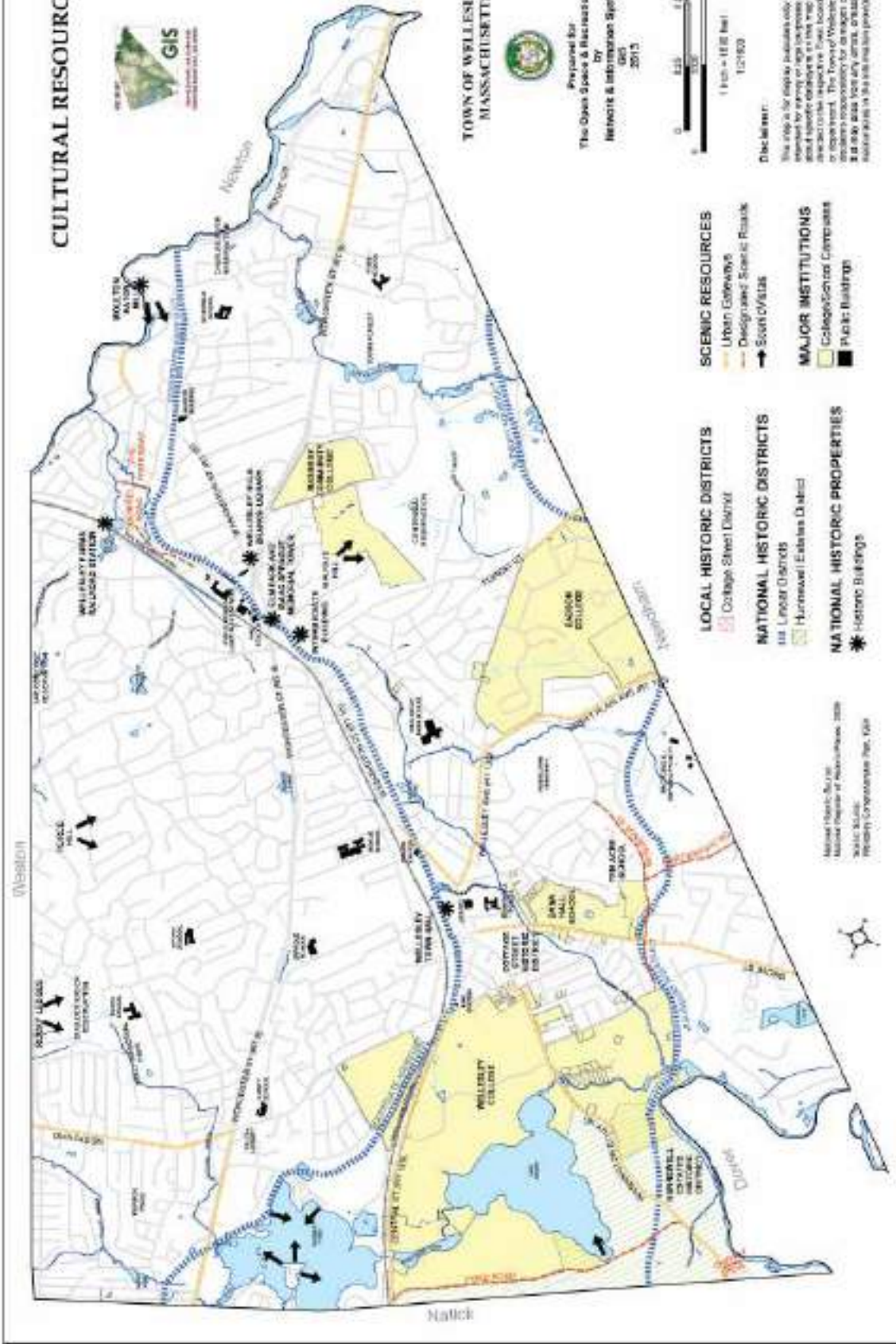
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GIS  
2013



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Page 10 of 10



- SCENIC RESOURCES**
  - Urban Gateways
  - Designated Scenic Routes
  - Scenic Overlooks
- MAJOR INSTITUTIONS**
  - College/Schools/Community Centers
  - Public Buildings
- LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**
  - College Street District
- NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICTS**
  - Lincoln District
  - Huronwell Estates District
- NATIONAL HISTORIC PROPERTIES**
  - Historic Buildings

Michael D'Amico, Esq.  
Michael D'Amico & Associates, Inc.  
300 State Street  
Wellesley, MA 02158

## Findings

### Natural Resources

- Wellesley's 2,212 acres of undeveloped land provide valuable environmental services to the town, for example through cooling temperatures in summer and absorbing stormwater and pollutants.
- Approximately 17% of Wellesley's land is protected from development.
- The Town's pond-management projects are successfully reducing erosion and creating healthier environments.
- Flash floods are an issue near Morses Pond and along Route 9.
- The town's Wetlands Regulations are being updated. In many cases they are more stringent than the state Wetland Protection Act.

### Open Space, Trails and Recreation

- The Town's restoration project for Fuller Brook Park is complete.
- There are 43 miles of trails in Wellesley, 26 miles of which are marked. The trail system segments cross property managed by 10 different entities.
- The Wellesley Recreation Department offers over a thousand programs annually.
- Recreation Department programs are fee-based, and the fees cover all expenses except staff salaries. The department typically contributes as much as \$100,000 back to the town budget every year.
- The 900 Worcester Street project is expected to bring an aquatics center and skating rink, among other indoor recreation facilities, through a public-private partnership.

### Historic Resources

- Wellesley has 3 National Register Historic Districts (2 of which are aqueducts), 4 Single-Building Historic Districts, 1 Local Historic District, and 7 individual properties listed on the National Register.
- Since a Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) bylaw was passed, one NCD has been established.
- Properties listed on the National Register are subject to review if they would be affected by federal projects but are otherwise unprotected from alteration or demolition.

- Properties in the Single-Building Historic Districts and Cottage Street Local Historic District may not have external alterations or be demolished without review from the Historic District Commission.
- In addition to the Historic District Commission, Wellesley has a Historical Commission, which promotes historic preservation.
- A Demolition Review Bylaw passed at 2017 Annual Town Meeting covers demolition requests for residential buildings from before 1950. The Historical Commission reviews the demolition request to see if the structure is preferably preserved with a delay period of twelve months to seek an alternative to demolition.

## Challenges

- Balancing the need and value of open space with other town initiatives and priorities.
- Balancing private property rights with regulation.
- Identifying historic resources that are preferably preserved and promoting their preservation.
- Providing sufficient outdoor and indoor recreation facilities for current and future use.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Is Wellesley an employment center

The biggest business sectors in Wellesley are educational services, finance and insurance, healthcare and social assistance, and professional, scientific and tech services. Together these types of businesses provide 64% of the 16,710 jobs in Wellesley as of September 2016.

### BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYEES IN WELLESLEY BY SECTOR

SECTOR	BUSINESSES		EMPLOYEES	
Retail Trade	120	8%	1,612	10%
Finance & Insurance	187	13%	2,681	16%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	343	24%	1,845	11%
Educational Services	34	2%	4,094	25%
Health Care & Social Assistance	212	15%	2,079	12%
Accommodation & Food Services	53	4%	1,294	8%
Other	495	34%	3,105	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,444</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,710</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

## Who are the biggest employers in Wellesley?

Primary centers of employment in Wellesley include the three colleges, the Lower Falls area, the office park at William Street and the retail centers like Wellesley Square and Linden Square.

### PRINCIPAL EMPLOYERS (EXCLUDING THE TOWN)

BUSINESS	NATURE OF BUSINESS	EMPLOYEES	% OF TOTAL TOWN EMPLOYMENT
Sun Life Assurance	Insurance	1,158	8.55%
Wellesley College	Higher Ed	1,100	8.13%
Babson College	Higher Ed	975	7.20%
Harvard Pilgrim Health Care	Insurance	398	2.94%
Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates	Healthcare	352	2.60%
Roche Brothers	Grocery	277	2.05%
Mass Bay Community College	Higher Ed	253	1.87%
Dana Hall School	Private School	255	1.88%
Wellesley Country Club	Private Club	239	1.77%
Elizabeth Seaton Residence	Healthcare	200	1.48%
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,207</b>	<b>38.40%</b>

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Wellesley local employers

## Where are Wellesley's commercial centers?

Wellesley has three traditional commercial/retail villages: Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills and Lower Falls. In addition, Cedar Street, Linden Square and the Falls area on Weston Road offer retail shopping.



## What kinds of retail establishments are there in Wellesley?

Nineteen percent of Wellesley's retail establishments are eating and drinking places like restaurants, 18% are home furnishing stores and 13% sell apparel and accessories.

RETAIL TRADE BUSINESSES BY TYPE	
RETAIL BUSINESS TYPE	% OF BUSINESSES
Home Improvement	3%
General Merchandise Stores	1%
Food Stores	8%
Auto Dealers, Gas Stations, Auto Aftermarket	11%
Apparel & Accessory Stores	13%
Furniture & Home Furnishings	18%
Eating & Drinking Places	19%
Miscellaneous Retail	27%

Source: Copyright 2016 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved. Esri Total Residential Population Forecasts for 2016.

## What kinds of jobs do Wellesley residents have?

### INDUSTRY FOR EMPLOYED WELLESLEY POPULATION 16 YEARS AND OLDER

SECTOR	RESIDENTS EMPLOYED	
Retail Trade	773	6%
Finance, insurance and real estate	1,827	15%
Professional, scientific, management and administrative	2,449	20%
Educational services, health care and social assistance	4,219	34%
Other	3,118	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,386</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

Employed Wellesley residents tend to work in knowledge-worker positions in education, health care, professional services, finance and management. Wellesley residents typically have a lower unemployment rate than the state average: 2.5% in Wellesley compared to 2.7% in Massachusetts in late 2016, according to the Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

## Findings

- Wellesley is an employment center as well as a bedroom community, with most jobs in the Wellesley Office Park, the town's colleges, and the commercial village districts.
- More people are employed in the education, insurance, health care, and professional services sectors than in retail. The biggest employers are Sun Life Assurance and Wellesley College.
- A substantial minority of the Wellesley labor force works in town. In 2000, MAPC data showed hometown employment as 35%. More recent data based on the percentage of the labor force that works at home or walks to work, suggest that this relatively high percentage employed in Wellesley continues to be the case.
- As is the case in many affluent communities, the commercial villages tend to attract upscale stores and chain retail because store rents tend to be high. Some residents find it more difficult to do simple errands for daily life in the villages without having to drive.

## Challenges

- Keeping a local retail and business mix in the commercial villages
- Keeping retail that supplies daily needs in the commercial villages
- Attracting desired retail when storefronts become empty
- Maximizing the benefit to the town of the Wellesley Office Park

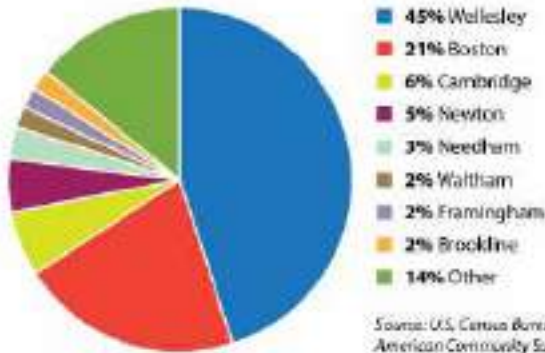
# TRANSPORTATION

## Where do Wellesley residents work and how do they get there?

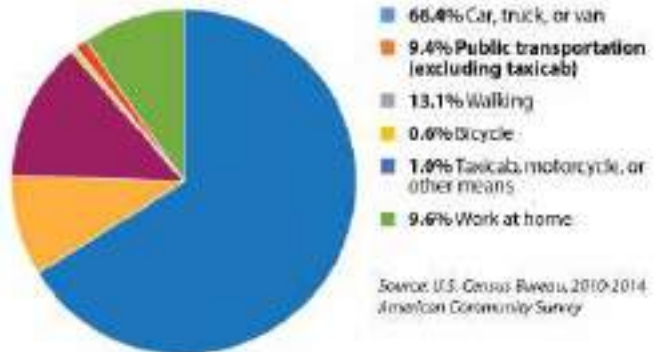
- A majority of working Wellesley residents drive to work alone in a vehicle.
- Forty-five percent of Wellesley residents work in Wellesley. Twenty-one percent commute to Boston.

- Nearly all of Wellesley residents work in Massachusetts (97%), but most residents work outside of Norfolk County (53%), reflecting those who may commute to employment centers like Boston or Cambridge.

### WORK DESTINATION FOR WELLESLEY RESIDENTS



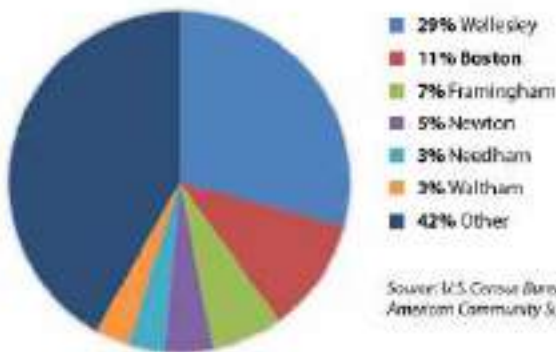
### MODE OF TRAVEL FOR COMMUTING EMPLOYED RESIDENTS OVER 16 YEARS OF AGE



## Where do people who work in Wellesley come from?

- Nearly one third of people who work in Wellesley also live in Wellesley.

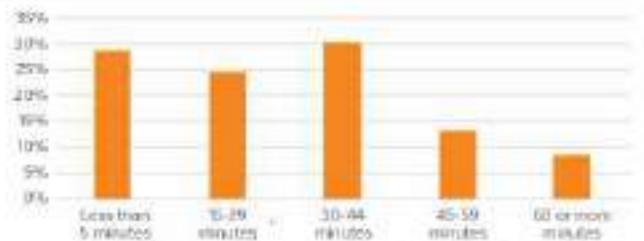
### ORIGIN OF PEOPLE WHO WORK IN WELLESLEY



## How long is the commute?

- Most working Wellesley residents can get to their jobs in under 45 minutes.

### TRAVEL TIME TO WORK FOR EMPLOYED RESIDENTS



## How much traffic is on Wellesley's major streets?

Besides I-95, Route 9 and Washington Street are the busiest corridors in Wellesley with peak traffic reaching over 50,000 daily trips near the intersection of Route 9 and near the office park near I-95.

### AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRIPS ON MAJOR ROADS



Source: ESRI

## What are the transportation alternatives to the car in Wellesley?

There are three Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) commuter rail stations in Wellesley: Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills and Wellesley Farms on the Framingham/Worcester Line with service between Worcester and Boston. The MetroWest Regional Transit Authority's (MWRTA) #1 and #8 buses also serves Wellesley, making connections from Natick to Wellesley College, Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills, MassBay Community College, Lower Falls and the Woodland MBTA Station. The colleges provide shuttles for their students, staff and faculty.

Wellesley has one marked bicycle lane on a limited segment of Washington Street. The Department of Public Works (DPW) is creating new bicycle markings on Cliff Road and Kingsbury Street.

## How many traffic accidents are there in Wellesley and where do they happen?

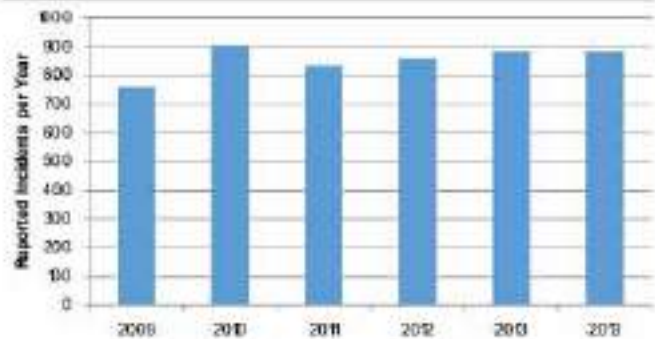
There were 885 incidents in 2013. The average number of reported incidents did not change significantly between 2009 and 2013. MassDOT has flagged the intersections along Route 9 and Route 16 shown in the Highway Safety Improvement Program Clusters map below as locations with a high number of reported incidents.

### HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM CLUSTERS



Source: MassGIS

### WELLESLEY ANNUAL REPORTED INCIDENTS



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

## How much parking does Wellesley have?

On-street metered parking is available in Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills, and Lower Falls. The town also has approximately 400 metered and all-day parking spaces throughout nine commuter and commercial lots.

### PARKING LOTS

LOT	VEHICLE SPACES	ACCESSIBLE PARKING	BIKE PARKING
Wellesley Farms	199	4	16
Wellesley Hills	51	—	—
Wellesley Square	224	2	—

## How many cars do Wellesley residents own?

According to 2010-2014 estimates, there are approximately 1.9 vehicles per household in Wellesley. With an estimate of 8,594 households for the same time period, that results in approximately 16,329 cars in Wellesley.

## What ongoing traffic improvements are under way in Wellesley?

Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) roadway improvements are finishing construction on Route 9 and Overbrook Drive in Wellesley. MassDOT is also in the bid phase for roadway improvements on Route 9 from Dearborn Street to the Natick town line and Route 9 and Kingsbury Street.

## Does Wellesley have a Complete Streets policy?

A Complete Street is a transportation policy and design approach that requires streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation. Wellesley is not currently registered with the Massachusetts Complete Streets Funding Program, which provides access to state funding, and has not passed a Complete Streets policy. The Town of Wellesley Bicycle Safety Committee recommended the Town pursue Complete Streets initiatives in April 2015.

## Findings

- Two-thirds of Wellesley working residents drive to work alone, a relatively low number compared to similar communities. Almost 10% take public transportation, 13% walk to work, and less than 1% bike to work. Nearly 10% work at home.
- There are nearly 2 cars per household.
- Four major roads carry regional traffic through Wellesley and experience the greatest congestion: I-95 at the town's eastern border; Route 9/Worcester Street; Route 16/Washington Street; and, to a lesser extent, Route 135/Central Street.
- Traffic congestion around schools at the beginning and end of the school day is significant.
- The majority of reported accidents are on Routes 9 and 16.
- Traffic signals on Route 16 are coordinated and camera controlled to enhance traffic flow.
- Wellesley has a variety of alternatives to the car: three commuter rail stations give access to the Worcester-Framingham Line; MWRTA bus service that connects with the rail stations and the Woodland Green Line MBTA station; the colleges run shuttle services for their students.
- Bicycles can use the 26-mile, town-owned system of marked off-road trails, but there is only one on-road marked bicycle route on a segment of Washington Street. A proposed bicycle network was developed in 2013.
- Some parts of Wellesley have ample pedestrian infrastructure like sidewalks and safe crossings, but walkability is not consistent across all of the town's neighborhoods.

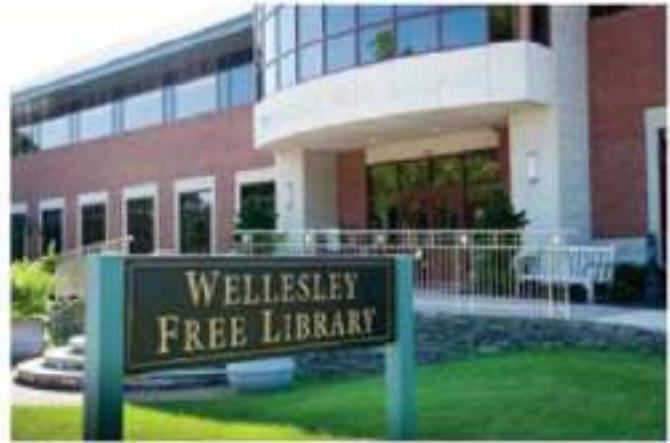
## Challenges

- Additional improvements to traffic flow on arterial streets
- Creating a safe and convenient bicycle network linking town destinations
- Enhancing pedestrian networks for safety and convenience
- Creating solutions to school traffic congestion
- Adopting a Complete Streets policy
- Providing sufficient parking where needed
- Improving trails and pedestrian and bicycle connections to abutting communities.

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

### *What does the Wellesley Free Library offer?*

- The Wellesley Free Library has three branches: the Main Branch, the Hills Branch and the Fells Branch. The new Main Branch opened in 2003. The Fells Library is operated through private support from dedicated residents.
- Approximately 60% of Wellesley residents have a library card. In addition to books and other materials, the library is a cultural destination. It offers classes, technical training, and gathering and meeting spaces.
- The Massachusetts Library System (MLS) bestowed the first ever “Stronger Together” Award upon the Wellesley Free Library for its contributions in strengthening library excellence in Massachusetts.
- In FY2017, there were 359,246 visits to the the library system. Upgrades to the nearly 20-year-old main building are planned.



### *How many attend Wellesley public schools?*

Wellesley has 10 public schools (seven elementary, one middle school, one high school, and a pre-school) and enrolls approximately 5,000 students each year. Wellesley has dropout rate below 1%, and 95% of graduates plan on post-secondary education.

### *How many students attend private schools in Wellesley?*

There are 6 private elementary, middle and/or high schools in Wellesley with a total enrollment of 1,166 students, the largest of which is Dana Hall School.

### *What are the new major projects in town?*

- The Massachusetts School Building Authority in late 2017 approved initial eligibility for school construction. Town evaluation of options and sites will continue through the eligibility process.
- Within the last decade, the town purchased two large properties: 900 Worcester Street and the “North 40.” An aquatic and ice rink facility managed by a private business is under construction at 900 Worcester Street. Several types of land use have been discussed for the North 40; a committee will be formed to determine its ultimate use.
- The Council on Aging recently opened a new senior center.

### *What infrastructure is the Town focusing on?*

- The Facilities Management Department has resolved deferred maintenance issues and is now developing a comprehensive maintenance/replacement program, as well as working on new projects.
- The Town is preparing to update and upgrade its stormwater-management policies and activities in order to comply with federal and state regulations. DPW is beginning to implement green infrastructure such as bioswales and permeable pavement.
- The town has an effective recycling program.

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## Findings

- Wellesley has 29 public buildings, including schools and the Municipal Light Plant.
- The library system gets almost 20% of its support from private sources.
- The Municipal Light Plant operation is in excellent physical and financial condition, with up-to-date infrastructure, \$65 million in assets and no debt.

## Challenges

- Reaching consensus on the future of the North 40
- Reaching consensus on the HHU school process
- Keeping up to date with technology for library patrons
- Preserving programs of regular investment in infrastructure
- Integrating sustainability practices, such as green infrastructure, into town facilities and services
- Providing sufficient meeting space for town organizations and residents

# PUBLIC HEALTH

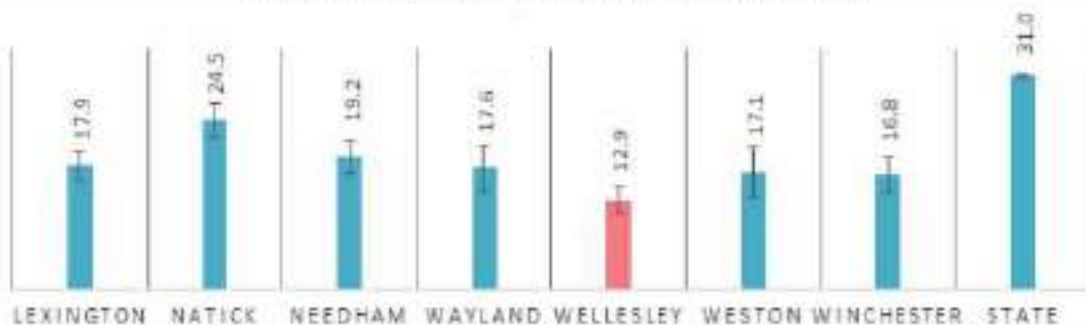
## How is Wellesley's health?

- According to data on hospitalizations, health behaviors, and other key indicators of current health in Wellesley, the Town is healthier than the Commonwealth across nearly all indicators. Wellesley also tends to be healthier than Norfolk and Middlesex counties and even outperforms comparison communities for certain key indicators including aging and mortality. The town did not perform statistically significantly worse than the state on any indicators.
- Although Wellesley tends to be healthier than its state and surrounding counties, social isolation, stress, and mental health have been identified through qualitative and quantitative data as areas of concern.

## What are the town's most important health issues?

- Increasing rates of stress and mental health issues, particularly among youth in the 9th through 12th grades.
- A 10-15% increase in the proportion of 9th through 12th graders reporting less than 60 minutes of exercise 5 or more days per week
- Social isolation among adults, especially elderly adults living alone.
- Growing need for pre- and post-operative services for aging Baby Boomers who live alone.

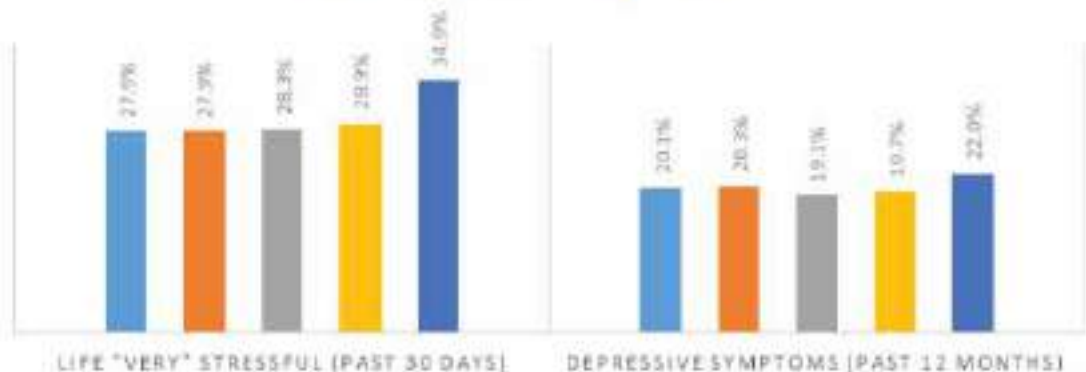
PREMATURE MORTALITY PER 10,000 PEOPLE, 2008-2012



Source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health Deaths Data, 2008-2012.

METROWEST YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

■ 2006 ■ 2008 ■ 2010 ■ 2012 ■ 2014



Source: Metrowest Adolescent Survey, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014

## Findings

- Wellesley performs better on key indicators of health than the State, Norfolk and Middlesex Counties, as well as comparable communities.
- There are over 100 medical reserve corps volunteers in Wellesley, mostly nurses.
- Health issues of concern in Wellesley are social isolation, particularly for elderly people who live alone, and stress and mental health issues for teenage youth.
- Fewer high school aged youth get sufficient exercise every week.
- As the Baby Boom generation ages and more people are living alone, pre- and post-operative care is becoming a bigger issue.
- Wellesley is not immune from the opioid crisis in Massachusetts. According to the Massachusetts Department of Health, there were two confirmed unintentional deaths from opioids in town in 2015. Comparable communities, such as Lexington, Natick, Needham, Wayland, Weston and Winchester, have also experienced small numbers of opioid overdose deaths in recent years.

## Challenges

- Maintaining and enhancing a sense of community in Wellesley for all residents.
- Providing sufficient mental health services for residents
- Creating interesting and fun activities for teenagers that will attract them to be involved and avoid unhealthy choices.

# TOWN GOVERNMENT

## Who directs Wellesley town government?

Wellesley voters. Once a year, Wellesley's registered voters go to the polls to elect members of 13 public entities (boards, commissions, committees, authorities, and persons), including the Town Clerk, the Town Meeting Moderator, and 240 members of Town Meeting.

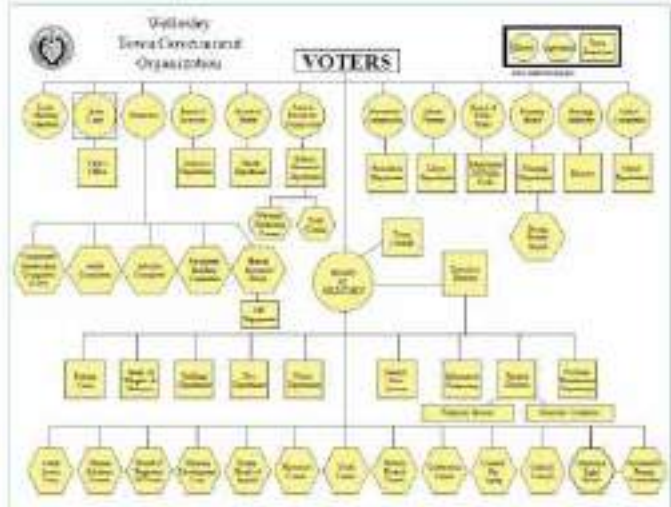
- There are 58 entities on the Wellesley Town Government organizational chart and 42 line items in the town budget.
- As of 2015, the town had 1,232 employees (of which 804 are school staff).
- Typically, 18% of the registered voters in Wellesley (approximately 3,000 out of 16,000 people) participate in the March annual town elections.

## What's working well in town government?

Wellesley town government generally functions well and is perceived as being high-functioning by both employees and elected and appointed officials.

- The town has a group of strong and experienced department heads, many of whom are leaders in their respective professions. They meet and build relationships to get things done. Each department independently performs its duties well.
- Wellesley town government is fortunate to have dedicated volunteers who devote countless hours to public service. As one interviewee pointed out, the town could not afford to pay for all of the time and expertise donated to government service.

- Town government reflects Wellesley's financial commitment to its departments, boards and commissions. Staff pay scales are competitive with peer towns.



## Who is accountable for the performance of town government?

Wellesley voters hold their government accountable through elections.

- There is no one entity, office, or person with overall accountability for performance. Wellesley does not have a single person or group responsible for managing the operations of town government or for overseeing quality of results.
- Each elected entity is responsible for the policy, department(s), staff, and budget in its area of responsibility.
- The Executive Director works for the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and shares responsibility with the BOS for some staff departments.

### How are town government functions managed?

The decentralized nature of town government means that some key management support functions are the responsibility of the boards and commissions rather than a central administrative body.

- Except for the Finance Department, which supports most of Town government, support functions that municipalities typically administer for all department, such as information technology (IT) and human resources (HR), are applied in a decentralized way by individual boards and commissions.
- Independent IT and HR functions carried out by many boards and commissions results in duplication of function and inconsistent levels of professionalism across entities.
- Decentralized IT increases cost and complexity as well as the chances for failed IT project implementation because of lack of specialized skills in the boards and departments. Some departments, such as the library, may have specialized requirements to coordinate with regional partners.
- Decentralized HR decreases standardization and fairness and can expose the town to liability as a result.

### How does Wellesley make budget decisions?

On an annual basis in October and November, each department, board, or commission is notified by the Finance Department and Board of Selectmen of a standard percentage increase guideline for purposes of creating its budget, a “one size fits all” approach to different parts of government.

- Boards and departments with larger existing budgets receive larger absolute increases and as a result have greater ability to take on new projects. Boards and departments with smaller existing budgets receive smaller absolute increases.
- With this percentage increase guideline as the foundation, proposed budgets are created, with justifications for amounts requested above the standard increase.
- Operating and capital budgets are not considered together.
- Annual operating and capital budgets are connected to strategic plans or a town-wide priority plan. Departments with strategic plans use them in preparing their budgets. The Town-Wide Financial Plan and the Five-Year Capital Plan are part of the overall budgeting process.
- While many budget documents are created and shared electronically, there is no single, central electronic records repository that provides transparency at each step of the budget creation and approval process across the town.
- The Board of Selectmen and the Advisory Committee review the budget requests with department heads and/or board, committee, or commission chairs and makes a recommendations to the final decision-makers, the elected Town Meeting members.

### How are decisions made?

The authority to make major decisions rests with the Town Meeting Members. When major decisions come up outside of Annual Town Meeting in the spring, there can be a Special Town Meeting in the fall.

- For all other decisions about the operations of government, authority and responsibility for decision-making is vested in the individual boards and commissions of town government.
- Elected officials do not receive professional training beyond ethics, conflict of interest and the open meetings law. They are not trained in the operations or administration of town government, and so are self-taught decision-makers.
- There is no standard method of making decisions and no standard way of setting priorities across the Town.
- Other than the Five-Year Capital Plan, there is no centralized database of projects under consideration, so staff and members of boards and commissions have no way of knowing the decisions that are coming in their pipeline.
- While some interviewees expressed the opinion that decision-making works well, many others were frustrated at the lack of transparency into the decision-making process of other parts of government, and about the length of time the deliberative and democratic decision-making process in Wellesley takes.
- Four strategic plans, from the School Department, Library, Public Works and the Natural Resources Commission are published online. There is no consistent framework across the plans and they are not explicitly tied to capital or operating budgets.

### How do decision makers communicate across town government?

Opinions were divided about communications within town government, with some feeling strongly that communications are good and others assessing the situation as needing improvement.

- The lack of formal communication channels for providing transparent status updates on projects contributes to the feeling that communication is weak.
- Examples of good communications typically focus on individual strong relationships that facilitate information exchange, particularly on the staff level.
- Critics cite the inconsistent transparency of departments, boards and commissions in their sharing of public information, as well as the ad hoc nature of interpersonal communications based on longstanding relationships.

### How does the Town communicate with the public?

The Town of Wellesley public website provides residents information on their government, for those with the skill to navigate the site.

- In some cases online transactions for doing business with the Town are available.
- What is less available is information on how government works, how the town spends its taxpayer dollars, and what major projects are under review.
- With no central web communications authority, each department, board or commission is responsible for posting information about its work, and the opportunities for the public to learn or contribute via open meetings.
- Many interviewees expressed frustration with the inability to easily see what meetings are happening and what projects are being proposed.
- One group organizes its volunteers to attend every public meeting in town just in case something is mentioned about their work, because they are not able to rely on published agendas or minutes of meetings to provide information accurately and timely.

## Findings

- Wellesley Town Government operates effectively, with a strong culture of volunteer public servants, the leadership of outstanding department heads, and low turnover among a devoted workforce in which relationships facilitate getting things done.
- The town has optimized efficiency within individual departments, boards and commissions, but has not chosen to optimize efficiency across operational entities or administrative functions (such as IT and HR) for a truly efficient town-wide government.
- Ongoing operational decision-making is made via distributed authority in the individual boards and commissions, often by volunteers who are not experts in municipal operations. Policy-making and administrative functions are not handled separately but instead are all the responsibility of the elected and appointed officials.
- Budget decisions are not universally tied to strategic plans and are created in a process that begins with the assumption all parts of government receive the same percentage increase.
- Very few people both inside and outside town government have a full understanding of how decisions get made in town government.
- Availability of information for public decisions is inconsistent in availability, quality, and timeliness across the town, and very little information is digitized or shared electronically among departments.
- The lack of “road maps” to the permitting and enforcement system makes it complicated and frustrating for residents to navigate.
- The Town does not have a centralized purchasing department; rather, purchases are made by individual departments.

## Challenges

- Developing a town-wide community vision and set of goals and strategies to guide all the entities in town government as they fulfill their roles (this is the purpose of the Unified Plan process)
- Balancing Wellesley’s highly democratic and citizen-led government tradition with the time- and cost-efficiency benefits of contemporary best practices in government administration
- Making information about all the entities and activities of town government and the activities of boards and commissions consistently available and up to date for everyone in the Wellesley community
- Developing strategic plans with standard requirements across town government, tying them to budget development, and incorporating time lines and measurable targets for stated goals
- Building budget transparency with a system for creating and tracking budgets throughout the life cycle and making budget information available on line.
- Balancing efficient provision of support services to multiple departments with the independence of boards and commissions
- Providing public-friendly information on how to navigate complex systems



## PART II

# Natural and Cultural Heritage

## CHAPTER 4 NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

- Continue management programs for Wellesley ponds, streams, and wetlands to improve and maintain water quality and habitat and avoid erosion.
- Continue to maintain and increase the urban forest and shade tree canopy on public and private property.
- Update the town wellhead-protection planning and collaborate with communities that share its aquifers.
- Permanently protect and manage existing Town-owned open space with appropriate zoning and conservation restrictions and provide appropriate public access.
- Continue to use zoning, easements, management agreements and other tools to promote protection of open space character and natural resources for large private open space tracts, such as institutional open space.
- Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan in a timely manner to inform NRC, Recreation Commission, and Town strategic planning and to obtain state approval for eligibility for state funding.

## CHAPTER 5 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Update and maintain a historic property inventory by documenting and submitting historic property forms for State and National Register listing.
- Develop a historic landscape plan for Wellesley.
- Expand public awareness of historic preservation through awards programs, illustrative materials to promote compatible renovation of historic properties, and developer and contractor education.
- Combine the Historical Commission and Historic District Commission to provide integrated leadership and regulatory experience.
- Work toward developing an arts and culture center in Wellesley.

## CHAPTER 6 PARKS, TRAILS, AND RECREATION

- Maintain and improve active recreation areas, including athletic fields and programs.
- Expand and enhance the existing trails network within Wellesley and to adjacent towns, and establish management policies for trail monitoring, maintenance and development.
- Improve the data collection system about the use, satisfaction, and demand for recreation facilities and programs, as well as changing needs.

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# *Natural Resources and Conservation*

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**W**ellesley residents value the green open space in town and want to preserve it. In principle, they want to preserve natural open space and its environmental value, and would like to see expansion of natural open space. However, because of Wellesley's very high real estate values, acquisition is very costly, and there are competing interests and values for open space. The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) is the steward of Wellesley's open space, setting policy and overseeing the use, preservation and protection of the Town's parks and conservation areas (including Town athletic fields not located on school sites) and watershed areas. It also serves as tree warden and sets policies for insect control and pesticide use by Town agencies.

This chapter of the Unified Plan focuses on natural resource management, natural open space, and conservation, and it is closely allied to sustainability and resilience issues discussed in Chapter 12. Like many nearly built-out communities, Wellesley faces the challenge of providing desired recreational facilities while protecting its natural resources. (Parks and Recreation are discussed more fully in Chapter 6.) Attention to both interests and values are highlighted in both chapters of the plan.

### **Supporting town government concepts**

*The Unified Plan's emphasis on making town government more customer-centric, data-driven and strategic, and transparent is reflected in several of this chapter's strategies: strengthening the open space data inventory; measuring the tree canopy and its environmental benefits; and preserving access through reducing encroachment.*

## **A. Natural Resources and Conservation in the Vision and Values**



### **VISION**

In 2040, Wellesley is a town recognized for its... respect for the environment and support for sustainability, conservation, and protection of physical and historical assets



### **VALUES**

**Conservation and Sustainability:** Make resource-efficient choices to conserve energy, water, and materials; improve water and air quality and reduce carbon emissions; develop and implement sustainable practices to adjust to changing environmental conditions.

## **B. Goals and Policies**

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS</b>
<b><i>Sensitive natural resources are restored, well-managed, preserved and expanded to protect and enhance water resources, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, public health, and enrichment of community character.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give priority and provide resources for initiatives to improve and maintain water quality in streams, ponds, wetlands, and aquifers and minimize nonpoint source pollution.</li><li>• Promote protection and enhancement of the tree canopy.</li><li>• Manage properties to promote habitat and biodiversity.</li><li>• Raise public awareness about landscape best management practices by public and private property owners</li></ul>
<b><i>The Town maintains an up to date inventory of open space.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support town decision making and priority-setting by maintaining good data.</li></ul>
<b><i>Public open space is protected and well-managed.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protect existing town-owned open space with conservation restrictions or zoning.</li><li>• Ensure public access to public open space and deter encroachments.</li><li>• Manage and maintain open space to protect the public interest in natural resources and public access.</li></ul>
<b><i>The Town maintains open space character through multiple strategies.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collaborate with non-municipal owners of open space.</li></ul>
<b><i>The Town maintains a state-approved Open Space and Recreation Plan.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide resources to update the OSRP to retain eligibility for grants.</li></ul>

## C. Findings and Challenges

### FINDINGS

#### Overview

- **Natural Resources Commission (NRC).**

Established by Wellesley Town Meeting in 1978, the Natural Resources Commission is a five-member, elected board. The NRC has the statutory authority and responsibility of a Park Commission, Conservation Commission, Tree Warden, Town Forest Committee, and Forestry and Pest Control Officer under Massachusetts law. The NRC appoints the Wetlands Protection Committee and the Trails Committee. The NRC's land management policies are carried out by the Department of Public Works with town budget allocated to the NRC.

- **Wellesley Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP).**

The Wellesley Open Space and Recreation Plan, completed in 2015 and approved by the State, is the guiding document for the NRC. The Plan contains an inventory of natural resources and open spaces, and their uses, identifies needs and areas for improvement, sets out goals, and includes action plans for those goals. The goals and actions were informed by public engagement, including a survey. The approved Plan also allows the Town to apply for State grants as long as it is updated every five years.

- **Surface water.** Wellesley's surface water and ground water are critical resources for drinking water and wildlife habitat. Six stream systems flow into the Charles River on the eastern and southwestern border of town forming six watersheds: Cold Stream Brook, Rosemary Brook, Hurd Brook, Fuller Brook, Waban Brook, and Pollock Brook (see Exhibit 4.1). Surface waters include two large ponds and 10 small ponds and the town has 14 wetland systems. Surface water in ponds and streams (including the Charles River) and groundwater in aquifers are vulnerable to nonpoint source pollution from stormwater runoff containing oil, grease, pesticides, herbicides, and other pollutants. The state Wetlands Protection Act, the Rivers Protection Act, and the Wellesley Wetlands Protection Bylaw regulate development to protect wetlands resources. Wellesley's water resources and adjacent lands function as wildlife corridors, provide

valuable plant and wildlife habitat, protect aquifers, mitigate climate change impacts, and help prevent flooding by capturing storm water.

- **Groundwater resources.** Two major aquifers supply drinking water. There are ten public wells, which provide the majority of drinking water (with the remainder purchased from the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority), two private wells on the land of the Wellesley Country Club that are used for golf course irrigation, and two wells on Wellesley College land. (See Figure 4.x) On the east side of town, the aquifer is protected by conservation areas around Rosemary Brook, Longfellow Pond and Bezanson Pond, the Town Forest, as well as the Wellesley Country Club lands. Morses Pond and Lake Waban and town-owned wellhead protection lands, along with Fuller Brook lands, Wellesley College lands, and North 40 lands help protect the aquifer in the western part of town.
- **Landscape character and wildlife habitat.** Wellesley's open space lands contain a variety of natural conditions including woodlands, open fields, and hillside areas with vegetation and wildlife populations that are typical of suburban fragmented and edge habitat conditions. The Wellesley Town Forest, Carisbrooke Reservation, and the Hemlock Gorge Reservation (state owned) are managed as wildlife habitat. Streams, wetlands, and ponds provide critical wildlife habitat connections in suburban environments like Wellesley. The Rosemary Brook corridor, which is conservation land, functions as the biggest wildlife corridor in the town. There are 13 certified vernal pools and an estimated 70-80 potential vernal pools. Vernal pools provide seasonal, temporary water habitat for amphibian and invertebrate species.
- **Urban forest.** Street trees and trees on public and private land play an important role in moderating temperature, precipitation, and air pollution, as well as providing habitat. Wellesley has an inventory of a total of 6,047 publicly -owned trees, of which 2,256 are street trees and the remainder are in public parks and other public landscaped areas. The trees in public conservation areas or the town forest are not included in this inventory. There is no current estimate of trees on private property or the town's overall tree canopy. Wellesley has been a Tree City USA for more than 30 years, meeting the standards of the Arbor Day Foundation for urban forestry.

- **Water quality as a top priority.** The top priority of the Natural Resources Commission for many years has been the reduction of nonpoint source pollution to improve and maintain water quality in town water resources. These efforts include:
  - › Working with other town boards and departments to implement the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Phase II Stormwater Regulations
  - › Continued use of Best Management Practices to mitigate the impacts of local and regional development through zoning, stormwater, and wetlands regulations
  - › Continued implementation of the Pond Restoration Program
  - › Implementation of the Morses Pond Management Study and erosion study
  - › Monitoring and management of restored ponds
  - › Continued use of organic Integrated Pest Management on Town properties
  - › Continued public awareness campaigns on the harmful effects of nonpoint source pollution, such as the promotion of eco-landscaping (Grow Green Wellesley program) on private property to reduce pesticide and herbicide use and encourage organic turf management

- › Construction of a boardwalk around the certified vernal pool on the North 40 to promote public awareness and education about vernal pools.

### Public and Private Open Space

- **Undeveloped land.** About a third, 33%, of Wellesley’s total 6,720 acres of land are not developed (2,213 acres), including a mix of local, state, federal and privately owned land. The Town owns 850 acres (38%) of this undeveloped land (including lands under control of the NRC, School Committee, Library, Public Works, and Board of Selectmen.
- **Protected open space.** Approximately 29% percent of undeveloped land (642 acres) is permanently protected under Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution. Of these 642 acres, the Town owns 545.45 acres (25% of all undeveloped land) and the remainder of these protected acres, 96.15 (4% of all undeveloped land), are State-owned. Another 255 acres are temporarily protected by the Chapter 61 program of tax abatements for forestry, agricultural, and recreational open space. Chapter 61 provides temporary protection because owners can choose to take the land out of the open space use. In that case, the property owner is required to pay some or all of

#### ARTICLE 97 PROTECTED LANDS

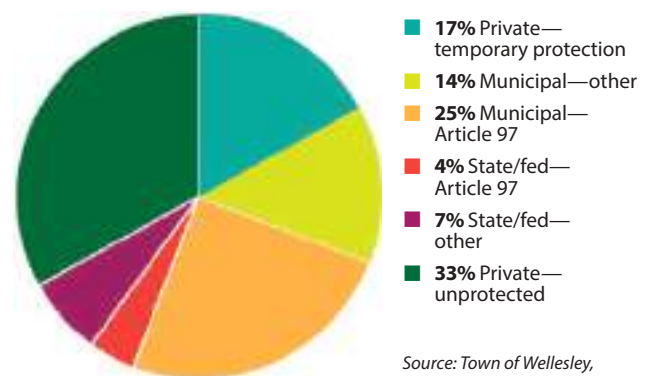
Article 97 of the Amendments to the Massachusetts constitution provides that “the people shall have the right to clean air and water, freedom from excessive and unnecessary noise, and the natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic qualities of their environment....Lands and easements taken or acquired for such purposes shall not be used for other purposes or otherwise disposed of except by laws enacted by a two-thirds vote” by the legislature. In practice, this means that land protected under Chapter 97 must be acquired explicitly [in the deed] for conservation, park, or recreation purposes. Sometimes town lands used for these purposes do not have these stipulations in the deed—for example school recreation lands are often not protected park land.

#### OPEN SPACE BY SIZE, 2014

CONTROL	PROTECTION	ACRES		
Town-owned	Municipal—other	845	300	38%
	Municipal—Article 97		545	
Other owners	State/fed—Article 97	1,368	96	62%
	State/fed—other		153	
	Private—temporary		388	
	Private—unprotected		730	
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,215</b>		<b>100%</b>

Source: Town of Wellesley, Natural Resources Commission

#### OPEN SPACE ACRES BY OWNERSHIP, 2014



Source: Town of Wellesley, Natural Resources Commission

the previous property tax abatement and the town has the right of first refusal to acquire land.

- **Private conservation land.** The Wellesley Conservation Council, a private non-profit organization established in 1958, maintains ten sanctuaries totaling 44 acres. Eight of the ten sanctuaries are located entirely within Wellesley, one includes land in both Wellesley and Needham, and one is located within Weston adjacent to Wellesley's Carisbrooke Reservation.
- **Public trails.** The Town has a total of 43 miles of trails. Twenty-six miles are marked with directional medallions, and the traversed land is owned by over 10 different entities. Wellesley trails are part of the Charles River Link, a 16-mile, six-town regional trail extending from Newton to Medfield.

### ***2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan Goals***

The goals of the 2015-2022 OSRP appear below. A few of these focus on recreation, which is treated in Chapter 6 of this Unified Plan.

1. Preserve open space for habitat protection and enhancement of community character.
2. Protect Wellesley's sensitive land, water, and wetlands resources, and restore those resources that have been degraded or impaired.
3. Prevent damage to natural resources and human health from hazardous materials and elements.
4. Encourage sustainable policy and practice within Town government and throughout the community.
5. Maintain up-to-date information about Wellesley's natural resources, to assist in resource management.
6. Continue and expand existing environmental education and awareness programs.
7. Protect open space and environmental resources.
8. Maintain, enhance, and expand Wellesley's public open space areas and recreation facilities.
9. Promote the awareness and use of Wellesley's parks, recreation facilities and open space resources.
10. Ensure that recreation facilities and programs continue to meet the needs of the Town.
11. Provide opportunities for safe and enjoyable walking and bicycle access throughout the Town.

12. Restore, preserve, and enhance open space and sensitive natural resources for protection of water resources, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and enrichment of community character.

### **CHALLENGES**

- The Open Space and Recreation Plan identified several natural resource challenges:
  - › The increased use of Wellesley's active recreation space exerts significant pressure on the Town to convert some passive recreation space to active use.
  - › Wellesley's built-out condition and high property values make it challenging to acquire significant amounts of open space.
  - › Significant open space areas are either held by institutions or are in tax-abatement programs that provide limited protection against development.
- Balancing the need and value of open space with other town initiatives and priorities.
- Balancing passive and active use of open space
- Balancing private property rights with regulation.
- Providing sufficient outdoor and indoor recreation facilities for current and future use.
- Improving safety at trail road crossings and along roads without sidewalks
- Providing recreational and social activities for teenagers in ways that will attract them to participate
- Improving Morse's Pond bathhouse and programming
- Systematically surveying recreation program users, evaluating programs, and responding to user demand

### **D. What The Community Said**

The Open Space and Recreation Plan includes results of a March 2015 survey with over 600 respondents and reports the highlights of the survey as follows:

- 91% feel it's important to acquire and preserve open space for active and passive recreation.
- 94% are concerned about water pollution from pesticides and stormwater runoff.
- 87% think it's important to acquire and preserve open space for natural resource protection.
- 82% are concerned about Wellesley trees.
- 89% feel areas specific to passive recreation are important.

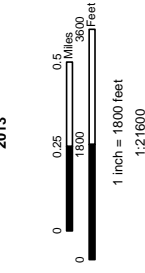
# WATERSHED DRAINAGE BASINS



## TOWN OF WELLESLEY, MASSACHUSETTS

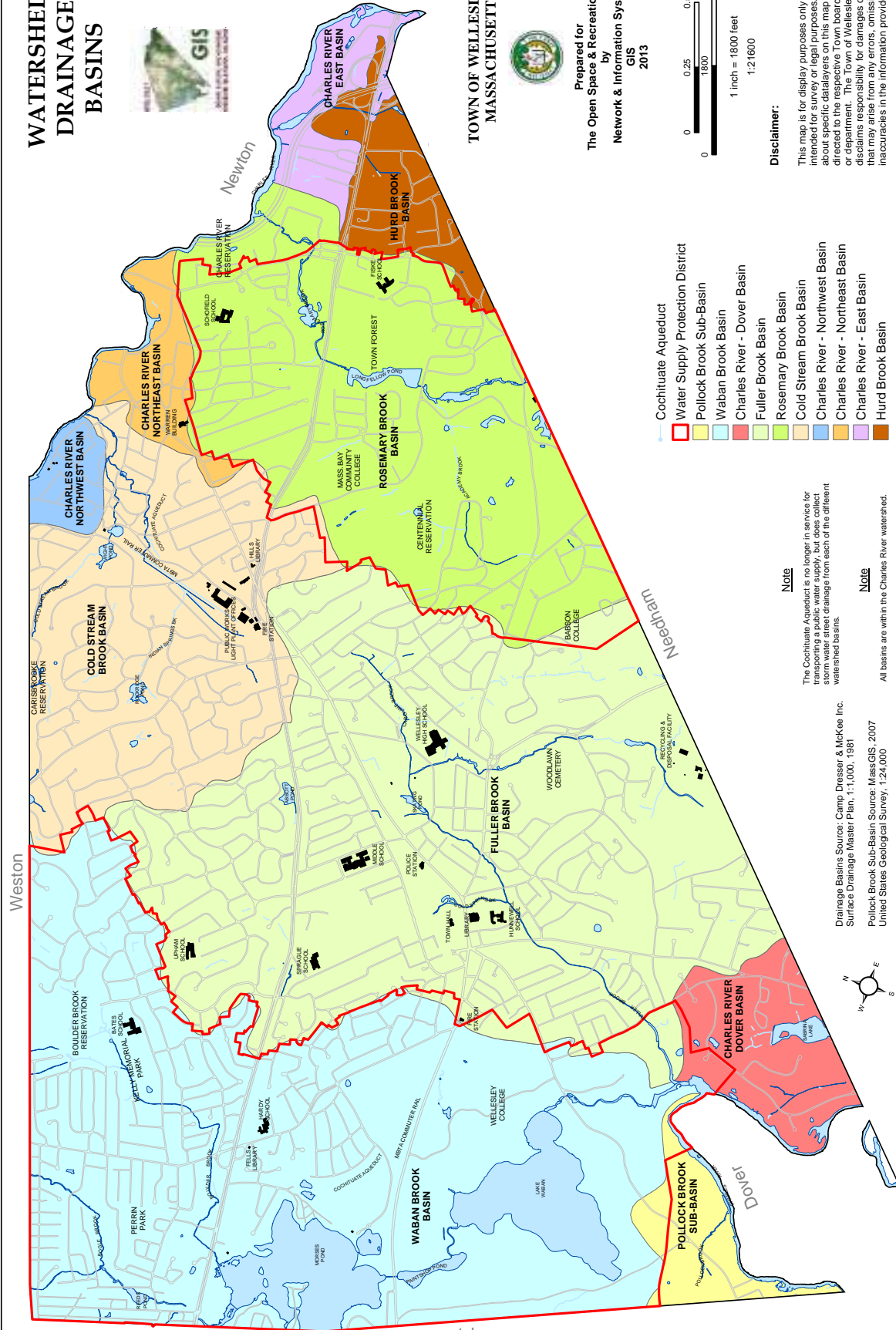


Prepared for  
The Open Space & Recreation Plan  
by  
Network & Information Systems  
GIS  
2013



**Disclaimer:**

This map is for display purposes only --- it is not intended for survey or legal purposes. Questions about specific data layers on this map should be directed to the respective Town board, committee, or department. The Town of Wellesley expressly disclaims responsibility for damages or liability that may arise from any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided herein.



- Cochituate Aqueduct
- Water Supply Protection District
- Pollock Brook Sub-Basin
- Waban Brook Basin
- Charles River - Dover Basin
- Fuller Brook Basin
- Rosemary Brook Basin
- Cold Stream Brook Basin
- Charles River - Northwest Basin
- Charles River - Northeast Basin
- Charles River - East Basin
- Hurd Brook Basin

**Note**

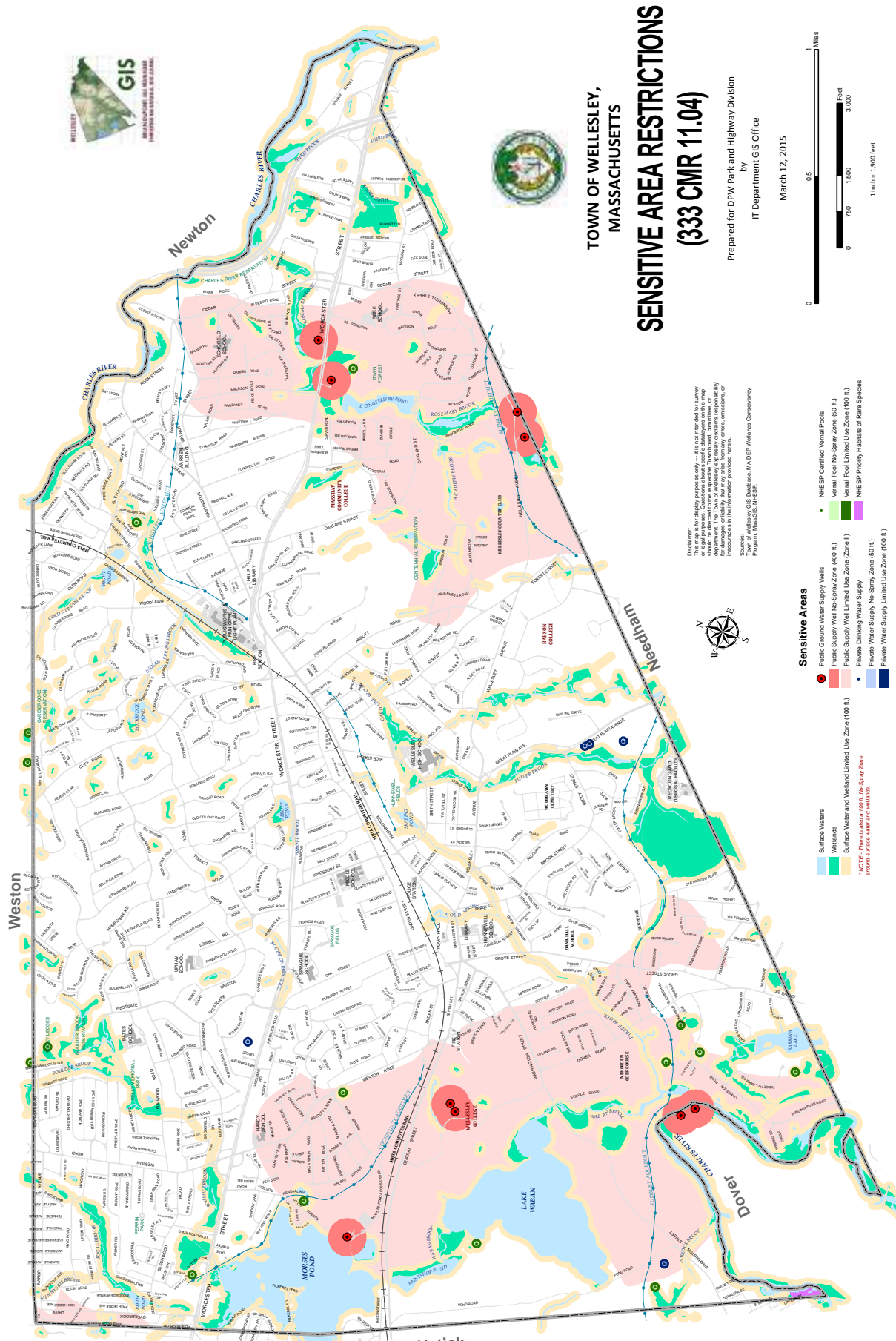
The Cochituate Aqueduct is no longer in service for transporting a public water supply, but does collect storm water street drainage from each of the different watershed basins.

**Note**

All basins are within the Charles River watershed.

Drainage Basins Source: Camp Dresser & McKee Inc. Surface Drainage Master Plan, 1:1,000, 1991  
Pollock Brook Sub-Basin Source: MassGIS, 2007  
United States Geological Survey, 1:24,000

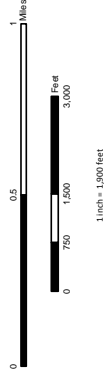




TOWN OF WELLESLEY,  
 MASSACHUSETTS  
**SENSITIVE AREA RESTRICTIONS**  
**(333 CMR 11.04)**

Prepared for DPW Park and Highway Division  
 by  
 IT Department GIS Office

March 12, 2015



Disclaimer: This information is provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended for survey or legal purposes. Questions about specific locations on the map should be directed to the appropriate regulatory agency. The Town of Wellesley disclaims any liability for errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided herein.

Sources:  
 Town of Wellesley GIS Database, MA DEP Wetlands Conservancy Program, Wetlands, NHESP

**Sensitive Areas**

- Surface Waters
  - Wetlands
  - Surface Water and Wetland Limited Use Zone (100 ft)
  - Public Ground Water Supply Wells
  - Public Supply Well No-Spray Zone (400 ft)
  - Public Supply Well Limited Use Zone (Zone II)
  - Private Dining Water Supply
  - Private Water Supply No-Spray Zone (50ft)
  - Private Water Supply Limited Use Zone (100 ft)
  - NHESP Certified Wetland Pools
  - Wetland No-Spray Zone (50 ft)
  - Wetland Limited Use Zone (100 ft)
  - NHESP Priority Habitats of Rare Species
- \*NOTE: There is also a 100 ft No-Spray Zone around surface water and wetlands.

- 67% feel areas specific to active sports are important.
- 76% would like our trail system to be expanded and improved.
- 71% would like to acquire more land for conservation purposes.
- 66% would like to acquire more land for recreational facilities.
- 80% would like better places to run and bike

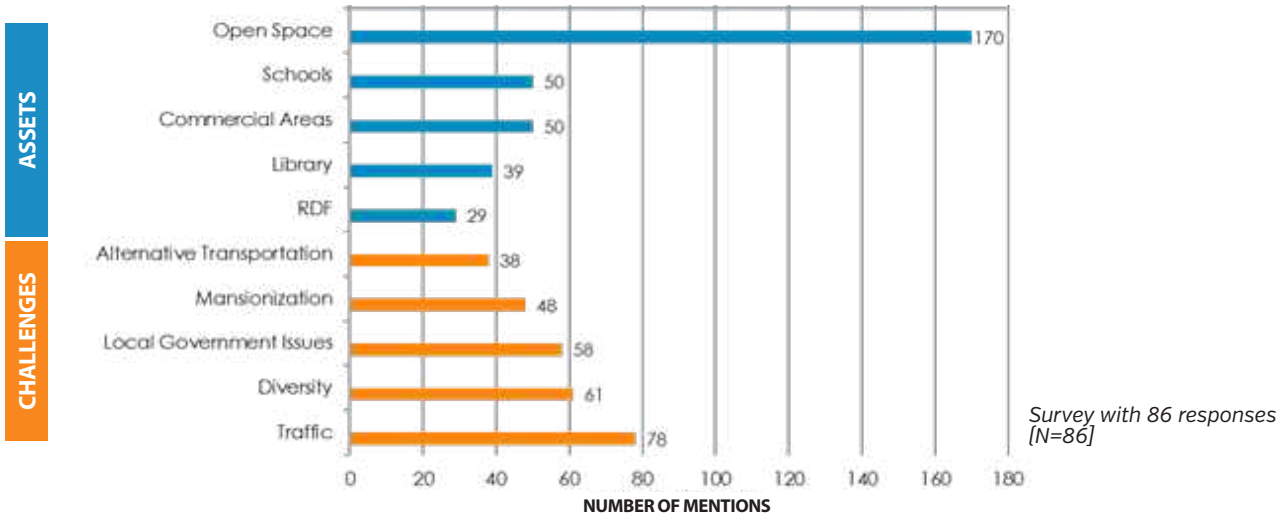
Relevant themes that emerged during the Wellesley Unified Plan process in public meetings and surveys include:

- A very high level of public appreciation of open space in general

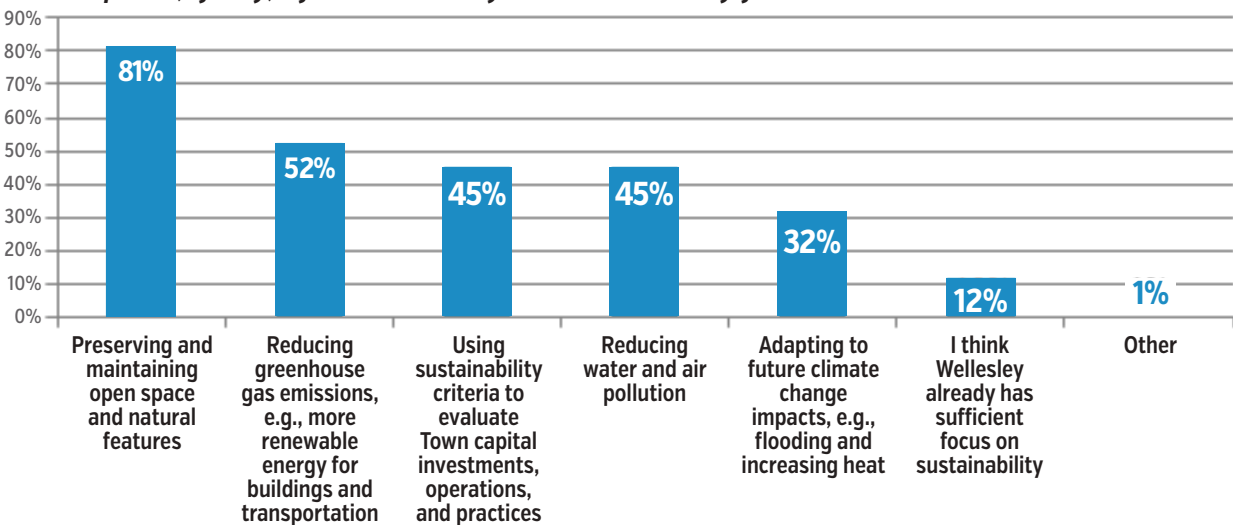
- Support for preservation and enhancement of trails, parks, conservation land, waterways, and community gardens
- Preservation of green space
- Protection of the environment and natural resources
- Desire for more choice in after-school programs
- Difficulty balancing demand for athletic fields with desire for open space.

Support for natural resources, open space, and parks was also evident in the responses to various digital surveys.

### Top Assets and Challenges



### Q: What aspects, if any, of sustainability should Wellesley focus on?



Vision and Values Survey (N=1,058)

IMPORTANT TO ME	IMPORTANT TO THE TOWN
1. School system excellence	1. School system excellence
2. Sense of community	2. Sense of community
3. Sustainability and preserving resources	4. Infrastructure and physical assets
4. Infrastructure and physical assets	3. Sustainability and preserving resources
5. Enhancing diversity	6. Improving transportation and connectivity
6. Improving transportation and connectivity	5. Enhancing diversity
7. Support for businesses	7. Support for businesses
8. Regional partnerships	8. Regional partnerships

### Workshop

On May 31, 2017, a workshop on natural and cultural heritage, including open space, parks, and recreation drew a group of approximately 30 participants. There were relatively few people at this workshop who were highly involved with recreation, historic preservation, or arts and culture. An online survey focusing on recreation sites and sources was made available on the project website during the month of July 2017.

Participants, working in small groups around tables with maps showing relevant town resources, were asked to take part in a series of exercises:

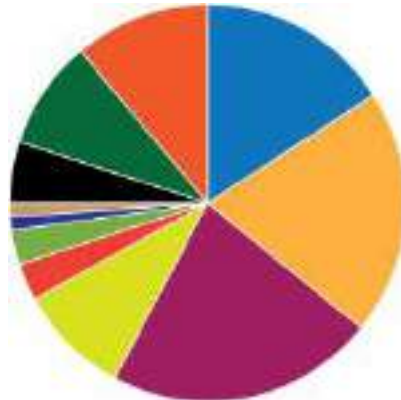
- Indication of individual preferences for allocation of resources to a range of open space strategies and activities
- Group discussion of these individual preferences
  - › Identification on the map of resources of existing protected or park areas that need enhanced maintenance—marked by “M”
  - › Identification on the map of natural resource areas that are not currently protected but need protection—marked by “C”
  - › Identification of neighborhood areas that do not have sufficient access to a park
- Group identification of top three priorities for conservation, parks, and trails
- Group identification of top priorities in passive and active recreation

- Group identification of next steps to support historic preservation, now that the town has a demolition delay bylaw
- Discussion of whether the town should have performing and visual arts space and, if so, how the Town could support this.

### Workshop: Allocating Funding for Open Space, Parks, And Recreation

The workshop participants focused on expansion of open space resources, proposing to spend 42% of resources on park and open space expansion, while assigning 25% of resources to maintenance and improvement of existing resources and trails. There was greater support for passive parks than for active recreation facilities.

### HOW WOULD YOU ALLOCATE \$100 IN SPENDING FOR OPEN SPACE, PARKS, AND RECREATION?



- **16%** Focus on the open space and parks that we already have. Maintain, improve, reduce encroachment.
- **20%** Expand existing parks and open space with adjacent land, when available.
- **22%** New parks: acquire land or conservation easements for new parks or natural open space.
- **9%** Focus on existing trails: maintain, improve, reduce encroachment.
- **3%** Expand the trail network with new trails.
- **3%** New athletic fields or facilities for **youth team** sports
- **1%** New athletic fields or facilities for **adult team** sports
- **1%** New facilities for **adult individual** sports (e.g., tennis)
- **5%** Improve pond swimming facilities
- **9%** Parks for walking, individual exercise, enjoying nature (passive parks)
- **11%** All other comments (most frequently cited: Protect water and water quality; invest in historic, cultural recreation; artist space/arts)


▶ EXHIBIT 4.3

**WORKSHOP MAP EXERCISE**

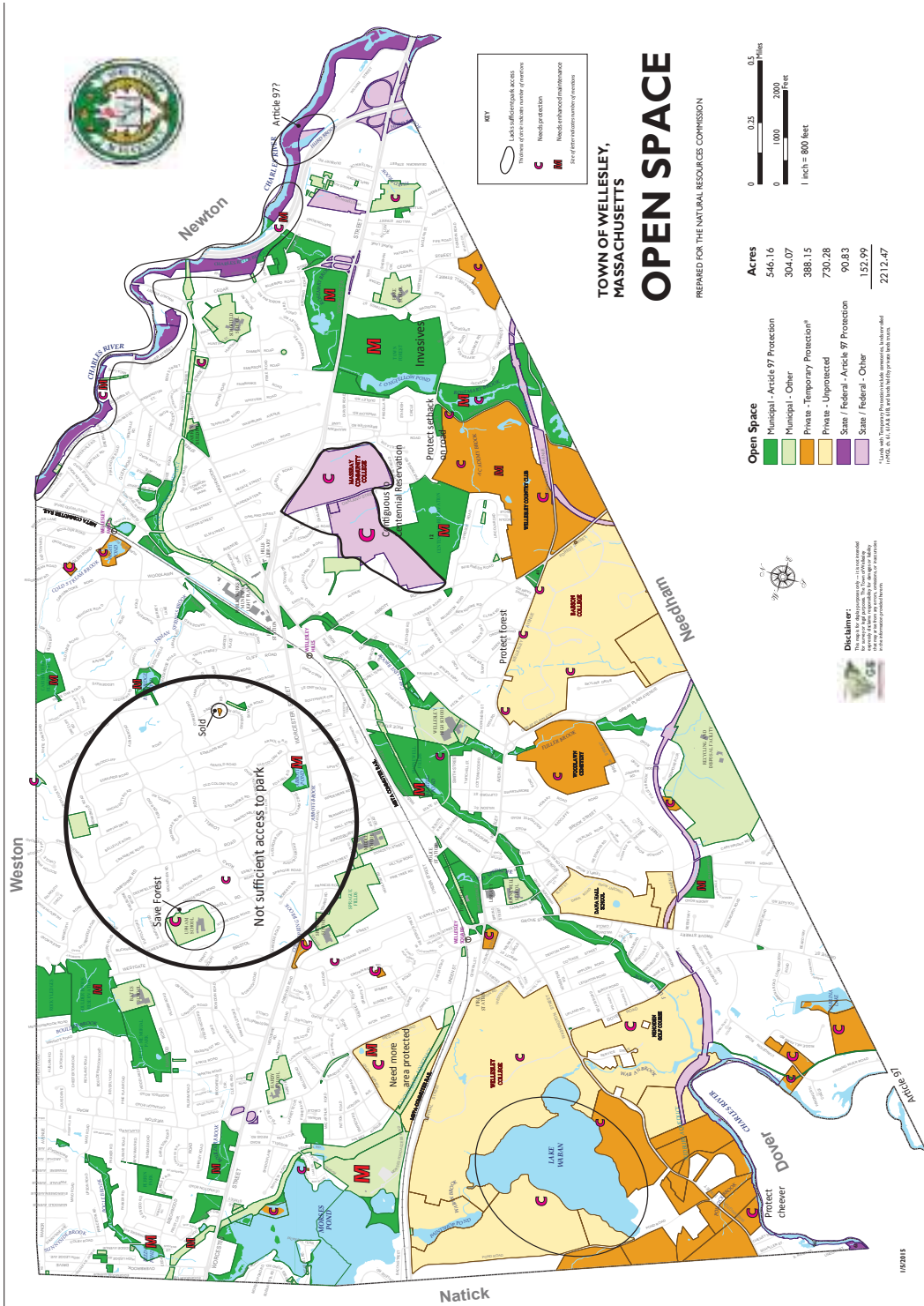
Participants were asked to identify areas on the map that need:

M = enhanced maintenance

C = protection

 = more parks

The size of the letter marking indicates more or fewer mentions on the map.



The map results indicate that almost every protected or open space property was seen by some participant as needing enhanced maintenance. The areas that attracted more mentions are: municipal property adjacent to Morses Pond; the Town Forest and Rosemary Brook area, where invasive species were called out as a problem; the area near the skating pond at Hunnewell Fields; the North Forty; and Reeds Pond.

Similarly, almost every unprotected area of open space was called out as needing conservation. The areas with more mentions include Mass Bay Community College; North 40; property around Lake Waban; Wellesley Country Club.

### ***Workshop: Priority Setting***

The six groups at the workshop identified their top three priorities. All but one of the groups included acquisition of new land as among its top three priorities.

#### **GROUP 1**

1. Focus on existing assets; trails, open space, parks
2. Acquire new land for parks or conservation
3. Improve pond facilities

#### **GROUP 2**

1. Water quality/quantity = sustainability/life. Establish a wellhead-protection plan identifying risks and opportunities. Identify cross-border activities in our high-yield aquifer areas as well. Subregional participation in protection.
2. Acquisition, expansion, and protection of new and contiguous/adjacent lands. Especially contiguous corridors that create more natural pocket parks in the neighborhoods.
3. Protect biodiversity, decrease artificial night light, and strengthen the tree bylaw to protect keystone species.

#### **GROUP 3**

1. Open space [current]
2. Athletic facilities
3. Expansion/acquisition

#### **GROUP 4**

1. Maintenance of open spaces
2. Trails maintained and expansion
3. Expand open space land

#### **GROUP 5**

1. Preserve/focus on existing space.
2. Acquire adjacent space.
3. Better communicate, collaborate, coordinate.

#### **GROUP 6**

1. Resolve tension between recreation drive for revenue with NRC preservation of green spaces and passive recreation space.
2. Reduce or eliminate drive for lights and sounds on space that abuts residents.
3. Preserve wooded areas/trails.

## **E. Strategies and Actions To Achieve The Goals**

### **GOAL 1: SENSITIVE NATURAL RESOURCES ARE RESTORED, WELL-MANAGED, AND PRESERVED TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE WATER RESOURCES, WILDLIFE HABITAT, BIODIVERSITY, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND ENRICHMENT OF COMMUNITY CHARACTER.**

#### ***Policies***

- Give priority to initiatives to improve and maintain water quality in streams, ponds, wetlands, and aquifers and minimize nonpoint source pollution.
- Promote protection and enhancement of the tree canopy.
- Manage properties to promote habitat and biodiversity.
- Raise public awareness about landscape best management practices by public and private property owners.

## STRATEGIES

### A. Continue a management program for Wellesley ponds, streams, and wetlands to improve and maintain water quality and habitat, and avoid erosion.

In Wellesley, what is called “nonpoint source pollution” is the primary threat to water quality. Nonpoint source pollution comes not from a specific source (for example, a business dumping pollutants into a stream) but from general landscape practices and stormwater management. Stormwater runoff from lawns and impervious surfaces (such

as driveways, roofs, and roads), contains pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, oil, grease, and chemicals. Wetland vegetation and garden vegetation buffers filter and clean stormwater that otherwise would go directly into the water resource. However, lawns are not as effective in slowing stormwater and cleaning pollution, allowing fertilizers and herbicides to reach streams and ponds.

The Center for Watershed Protection offers many resources on stormwater protection strategies: <http://www.cwp.org/stormwater-management/>

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Manage Morse’s Pond to avoid eutrophication and to maintain its use as an environmental and recreational resource and implement the Morse’s Pond Erosion Report recommendations.</i> Management of the pond’s water quality includes attention to fertilizer runoff, as excessive nutrients in the water promote the growth of milfoil and other vegetation, affecting the pond’s recreational value.	Ongoing	NRC; DPW
i. <i>Implement the Comprehensive Pond Management Report recommendations and continue small-pond management based on the Pond Restoration Master Plan.</i>	Ongoing	NRC; DPW
iii. <i>Provide nonpoint source pollution education to residential and nonresidential private property owners.</i> NRC’s initiatives to promote organic integrated pest management on Town properties has been successful, and it is renewing programs to raise public awareness about best landscape-management practices (Grow Green Wellesley eco-landscaping program).	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; Seek grant funding and nonprofit partners as well as town funding.
iv. <i>Promote the use of green infrastructure best management practices (BMPs) on public and private properties to manage stormwater.</i> BMPs include bioswales, sidewalk planters, pervious pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, and green roofs. DPW has started to implement bioswales, and there is pervious pavement on parts of the high school parking lot and basketball courts. The Fuller Brook project is also designed to improve stormwater biofiltration.	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC and DPW; Seek grant funding and nonprofit partners as well as town funding.
v. <i>Continue to implement the organic integrated pest management program.</i>	Ongoing	NRC; Board of Selectmen; DPW

### B. Continue to maintain and increase the urban forest and shade-tree canopy on public and private property in Wellesley.

Wellesley has a strong proactive program for managing the public urban forest. However, trees on private property make up a substantial component of the overall public forest in Wellesley. Communities have increasingly focused some of their urban forestry efforts and initiatives on protecting and enhancing the urban forest on private property as well as the

public urban forest—to enhance climate change resilience as well as promote the traditional benefits of planting trees. The USDA Forest Service has developed a number of free tools to assist communities in establishing urban forestry best practices. The 2016 *Sustainable Urban Forest Guide* ([iTreetools.org](http://iTreetools.org)) provides a step-by-step approach to planning, implementing and monitoring the urban forest for long-term sustainability. Free, state-of-the-art, peer-reviewed software developed by

the Forest Service and used by many volunteer groups, nonprofits, and communities (at the same iTree website) offers tools to enhance knowledge and management of the urban forest. Examples include:

- **i-Tree Canopy** offers a quick and easy way to produce a statistically valid estimate of land cover types (e.g., tree cover) using aerial images available in Google Maps. The latest version also estimates values for air pollution reduction and capturing atmospheric carbon. Canopy can be used by urban forest managers to estimate tree canopy cover, set canopy goals and monitor canopy change over time. Canopy can also be used to estimate inputs for use in i-Tree Hydro and elsewhere where land cover data are needed.
- **i-Tree Streets** focuses on the benefits provided by a municipality’s street trees. It makes use of a sample or complete inventory to quantify and put a dollar value on street trees’ annual environmental and aesthetic benefits. This tool also describes urban forest structure and management needs to help managers plan for the future.
- **i-Tree Vue** allows you to make use of the freely available National Land Cover Database (NLCD) satellite imagery to assess a community’s land cover, including tree canopy, and some of the ecosystem services provided by current urban forest. It can also model the effects of planting scenarios on future benefits.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Continue and expand Wellesley’s Public Shade Tree Program. Maintain the current NRC/DPW program of routine inspection, pruning, and removal [when needed] on a four-year cycle.</i>	Ongoing	NRC; DPW
<i>ii. Review the effectiveness of the current tree-protection bylaw and adjust as needed.</i>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Planning; Building, NRC; DPW
<i>iii. Continue public outreach on the benefits of trees and the tree planting program.</i>	2018 and ongoing	NRC; DPW
<i>iv. Investigate and implement forestry-stewardship plans to care for trees on conservation lands</i>	2018-2022	NRC; DPW
<i>v. Create a baseline estimate of total tree cover (public and private) in Wellesley, and the clean air, stormwater and habitat benefits to the town. Understanding of the town’s overall tree canopy and the contribution of trees on private property can help create a powerful data-driven public campaign on the importance of Wellesley’s trees.</i>	2018-2022	NRC; DPW; Planning; volunteers
<i>vi. Set a tree cover/canopy goal for Wellesley. A tree canopy goal can be broken down into neighborhoods or districts in order to identify priority areas for attention. Urban/suburban forestry experts have stopped recommending an across-the-board tree cover percentage. Instead, they emphasize tailoring the goal to the needs of specific communities. [See <a href="http://www.americanforests.org/blog/no-longer-recommend-40-percent-urban-tree-canopy-goal/">http://www.americanforests.org/blog/no-longer-recommend-40-percent-urban-tree-canopy-goal/</a>]</i>	2018-2022	NRC; DPW; Planning; volunteers

**C. Update the town’s wellhead-protection planning and collaborate with communities that share its aquifers.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Cooperate with communities and private entities that share Wellesley’s aquifers to establish common policies.</i>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen; Planning Dept.; DPW
<i>ii. Establish a wellhead- and aquifer-protection plan.</i>	2022-2028	Planning Dept.; DPW

**GOAL 2: THE TOWN MAINTAINS AN UP TO DATE INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE.**

**Policy**

- Support town decision making and priority-setting by maintaining good data.

**STRATEGIES**

- A. Create a thorough database of open space under all protection and ownership types.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Improve, update, and maintain a database of open space, organized by protection level that is easily understandable to the public.</i> The primary organizational principle of the inventory in the OSRP is ownership, rather than protection, without a summary that makes it clear what is protected, what is not, and what resources need priority protection. For example, the existing database includes several government-owned traffic island properties that provide some green space function but are not high-priority protection targets.	2018-2022	NRC staff
<i>ii. Verify and improve data cataloging easements, deed restrictions, and other similar private protection mechanisms for properties west and south of Lake Waban.</i> Commission members and staff indicate that the nature of private protections on these properties is poorly understood, but their proximity to Lake Waban gives them very high priority. After the protection status of these properties has been documented, the initiative should continue on any properties in similar circumstances located elsewhere in the town for integration into the database.	2018-2022	NRC Staff; Seek grants and assistance by students.
<i>iii. Identify open space protection options that strengthen the connectivity of green space.</i>	2018-2022	NRC

**GOAL 3: PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IS PROTECTED AND WELL-MANAGED.**

**Policies**

- Protect existing town-owned open space with conservation restrictions or zoning.
- Ensure public access to public open space and deter encroachments.

- Manage and maintain open space to protect the public interest in natural resources and public access.

**Strategies**

- A. Permanently protect existing town-owned open space with appropriate zoning and conservation restrictions.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Continue rezoning of NRC properties used as parks or conservation land from Single Residence to Conservation and Parks.</i> The Town has been implementing in phases a recommendation of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan to ensure protection of open space resources through appropriate zoning. Remaining rezoning is expected at 2018 Annual Town Meeting.	2018-2022	Planning; Town meeting

**B. Manage and maintain public open space to protect resources and provide public access, as appropriate.**

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHO</b>
<i>i. Develop management plans for all conservation areas.</i>	2018–2028	NRC
<i>ii. Identify areas of private encroachment on public open spaces and work with property owners on compliance.</i> Although the Town has an encroachment policy and the NRC acts to resolve encroachments when possible, more can be done to protect the integrity of public land. Begin with a public awareness campaign, emphasizing compliance, not punishment. Work with the Trails Committee and other volunteers to identify priority areas (such as those adjacent to water and wetlands) for research through review of aerial photographs and parcel maps as well as site visits.	2022–2028	NRC; DPW; Board of Selectmen—create a work program and recruit volunteers to assist.
<i>iii. Develop signage and, when appropriate, public access, after correction of encroachment.</i>	2022–2028	NRC; DPW; Board of Selectmen
<i>iv. Develop a common policy framework for open space resources used for common purposes but managed by different town entities.</i> For example, document how the town trails are managed, monitored, maintained and enhanced.	2022–2028	Trails committee working with NRC and other entities.
<i>v. In addition to water-quality measures, continue to apply appropriate best management practices, such as invasive species removal, to ensure preservation of natural resources and habitat.</i>	2018–2022	NRC; DPW
<i>vi. Ask users to identify management or maintenance issues that need attention.</i> Options include periodic surveys or a system or smartphone app (which could also be used for reporting on other town issues), with signage at parking areas by which users can email a photo of conditions that need attention—and including a response from the Town.	2022–2028	NRC: Trails Committee; Recreation Commission
<i>vii. Include natural open space and trails in the plans for the North 40.</i>	2018–2022	NRC and other policymakers

**GOAL 4: THE TOWN PURSUES THE PUBLIC INTEREST IN OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION THROUGH MULTIPLE STRATEGIES.**

**Policy**

- Collaborate with non-municipal owners of open space.

**STRATEGIES**

- A. Continue to use zoning, easements, management agreements and other tools to promote protection of open space character and natural resources for large private open space tracts, such as institutional open space or Chapter 41 tax-abatement properties.**

The Town implemented a recommendation of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan to establish zoning requirements for large tracts of privately owned open space with residential zoning, such as the Wellesley Country Club, in order to preserve some of the open space character of these areas, should the owners sell them for development. Section XVIF—Natural Resources Protection (NRP) Development provides for by-right development of large subdivisions designed to protect natural resources in at least 50% of the site. The bylaw includes requirements for the site design process and design standards.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Identify and evaluate tax-title properties for incorporation into the open space system. Several tax-title properties are listed in the OSRP. They should be evaluated for potential conservation and recreational value and, if found suitable, they should be incorporated into the open space system.</i>	2022-2028	NRC
<i>ii. Identify priority areas for protection that strengthen the green space network by adding adjacent lands or bridging network gaps. Protection does not have to mean purchase by the Town—land is very expensive in Wellesley. Protection can take the form of acquisition [by donation or purchase] by the Town or a conservation organization such as the land trust, permanent conservation easement, Chapter 41 tax abatements, and zoning that would guarantee significant open space preservation in case of sale for development.</i>	2018-2022	NRC
<i>iii. Review the Natural Resources Zoning Development bylaw and revise it if needed. Review the law to make sure that there are no barriers to use.</i>	2022-2028	Planning Board; NRC
<i>iv. Develop agreements with institutions such as easements or other protections where they affect town-wide networks, adjacent protected open space, and open space character seen from public streets.</i>	2022-2028	NRC; Board of Selectmen

**GOAL 5: THE TOWN MAINTAINS A STATE-APPROVED OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN.**

**Policy**

- Provide resources to update the OSRP to retain eligibility for grants.

*[This section also appears in Chapter 6—Recreation and Parks.]*

**STRATEGIES**

- A. Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan in a timely manner to inform NRC, Recreation Commission, and Town strategic planning and to obtain state approval for eligibility for state funding.**

The current OSRP was adopted in 2015 and will expire in April 2021. The previous plan was adopted in 1994, twenty-one years earlier. Timely updates will inform NRC, Recreation Commission and Town understanding of open space and recreation needs.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Review the OSRP plan at least once a year to measure progress and identify any changes needed in the inventory and action plan. Annual consultation between the NRC and Recreation will enhance communication about balancing natural resources and passive recreation issues with active recreation issues.</i>	2018-2022	NRC and Recreation Commission
<i>ii. Program the full update of the document for FY 2021.</i>	2018-2022	NRC and Recreation Commission in consultation with other boards and the public



# *Historic and Cultural Resources*

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**W**ellesley residents value the historic buildings and neighborhood character that can be found in many parts of town. The town's most iconic historic building, the Romanesque Revival Town Hall, is scheduled for external restoration work and internal renovation over the next ten years at a total estimated cost of \$24 million, with most of the work to be done by 2022.

At the same time, Wellesley has been traditionally reticent about regulating changes in historic private properties. Following recommendations in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, the Town created several single-building historic districts and authorized the creation of Neighborhood Conservation Districts, one of which was adopted. In 2017 Town Meeting adopted demolition delay for single-family residences dating before 1950. As a result, Wellesley now has access to many of the historic preservation tools available to Massachusetts towns. Over the next ten years covered by the Wellesley Unified Plan, an important set of tasks will focus on refining and implementing tools for historic preservation.

The Town has access to a variety of cultural resources, from concerts, exhibitions, and lectures at the colleges to Recreation Center activities, community music, art, and theater groups, and programs for children and youth. However, unlike some comparable towns, Wellesley does not have a community visual and performing arts center. There is a constituency for an arts and culture center, and the lack of space has made it difficult for some groups, such as the Wellesley Players, to continue to operate. Arts and culture centers elsewhere are typically managed and funded by nonprofit organizations with the

collaboration and support of town governments in some way. The ten-year period of this Unified Plan offers an opportunity to identify options, cultivate a constituency, and create a business plan.

***Supporting Town Government Concepts***  
*The Unified Plan’s emphasis on making town government more customer-centered, data-driven, and strategic is reflected in this chapter, including strategies to complete the historic inventory and raise public awareness.*

## A. Historic and Cultural Resources In The Vision And Values



### **Vision**

In 2040, Wellesley is a town recognized for....respect for the environment and support for sustainability, conservation, and protection of physical and historical assets



### **Values**

**Town Character:** Establish policies, practices and criteria for the preservation of the character of the town’s residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and open spaces.

## B. Goals and Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<b><i>Wellesley preserves cultural resources, including cultural landscapes, to maintain and enrich community character.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support initiatives to inventory historic properties and establish clear and understandable criteria and guidelines for historic district and demolition delay requirements.</li> </ul>
<b><i>The Town government continues to maintain the character of its historic buildings, such as Town Hall.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain historic character through renovations and retrofits (i.e. adaptive reuse.)</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley is developing a permanent arts and culture center.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek options to support performing and visual arts activities for Wellesley cultural organizations and artists.</li> </ul>



## C. Findings and Challenges

### FINDINGS

#### *Historic Resources*

- Wellesley has three National Register Historic Districts (Hunnewell Estates, Sudbury Aqueduct Linear District, and Cochituate Aqueduct), seven individual National Register properties, four Single-Building Historic Districts and one Local Historic District.
- Except for buildings in the Single-Building Historic Districts and the Cottage Street Local Historic District, most of Wellesley's historic properties are not protected in any way from external alterations.
- At the 2017 Annual Town Meeting, Wellesley adopted a demolition review bylaw for review of proposed demolition of single-family houses buildings dating from 1949 or earlier. If the buildings are determined by the Historical Commission to be preferably preserved, they are subject to a twelve-month delay before a demolition permit can be issued. During the delay period, the owners are encouraged to work with the Historical Commission to find a way to preserve the historical significance of the building while providing desired changes.
- Wellesley has one Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD), Denton Road, and a study committee has been established for a potential Standish Road NCD. NCDs are created when residents of a specific area vote that they would like to preserve certain aspects of the character of the area.
- The historic structures and places on the National Register include:
  - › The Eaton-Moulton Mill, ca. 1853
  - › Wellesley Farms Railroad Station, ca. 1893
  - › Wellesley Hills Branch Library, ca. 1927
  - › Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Clock Tower, ca. 1928
  - › The Intermediate Building ca. 1894
  - › Wellesley Town Hall ca. 1881-85
  - › Wellesley Congregational Church and Cemetery, ca. 1918-22
  - › Fuller Brook Park ca. 1899
- The single-building historic districts include:
  - › 379 Weston Road
  - › 38 Lowell Road
  - › 26 Elmwood Road

- The Wellesley Historical Society, a private educational and advocacy organization, is cataloging its materials.
- The Historical Commission is researching properties from 1881 to 1914 for plaques to add to the plaques already in place for properties from before 1881.

#### *Scenic roads*

- The Town has designated seven scenic roads under MGL Chapter 40, Sec. 15C. Requests for activity within the right of way that could damage trees must go through a public hearing before the Planning Board. The designated scenic roads, and year designated, are:
  - › Pond Road - 1974
  - › The Waterway/Brookway - 1978
  - › Squirrel Road - 1985
  - › Cartwright Road - 1989
  - › Cheney Drive - 1991
  - › Benvenue Street - 1991
  - › Brookside Road - 2011

#### *Cultural Resources*

- Wellesley has a number of art and performance groups including:
  - › Wellesley Symphony Orchestra
  - › Wellesley Chamber Players
  - › Wellesley Choral Society
  - › Wellesley Players
  - › Wellesley Society of Artists
  - › Wellesley Repertory Theater
  - › Wellesley Theatre Project (pre-K to 12th grade)
  - › Wellesley Community Art Project (community artists showcased in retail properties)
  - › World of Wellesley
- Wellesley College, Babson College, MassBay Community College, and Dana Hall School all have arts and cultural events open to the public.
- The Warren Building/Recreation Department includes an art studio.
- There is limited performance or art space in Wellesley outside of the colleges. The Wellesley Symphony Orchestra has been the orchestra in residence at MassBay Community College since 1984 and the Wellesley Repertory Theater is in residence at Wellesley College. Most performing arts groups must find performance space outside Wellesley. There is

no community arts center in Wellesley similar to the Umbrella Community Arts Center in Concord, the Munroe Center for the Arts in Lexington, or the Arlington Center for the Arts.

## CHALLENGE

- Expanding public awareness of the range of historic resources and properties in Wellesley
- Promoting the economic benefits of historic preservation
- Providing examples of modern renovations compatible with the historic origins of buildings
- Lack of private nonprofit or public-private arts coordinating arts organization

## D. What The Community Said

### *Themes in public meetings and surveys:*

- Widespread concern about teardowns of older buildings
- Need for performing and visual arts spaces, in Wellesley or in conjunction with neighboring towns

### *Workshop*

Participants were asked to identify the next steps for historic preservation:

- Look into roles of Historic Districts and historical comm. to see if there is a benefit in combining—are there overlaps?
- Town establish design guidelines for historic renovations
- Count trees in preservation efforts
- Preserve and renovate town hall—do a better job utilizing beautiful design elements of building
- Historic landscapes—Lake Waban, Mass Bay, land around town hall
- Building awareness—strategies that don't take away from natural surroundings. Build curiosity and the desire to research and learn. Watch the signage and don't pollute. Possibly more historic districts.
- Increased use of NCDs
- More single building historic districts
- Support Form B submissions
- Address the commercial area for 1) preservation 2)

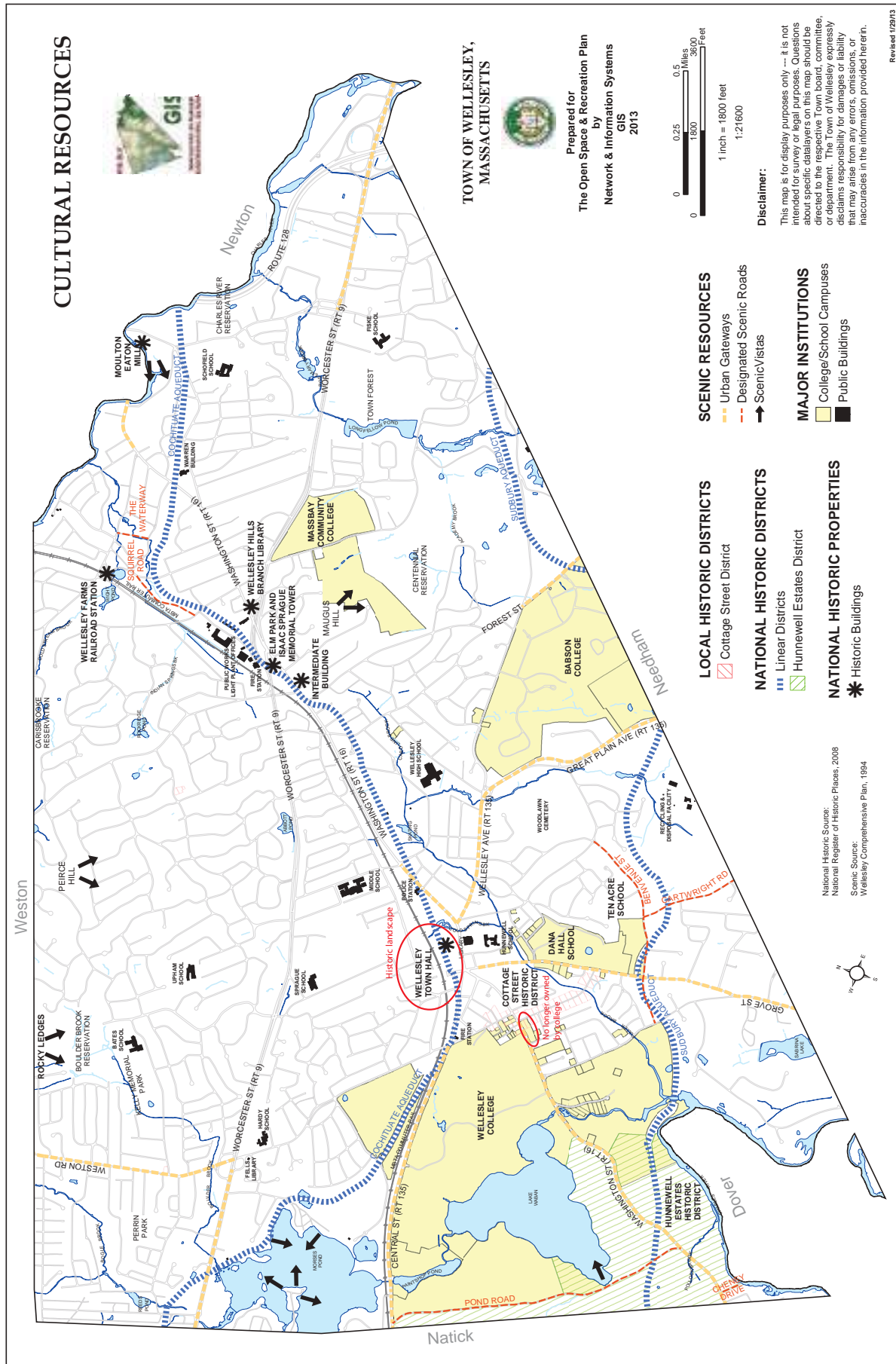


creative affordable and reasonable mix uses

- Preserve as much as possible of Hardy and Hunnewell facades

Participants were also asked whether Wellesley should have an arts and culture organization with performing and visual arts space, and if so, should the town support this goal and how would it do so?

- If an empty school building becomes available, consider it for performing arts center
- Can we co-develop an arts center with/at MassBay CC?
- Integrate into other building projects
- Yes, perhaps look at the community center
- Yes to having an arts center/can the community center be redeveloped to support visual, performing arts- including studio space.
- Collaboration between rec/library/community council on aging, etc. and health department



## E. Strategies and Actions To Achieve The Goals

understandable criteria and guidelines for historic district and demolition delay requirements.

### Goal 1: Wellesley preserves cultural resources, including cultural landscapes, to maintain and enrich community character.

#### Policy

- Support initiatives to inventory historic properties and establish clear and

### STRATEGIES

- A. Create a historic property inventory by documenting historic properties eligible for State and National Register listing and submit the forms.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Work with the Historical Society to identify historic properties for documentation.</i> The National Register of Historic Places Program has guidance publications for documentation and the Massachusetts Historical Commission has standard inventory forms for buildings, structures, objects, bridges, areas, parks and landscape features, burial grounds, streetscapes, and archaeological sites.	2018-2022	Historical Commission; Historical Society
<i>ii. Provide funding to the Society or to a historic resources consultant to prepare the forms.</i>	2018-2022	Town Meeting
<i>iii. Create priority categories or criteria for historic properties outside of local historic districts to be used in preservation efforts and demolition delay cases.</i> As the inventory of historical sites proceeds, the Historical Society and the Historical Commission can work together to develop Wellesley-specific categories and priorities for preservation.	2023-2028	Historical Commission
<i>iv. Create a historic property inventory database on the Town website.</i> This information should be available on the website, ideally as part of a Town data warehouse.	2023-2028	Historical Commission; IT

- B. Provide guidance to property owners and regulators on how to preserve historic character.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Identify categories of historic styles common in Wellesley.</i>	2018-2022	Historical Commission; Design Review Board
<i>ii. Develop design standards and criteria for use in determining Certificates of Appropriateness in local historic district properties.</i> These standards and criteria should be appropriate to Wellesley and more specific than the Secretary of the Interior's standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Town Meeting has allocated some funds for this purpose.	2018-2022	Historic District Commission; Planning Department
<i>iii. Use historic categories and criteria for the purposes of the demolition-review bylaw for determining whether a property is preferably preserved.</i> Adopt and make public a guidance document for decision making.	2018-2022	Historical Commission; Planning Department

### Historic Preservation Design Guidelines

Newton has developed publications that explain historic preservation priorities, options, and requirements.

[www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/histpres/design.asp](http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/histpres/design.asp)



- C. Develop a historic landscape plan for Wellesley.** The Town could obtain assistance at limited cost by working with graduate programs of groups and institutions such as the New England Landscape Design History Association, the Conway School of Landscape Design, the Landscape Institute at the Boston Architectural College, and others.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. Develop a scope for a historic landscape plan. The Historical Commission and the Natural Resources Commission can develop a basic scope for the plan and explore opportunities with graduate programs.	2023-2028	Historical Commission; NRC; Planning Department
ii. Integrate the plan's recommendations into maintenance programs for the town's historic landscapes when complete and adopted by both Commissions. The Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation (located in Charlestown) has a relevant publication, <i>Guide to Developing a Preservation Maintenance Plan for a Historic Landscape</i> , available online at <a href="https://www.nps.gov/oclp/Guide%20to%20Developing%20a%20Preservation%20Maintenance%20Plan%20for%20an%20Historic%20Landscape.pdf">https://www.nps.gov/oclp/Guide%20to%20Developing%20a%20Preservation%20Maintenance%20Plan%20for%20an%20Historic%20Landscape.pdf</a> .	2023-2028	Natural Resources Commission; DPW

**D. Expand public awareness of historic preservation through awards programs, illustrative materials to promote compatible renovation of historic properties, and developer and contractor education.**

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHO</b>
<i>i. Send notices once a year to property-owners in the local historic districts explaining when they need a Certificate of Appropriateness and how to get one and make this information available to realtors.</i>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Historic District Commission; Planning Department
<i>ii. Send notices once a year to owners of State and National Register listed properties, if not in local historic districts, to raise awareness about the historic value of their properties and encouraging voluntary consultation with the Historical Commission when making renovations. Make this information available to realtors.</i>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Historical Commission; Planning Department
<i>iii. Provide information sheets on historic styles common in Wellesley that show how to make historically-sensitive renovations. There are many sources of information available online from other municipalities that could be helpful models.</i>	2018-2022	Historical Commission; Planning Department
<i>iv. Create an award program for historic preservation. The Historical Commission can develop an award program to highlight excellent historic preservation and adaptive reuse projects.</i>	2023-2028	Historical Commission

**E. Improve the Neighborhood Conservation District process.**

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHO</b>
<i>i. Review and amend the NCD bylaw to better define the process while still requiring significant consensus. The process now requires 80% of owners to sign a petition to begin the process. To initiate the NCD study, a somewhat smaller percentage, such as 70% or 60%, might be suitable, while retaining the higher percentage for final adoption. This would provide the opportunity to persuade reluctant property owners during the study process.</i>	2023-2028	Historical Commission; Planning Board; Planning Department
<i>ii. Prepare an information sheet that succinctly explains the purpose and process for setting up an NCD.</i>	2023-2028	Planning Department

**F. Combine the Historical Commission and Historic District Commission.** One Town entity dedicated to historic preservation can provide more coherent leadership on these issues and give all commission members more experience in dealing with the regulatory aspects of historic preservation.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Combine the Historical Commission and the Historic District Commission.</i>	2023-2028	Town Meeting

**GOAL 2: TOWN GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO MAINTAIN THE CHARACTER OF ITS HISTORIC BUILDINGS, SUCH AS TOWN HALL.**

**Policy**

- Maintain historic character through historically-sensitive renovations and retrofits.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Identify key historic exterior and interior design features of Wellesley’s iconic Town buildings and incorporate them into renovations and retrofits.</i> Design of the restoration of the building envelope and renovation of the interior are underway in FY2018.	2018-2022	Permanent Building Committee; Facilities Management Department

**STRATEGIES**

- A. *Preserve Wellesley’s iconic town-owned buildings and structures, while providing functional interior workspaces and up-to-date energy-efficiency.*

**GOAL 3: WELLESLEY IS DEVELOPING A PERMANENT ARTS AND CULTURE CENTER.**

**Policy**

- Seek options to support performing and visual arts activities for Wellesley cultural organizations and artists.

**STRATEGIES**

- A. *Develop leadership and a constituency for an arts and culture center in Wellesley.*

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Strengthen the Wellesley Arts Alliance.</i> The Town could give limited assistance to the Alliance to organize into a nonprofit that can develop a business plan to create and manage a community arts center in Wellesley.	2018-2022	Town Meeting; Alliance volunteers
ii. <i>Investigate options such as use of the community center, integrating into other building projects or facilities not in current use.</i>	2023-2028	Alliance volunteers
iii. <i>Collaborate with the Recreation Department, Library, Health Department, Council on Aging, and the Public Schools.</i> Collaborating with relevant departments in Wellesley will help the Arts Alliance create a constituency for an arts center.	2023-2028	Alliance volunteers; Planning

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>iv. Develop a fund-raising and location campaign for an arts and culture center.</i> Suggested locations for an arts and culture center include any town building not being used, like the former school buildings and firehouse that house arts centers in Lexington, Concord, and Natick. The Cheever House, currently owned by Wellesley but scheduled for eventual sale, was also suggested as an option, should the Town acquire it in the future.</p>	2018-2022	Alliance volunteers; Library; Council on Aging; School Department

### Arts Centers in Similar Communities

#### LEXINGTON

The Munroe Center for the Arts in Lexington is run by Lexington Friends of the Arts, a nonprofit organization, as a community arts center with six visual and performing arts schools for all ages, 11 low-cost artist studios, a gallery, and arts events. The Town owns the building, the organization pays rent to the Town and maintains the building, and the schools and studio artists pay rent.

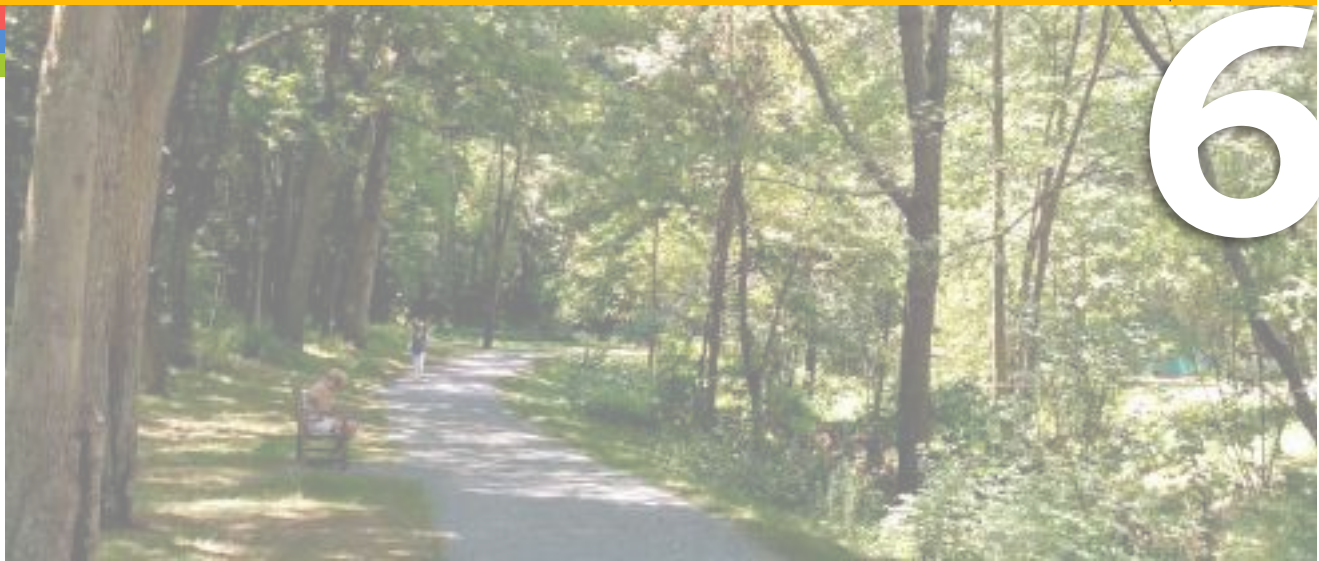


#### CONCORD

The Umbrella Community Arts Center is managed by a nonprofit organization that leases the building [a former school] from the Town. It includes 50 artists' studios, four teaching studios for classes and workshops, a gallery, and a 435-seat theater. The nonprofit is responsible for programming, operating, building maintenance, and capital improvement costs.

#### NATICK

The Center for Arts in Natick (TCAN), a nonprofit organization, owns the historic firehouse in downtown Natick that includes a 290-seat theatre, art gallery and community center with space to accommodate art exhibits and administrative offices. TCAN serves the entire MetroWest region and has a strong fundraising program.



# *Parks, Trails and Recreation*

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**R**ecreational use of parks, including passive recreation and nature trails, and active recreation and programs are the subject of this chapter. The Natural Resources Commission acts as the Park Commission in Wellesley to oversee the management of certain recreation sites and trails (through the Trails Committee appointed by the NRC). The Recreation Commission focuses on providing recreation programs for Wellesley residents, including summer camps, operating Morses Pond Beach, providing after-school programming, and collaborating with the Youth Commission and the Council on Aging to partner on programs for teens and seniors. The Playing Fields Task Force is an advisory committee made up of representatives of five Town boards (including the NRC and the Recreation Commission) and six sports leagues.

Finding the proper balance among natural resources and conservation open space, passive recreation, and active recreation is one of Wellesley's major challenges, as it is for many communities in Eastern Massachusetts. Recreation use and preferences vary with the life cycle and providing opportunities for active lifestyles is also a health goal. Families with young children need playgrounds, many school-age children and youth are involved in organized sports, and although many adults are also interested in active sports, priorities tend to shift with age to opportunities for individual fitness, such as

biking, running, and walking. In Wellesley, a majority of residents, as indicated in the Open Space and Recreation Plan survey, is interested in having more of both active and passive recreation resources. At the same time, there is very strong support for nature-based recreation and the conservation of natural open space.

The Town has been pursuing ways to improve existing active recreation resources and use them more efficiently. The number of athletic fields is limited, and lighting for nighttime use can be controversial. In 2016, renovation of the Hunnewell Track and Field was completed. The field size was expanded to accommodate sports like soccer, lacrosse, and field hockey, and the grass field was converted to artificial turf to allow for year-round use. Plans for on-site bathrooms and team rooms are in progress. Plans are also being developed to improve the girls' softball fields at the Hunnewell and Lee fields. The new recreation facility at 900 Worcester Street will add an aquatic facility, ice rink, indoor soccer field, and a fitness facility. As noted in Chapter 4, the expansion of town-owned open space is difficult because Wellesley real estate is very expensive and remaining large parcels of open space are controlled by institutional owners. Discussions about the "North 40" parcel acquired by the Town show that there are multiple potential uses of the land, including for passive and active recreation.

### ***Supporting town government concepts***

*The Unified Plan's emphasis on making town government more customer-centric, data-driven and strategic, and transparent is reflected in several of this chapter's strategies, including monitoring usage and demand at the 900 Worcester Street facility and regular surveys on recreation preferences, including needs of different demographic groups.*

## **A. Parks and Recreation in the Vision and Values**



### **VISION**

Wellesley is a town recognized for its ...exemplary town services...a quality of life that enhances the health and social well-being of its residents....

### **VALUES**

**Enhance the health and wellness of residents** through public health initiatives, educational, social and recreational opportunities; create the conditions for healthy lifestyles through easy access to healthful food, medical and psychological care, support systems, non-motorized transportation options, and town facilities.

## B. Goals And Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<b><i>The Town provides recreational open space, facilities, and programs for family, youth and adult activities, both team and individual.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve a balance between active and passive recreation and natural resources.</li> <li>• Preserve a balance between individual activities and team or group activities.</li> </ul>
<b><i>The open space trail system is integrated with an overall pedestrian and bicycle network.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support creation of volunteer groups to assist in trail maintenance, development, and enhancement.</li> <li>• Coordinate trail management with development of a town-wide network of pedestrian and bicycle routes.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Town recreation facilities and programs meet the changing needs of the community.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey users and evaluate programs regularly to respond to demographic and other changes in community demand</li> </ul>
<b><i>The Town maintains a state-approved Open Space and Recreation Plan.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide resources to update the OSRP to retain eligibility for grants.</li> </ul>

## C. Findings And Challenges

### FINDINGS

#### Overview

- The Natural Resources Commission (NRC), created in 1978 has the statutory authority and responsibility of Park Commission, Conservation Commission, Tree Warden, Town Forest Committee, and Forestry and Pest Control Officer under Massachusetts law. The NRC appoints the Wetlands Protection Committee and the Trails Committee.
- The Recreation Commission’s mission is to provide recreational and educational opportunities to Wellesley residents. Commission members typically chair the Playing Field Task Force and also chaired the 900 Worcester Planning Committee that developed the program for the new indoor recreational facility to be managed by a private contractor
- The Wellesley Open Space and Recreation Plan, completed in 2015, contains information on the recreational use of Town parks. The plan was approved by the State, making Wellesley eligible for applicable state grant programs.
- During the OSRP planning process, the NRC conducted an on-line survey, with the link widely distributed to residents by multiple means, that received more than 600 responses.

#### OSRP 2015 SUMMARY RESULTS

- 91% feel it's important to acquire and preserve open space for active and passive recreation.
- 94% percent are concerned about water pollution from pesticides and stormwater runoff.
- 87% think it's important to acquire and preserve open space for natural resource protection.
- 82% are concerned about Wellesley trees.
- 89% feel areas specific to passive recreation are important.
- 67% feel areas specific to active sports are important.
- 76% would like our trail system to be expanded and improved.
- 71% would like to acquire more land for conservation purposes.
- 66% would like to acquire more land for recreational facilities.
- 80% would like better places to run and bike.
- OSRP goals related to recreation include:
  - › Provide recreational facilities that meet the needs of the town’s residents.
  - › Continue to provide recreational facilities that meet the needs of the Town’s residents.
  - › Enhance accessibility to both playgrounds and trails for young, old and handicapped users.
  - › Connect parks, playing fields and other public and publicly-accessible lands with walkways and bike-ways to create a network of parks and open space within Wellesley and neighboring towns.

- › Provide more indoor and outdoor multi-purpose park and recreational lands and facilities.

- The Committee identified nine future trail projects and ranked them according to their criteria:

### Nature Recreation: Woodland Trails

- The Trails Committee in December 2016 issued a Trails Development and Improvement Plan for 2017-2022. It ranked trail projects using the following criteria (the rankings appear below):
  - › Benefits to trails network: *high, medium, low*
  - › Trail access issues: *difficult, moderate, easy, none*
  - › Town capital cost: *high* (greater than \$10,000), *moderate* (between \$1,000 and \$10,000), *low* (less than \$1,000), *none*
  - › Town ongoing expense: *high* (greater than \$1,000/year), *moderate* (between \$100 and \$1,000/year), *low* (less than \$100/year), *none*.
- Ongoing projects as of late 2017 are Brook Path improvements at the High School, Road Crossing Safety, Riverside Rail Trail, and Crosstown Trail crossing at Route 9.

	BENEFITS TO TRAILS NETWORK	ACCESS ISSUES	CAPITAL COSTS	ONGOING EXPENSE
1. Brook Path improvements at high school	High	Moderate	High	Low
2. Paintshop Pond Trail	High	Difficult	Low-Moderate	None
3. Sudbury Path connection to Natick	High	Difficult	Moderate	Low
4. North 40 trails	High	Difficult	Unknown	Unknown
5. Road crossings safety	High	None	Low-Moderate	Low
6. Riverside Rail Trail	High	Difficult	None	None
7. Charles River Path Extension to Crosstown Trail	Medium	Easy	None	None
8. Crosstown Trail relocation in Hills	Medium	None	None	None
9. Morses Pond Trail Relocation	Medium	Easy	None	None
10. Charles River footbridge to Elm Bank	High	Difficult	None <sup>1</sup>	None <sup>2</sup>
11. Crosstown Trail crossing at Route 9	High	Difficult	None <sup>3</sup>	None <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Access issues include permission from land owners, safety concerns, terrain conditions, parking availability, and trail route compromises [see Appendix A for details].

<sup>2</sup> Ongoing DCR project and funded by the State.

<sup>3</sup> Assumed to be a DCR project and funded by the State, various grants, and private donations.

<sup>4</sup> Assumed to be a MassDOT project and funded by the State.

### TRAILS COMMITTEE PRIORITIES (2016)

Several of these trail projects are intended to bridge gaps between existing trail segments. The list shows priority based on the Committee's criteria:

1. Brook Path Improvement at High School: Provide a continuous, well-defined path from State Street to the trail off Paine Street that maximizes off-road travel and addresses current access problems at State Street parking lot.
2. Paintshop Pond Trail: Create a new woodland trail at Wellesley college; the trail would follow existing trails between Pond Road, Paintshop Pond, and Lake Waban.
3. Sudbury Path connection to Natick: Extend the Sudbury Path from the Cheever House along Washington St. to the Natick town line.
4. North 40 Trails: Preserve the Crosstown Trail along the Cochituate Aqueduct as an open space corridor, maximize open space retained for passive recreational use, and retain/establish trails connecting the neighborhood to the Crosstown Trail.
5. Road crossings safety: Work with the Traffic Committee to identify safety concerns and priorities for crosswalks where trails cross roads.
6. Riverside Rail Trail: Advocate for the completion of the rail trail connecting the new DCR bridge over the Charles River in Lower Falls to the Riverside MBTA station in Newton.
7. Charles River Path extension to Crosstown Trail: Instead of ending the Charles River Path at the Weston town line, extend the trail through Indian Springs Park to the Crosstown Trail. Completed in 2017.
8. Crosstown Trail relocation in Hills: Reroute the trail to avoid walking through congested areas along Washington St from Cliff Rd to Woodlawn Ave. Completed in 2017.
9. Morses Pond Trail relocation: Instead of following the paved path along the beach access road, reroute the trail through the woods to the parking lot. Completed in 2017.
10. Charles River Footbridge to Elm Bank: Construct a footbridge across the Charles River that will connect the Waban Arches to Elm Bank. The bridge is inspired by the Blue Heron Bridge built by DCR across the Charles connecting Newton to Watertown.
11. Crosstown Trail crossing at Route 9: Currently the trail crosses Route 9 at the Overbrook Dr traffic light. With the recent Town acquisition of Cochituate Aqueduct land north of Route
12. Investigate options for a safe trail crossing where the aqueduct crosses the highway.

## ***Recreation Department***

- The Recreation Department is headquartered in the Warren Building, which includes a gym, dance studio, multipurpose classroom, teaching kitchen, and art studio.
- The Recreation Department’s mission is to provide recreational and educational opportunities to enhance the quality of life for all Wellesley residents in the most cost effective manner: “something for everyone.”
- Programs are fee-based and the fees cover all expenses except staff salaries.
- Funds not used for expenses and operations are returned to the General Fund. The department typically contributes as much as \$100,000 back to the town budget every year. The department currently cannot use money it collects from fees for recreation-related capital improvements.
- The Recreation Commission also sponsors special events such as summer concerts and movies, Halloween Parade, and others. Some of these events are supported by private funds.
- In 2016, the Department offered 559 recreational programs serving 6,648 participants.
- The Recreation Department provides After School programs at elementary schools, works with the Senior Center to maximize programs at the new Senior Center, and partners with the Youth Commission to develop Teen Center Programming.
- The Recreation Department operates recreation facilities at Morses Pond, most recently serving 28,387 visitors in 2016. The number of resident tags increased from 2,987 in 2015 to 4,283 in 2016.

## ***Athletic Fields***

- Like many communities, Wellesley experiences high demand for athletic fields from school teams, youth leagues, adult leagues, and other users. The growth of team sports, with accompanying demand for practice and game space, is a challenge to many towns in our region, including those with more available land. At the same time, many argue that organized sports serve specialized groups more than the community as a whole.



- There are 25 fields available for recreational purposes in Wellesley.
- Improvements to Wellesley High School Track and Field were complete in 2016: increased field size to accommodate more sports: soccer, lacrosse and field hockey as well as football; installation of synthetic turf field to make daily, multi-season play possible. On-site bathroom facilities and a field house are planned for 2018.
- A new multipurpose athletic field requires a minimum of 1 to 2 acres of land.
- The Playing Fields Task Force is an Advisory Committee of the Board of Selectmen, Recreation Commission, Board of Public Works, Natural Resources Commission, and School Committee to manage use of playing fields. It consists of representatives from the major user groups (Public Schools, Little League/Softball, Youth Soccer, Youth Lacrosse, Youth Football, Adult Leagues, and the boards listed above).
- Field use fees are collected by the Recreation Department and are then segregated into accounts for use by DPW for field maintenance. Field fees may be expended by Board of Public Works after consultation with the Recreation Commission and NRC.
- A 2016 review of the athletics programs at Wellesley Middle and High Schools found that Wellesley has very high participation rates, teams that excel, and good coaching. Concerns focused on communication, transparency, need for good facilities for all teams, and equal distribution of resources between girls’ and boys’ teams.

### ***Wellesley Sports Center at 900 Worcester Street***

- The Town has entered into a land lease with a private owner-operator of the facility who will build, operate, and manage it. The facility is expected to open in fall 2018 and include the following:
  - › NHL size hockey rinks
  - › Swimming pool
  - › Teaching/therapy pool
  - › Indoor turf field suitable for high school soccer
  - › Fitness area with physical therapy and strength conditioning areas

### ***Private recreational groups***

- The Wellesley Teen Center serves 5th to 8th grade youth with Saturday dances. It is run by parents and funded by fees.
- Community Investors is a nonprofit focusing on providing community sports-based youth development
- Wellesley's Wonderful Weekend is a town festival run by a private committee of residents and assisted by town departments.

### ***ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) access***

- The OSRP identified the need to expand ADA accessibility in the town open space and recreation network.
- As improvements are made to town recreational facilities of all types, they are upgraded to meet Americans with Disabilities Act requirements and modern safety standards. The Fuller Brook Park project includes construction of accessible pathways and parking.
- The law does not require that all municipal sites be made accessible to people with disabilities but that there be accessible sites for services within

the community. The New England ADA Center at the Institute for Human-Centered Design ([www.newenglandada.org](http://www.newenglandada.org)) provides information, training and assistance on ADA and other accessibility issues, including checklists (<http://adachecklist.org/checklist.html#rec>)

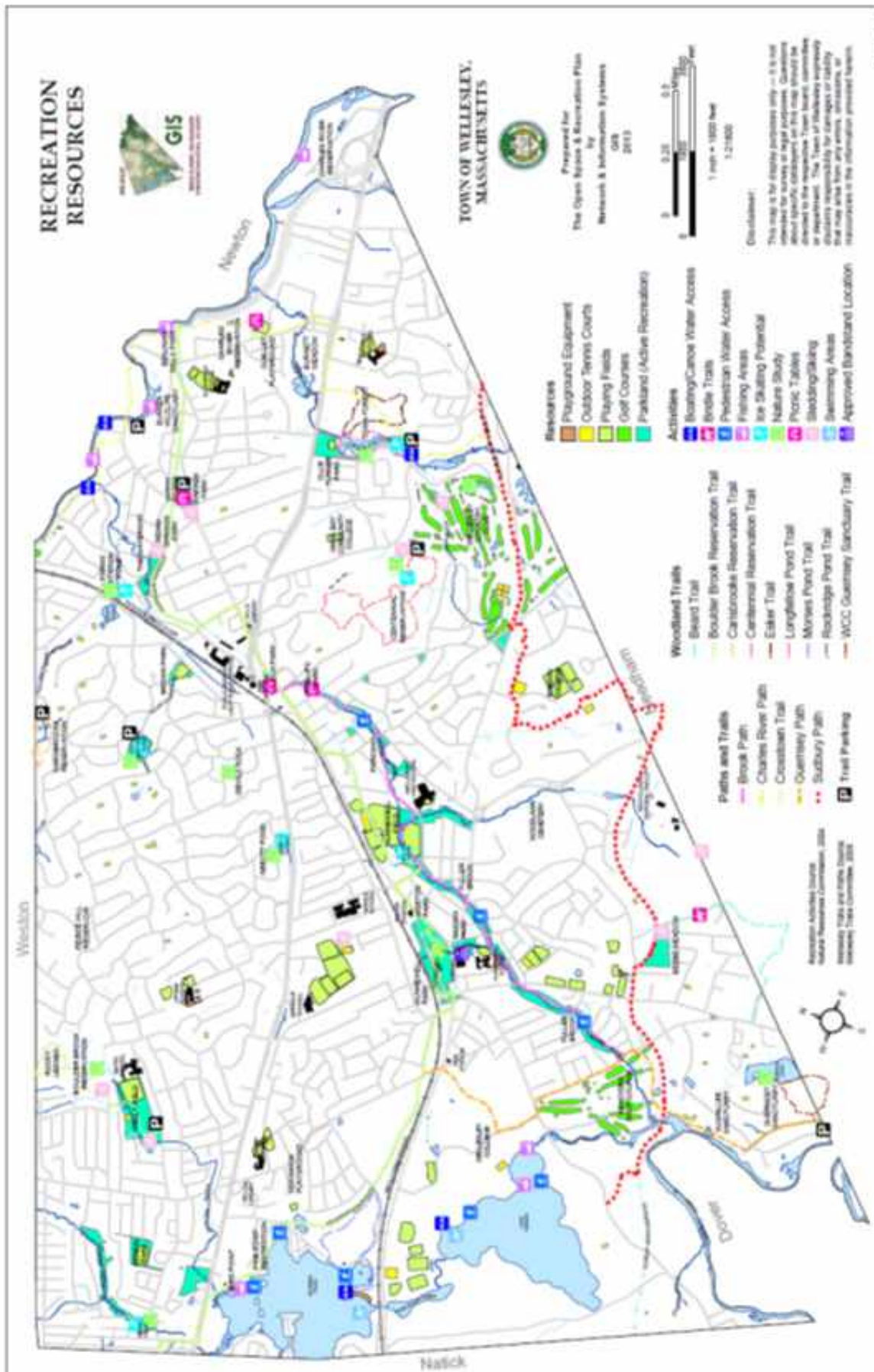
### ***Playgrounds and park improvements***

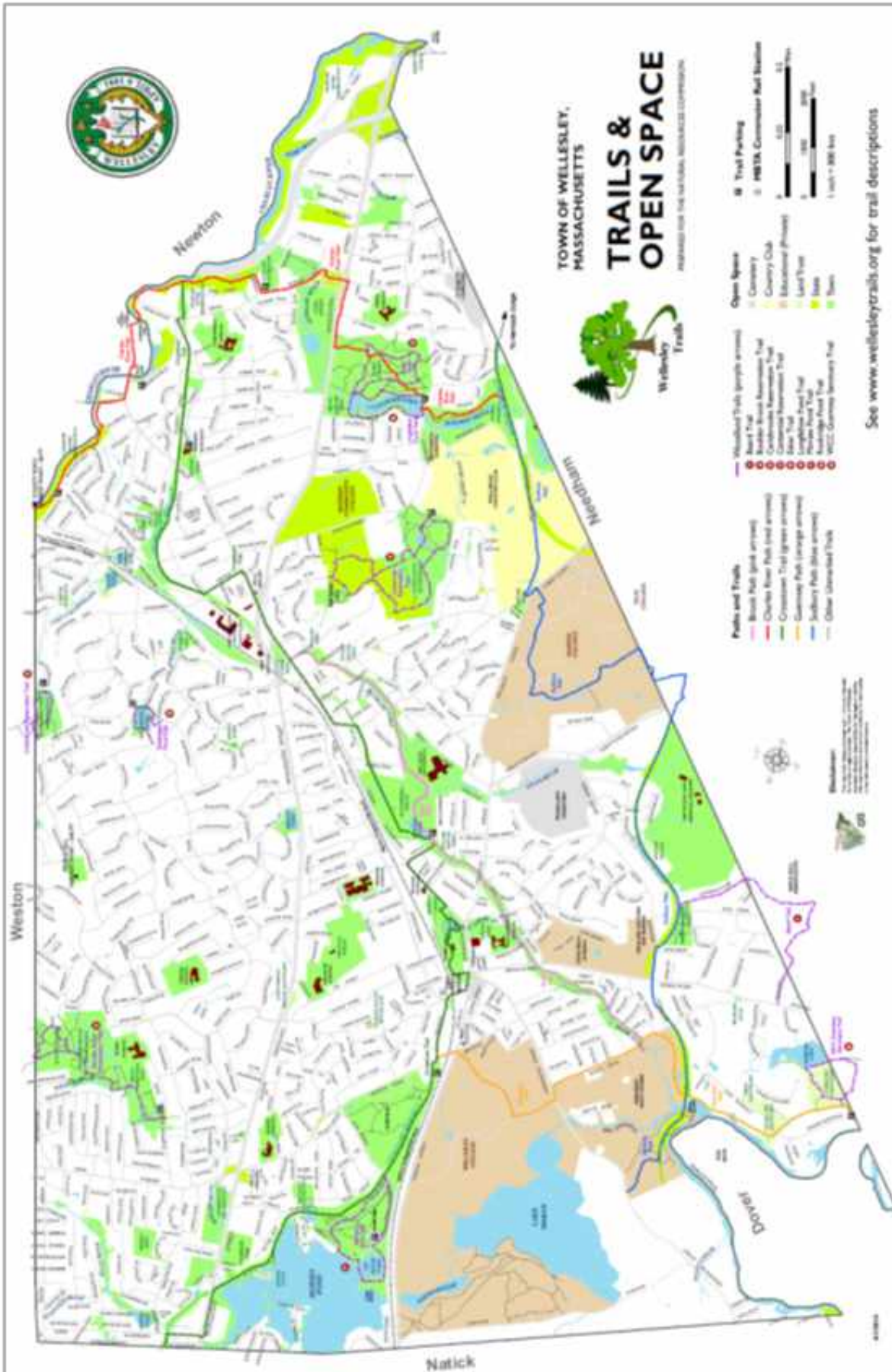
- The NRC and DPW implemented a Park and Playground Master Plan, including new playgrounds at Ouellet Park, Warren Park, Phillips Park, and Hunnewell Field Tot Lot. In addition, amenities such as trash cans, benches, picnic tables, and trees and shrubs were installed in recent years at Longfellow Pond, Rockridge Pond, Reeds Pond, Town Hall Duck Pond, and Morses Pond.

### ***Park and recreation standards***

- The OSRP uses standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association for types of parks and recreational facilities. The NRPA standards are typically expressed in terms of the facilities per 1,000 persons. They were originally developed in the second half of the twentieth century as new suburbs were being created from farm and forest lands. Since the beginning of the 21st century, an alternative metric based on access is increasingly used for more densely build-up communities. The access metric is whether a park is within a five- or ten-minute walk (one-quarter to one-half mile). Research has shown that people use parks more if they can walk to them, regardless of size.
- The OSRP includes a statement that the NRC and Recreation Commission should assess park and recreation needs based on “population projects in and current demands,” but does not indicate what criteria should be used to make decisions if and when there are conflicts about use.







## CHALLENGES

- The Open Space and Recreation Plan identified these natural resource challenges:
  - › The increased use of Wellesley’s active recreation space exerts significant pressure on the Town to convert some of its passive recreation space to active space.
  - › Wellesley’s built-out condition and high property values preclude the acquisition of significant amounts of open space.
  - › Significant open space areas are either held by institutions or are in tax abatement programs that provide limited protection against development.
- Balancing the need and value of open space with other town initiatives and priorities.
- Balancing passive and active use of open space
- Balancing private property rights with regulation.
- Providing sufficient outdoor and indoor recreation facilities for current and future use.
- Improving safety at trail street crossings and along streets without sidewalks.
- Providing recreational and social activities for teenagers in ways that will attract them to participate
- Improving Morse’s Pond facilities, bathhouse and programming
- Systematically surveying recreation program users, evaluating programs, and responding to user demand

## D. What The Community Said

Themes in public meetings and surveys:

- Very high level of public appreciation of open space in general
- Preserve/enhance trails, parks, conservation land, waterways, community gardens
- Preserve green space; protect the environment and natural resources
- Desire for more choice in after-school programs
- Difficulty balancing demand for athletic fields with desire for open space.

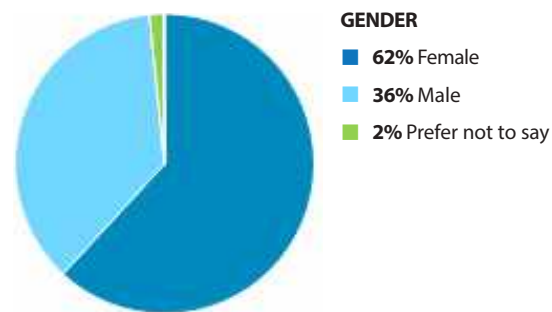
## OSRP 2015 SUMMARY RESULTS WITH RECREATION-RELATED ITEMS HIGHLIGHTED

- **91% feel it’s important to acquire and preserve open space for active and passive recreation.**
- 94% percent are concerned about water pollution from pesticides and stormwater runoff.
- 87% think it’s important to acquire and preserve open space for natural resource protection.
- 82% are concerned about Wellesley trees.
- **89% feel areas specific to passive recreation are important.**
- **67% feel areas specific to active sports are important.**
- **76% would like our trail system to be expanded and improved.**
- 71% would like to acquire more land for conservation purposes.
- **66% would like to acquire more land for recreational facilities.**
- **80% would like better places to run and bike.**

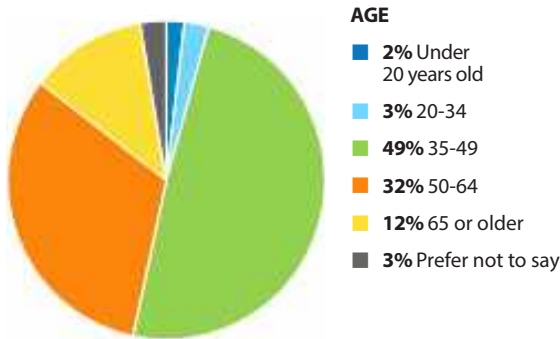
### Recreation survey

Because other Unified Plan surveys offered reduced opportunities to comment on recreation issues, a separate recreation-oriented survey was made available in July 2017 at the request of a Steering Committee member. Nine hundred ninety-three responses were received. Questions focused particularly on Morses Pond, natural parks and trails, playgrounds, and active recreation facilities (especially athletic fields and courts). Because nighttime lighting and noise had emerged as an issue in workshops and meetings, the survey included several questions on this issue.

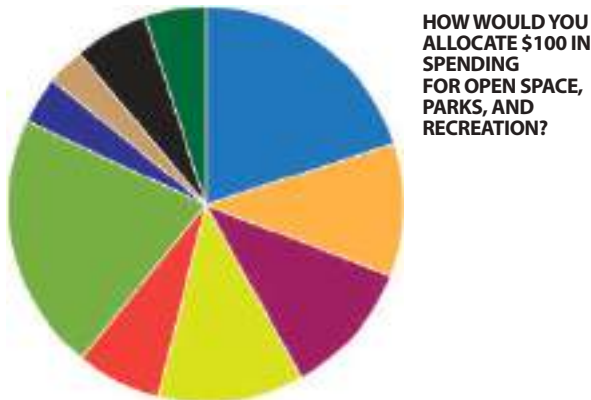
### SURVEY RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



## SURVEY RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS (CONT.)



In the recreation-oriented survey, respondents were asked the same question about allocation of funding as participants in the workshop described in Chapter 4, where most participants focused on natural resources issues. Perhaps not surprisingly, in the recreation-oriented survey there was a greater emphasis on providing new or upgraded recreation facilities.



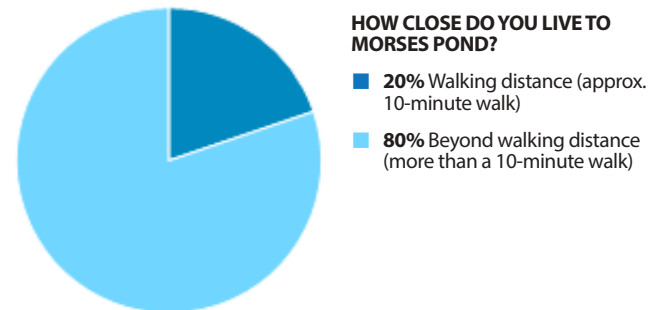
- 20% Focus on the open space and parks that we already have. Maintain, improve, reduce encroachment.
- 11% Expand existing parks and open space with adjacent land, when available.
- 11% New parks: acquire land or conservation easements for new parks or natural open space.
- 12% Focus on existing trails: maintain, improve, reduce encroachment.
- 7% Expand the trail network with new trails.
- 21% New athletic fields or facilities for **youth team** sports
- 4% New athletic fields or facilities for **adult team** sports
- 3% New facilities for **adult individual** sports (e.g., tennis)
- 6% Improve pond swimming facilities
- 5% Other

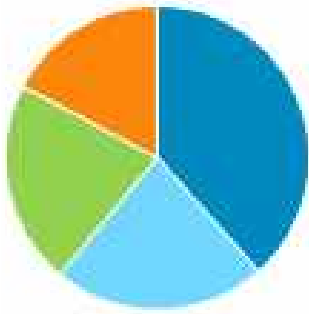
## Comparison: How Workshop Participants And Recreation Survey Respondents Allocated Funds For Recreation

OPTION	WORK-SHOP	SURVEY
Focus on what we already have... maintain, improve, reduce encroachment	16%	20%
Expand existing parks and open space with adjacent land when available	20%	11%
New parks; acquire land or conservation easements for new parks or natural open space	22%	11%
Focus on existing trails: maintain, improve, reduce encroachment	9%	12%
Expand the trail network with new trails	3%	7%
New athletic fields or facilities for youth team sports	3%	21%
New athletic fields or facilities for adult team sports	1%	4%
New facilities for individual adult sports (e.g., tennis)	1%	3%
Improve pond facilities	5%	6%
Parks for walking, individual exercise, enjoying nature (passive parks)	9%	N/A
Other	11%	5%

## QUESTIONS ABOUT MORSES POND

While 38% of respondents never go to Morses Pond in the summer, 39% go at least once a month. Visitation is less frequent in the off-season, with 56% never visiting the pond. Less than half, 44%, were satisfied or very satisfied with their Morses Pond experience, with nearly the same percentage (43%) describing themselves as neutral.





**HOW OFTEN DO MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD VISIT MORSES POND DURING THE SUMMER?**

- 38% Never
- 23% Less than once a month
- 23% At least once a month
- 17% At least once a week



**HOW OFTEN DO MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD VISIT MORSES POND OFF-SEASON?**

- 56% Never
- 25% Less than once a month
- 12% At least once a month
- 6% At least once a week



**HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE QUALITY OF YOUR EXPERIENCES AT MORSES POND?**

- 12% Very satisfied
- 32% Satisfied
- 43% Neutral
- 10% Dissatisfied
- 3% Very dissatisfied

### CONCERNS ABOUT MORSES POND

Respondents were asked if they had any concerns about Morse's Pond. Some acknowledged recent improvements: "Great to see the investments made to upgrade the pond experience this season!" "New sand looks great and layout is improved. Could use additional upgrades to facilities." In some cases, it appeared that comments were not based on recent visits to use the pond. The most frequently-mentioned topics of concern were:

- **Weeds and vegetation, both in the pond and the upland.** Respondents mentioned milfoil and other water vegetation, weeds, poison ivy, and invasive plants as not being kept under control.
- **Water quality.** There were many comments that the water is "murky," and concerns that it is polluted, both by runoff from adjacent properties and by bacteria.
- **Cleanliness and maintenance.** Some respondents said that the sand and facilities were not well maintained or kept sufficiently clean.

- **Crowds and non-residents users.** Especially on weekends, some respondents said the pond was too crowded and that there were many non-Wellesley groups reserving the shaded areas.
- **Boating access.** There was a desire by some for more and better access for canoeing, kayaking, paddle boats, small sailboats, and emphasis on the upkeep of the docks and floats. When the gate is closed, the distance to carry canoes or kayaks is too great.
- **Amenities.** In addition to better restrooms and changing facilities, a number of people requested some kind of snack bar. One person suggested that a food truck could serve that role.
- **Length of season.** While there were comments based on conditions in previous years, some respondents would like the beach to have a longer season and stay open through Labor Day.

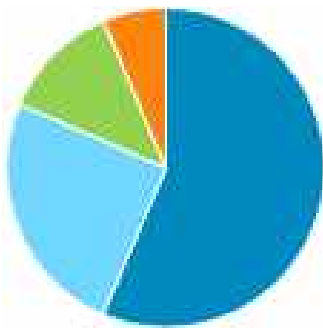
### QUESTIONS ABOUT WOODLANDS, PARKS, AND TRAILS

Wellesley residents in surveys and workshops expressed strong interest and commitment to open space preservation, and 54% of survey respondents said that they visit Wellesley's woodlands, parks and walking trails at least once a week. Certain trails or walking paths are very well known, such as Fuller Brook Path, while others appear to be less well known. Eighty-six percent of respondents described their experience as Satisfactory or Very Satisfactory.



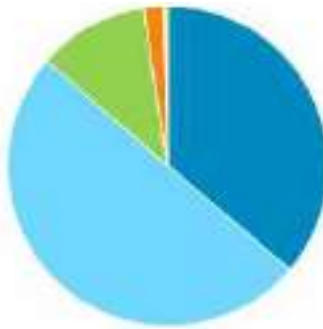
**HOW CLOSE DO YOU LIVE TO WELLESLEY'S WOODLANDS/PARKS/WALKING TRAILS?**

- 86% Walking distance (approx. 10-minute walk)
- 14% Beyond walking distance (more than a 10-minute walk)



**HOW OFTEN DO MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD VISIT WELLESLEY'S WOODLANDS/ PARKS/ WALKING TRAILS?**

- 54% At least once a week
- 25% At least once a month
- 15% Less than once a month
- 6% Never



**HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE QUALITY OF YOUR EXPERIENCE AT WELLESLEY'S WOODLANDS/ PARKS/ WALKING TRAILS?**

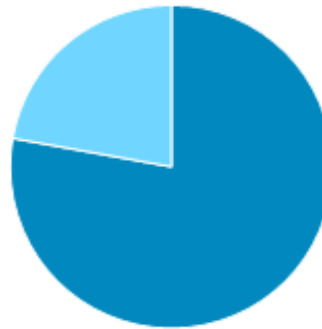
- 36% Very satisfied
- 50% Satisfied
- 11% Neutral
- 2% Dissatisfied
- 0% Very dissatisfied

### CONCERNS ABOUT WOODLANDS, PARKS AND TRAILS

- **Positive comments:** Those who use the trails are often very positive. “These trails are outstanding resources....Hiking in the winter is enjoyable if the trails are passable...The walking trails are a wonderful part of Wellesley. The work to upgrade the trails the last several years has been excellent.”
- **Connections and accessibility needed:** A repeated theme is to connect trails across the town. “Adding some smaller trails to tie together the town network would be great; Hard to make connections between many of the trails....I would like to expand them so that we can use them more as town bike paths for children so they are not forced to bike on dangerous streets. Connect them to the schools where possible!!.... expand so you can bike/run all the way thru Wellesley...Investment in these areas is paying off... maybe add some functional fitness elements to paths...Trails are fantastic....Would love some that are stroller/ wheelchair accessible.”
- **Litter, dog waste, invasives, poison ivy, habitat for ticks:** Concerns included litter, poison ivy, yard debris, and dog waste; overgrown trails providing too much tick habitat. Some comments that dog owners or professional dog walkers do not control their dogs.

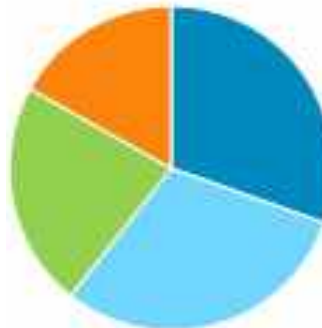
### QUESTIONS ABOUT PLAYGROUNDS

A majority of respondents (78%) live within walking distance of a playground and only 30% say they never visit the playgrounds. This may well reflect the age profile of respondents. Satisfaction with Wellesley playgrounds is relatively high: 73% satisfied or very satisfied and 24% neutral. Only 4% of respondents were dissatisfied.



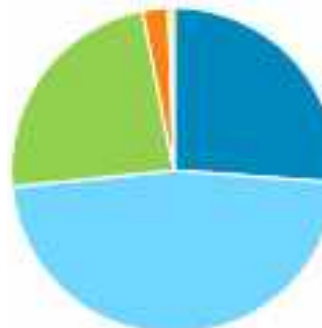
**HOW CLOSE DO YOU LIVE TO WELLESLEY'S PLAYGROUNDS?**

- 78% Walking distance (approx. 10-minute walk)
- 22% Beyond walking distance (more than a 10-minute walk)



**HOW OFTEN DO MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD VISIT WELLESLEY'S PLAYGROUNDS?**

- 30% Never
- 30% Less than once a month
- 22% At least once a month
- 17% At least once a week



**HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE QUALITY OF YOUR EXPERIENCE AT WELLESLEY'S PLAYGROUNDS?**

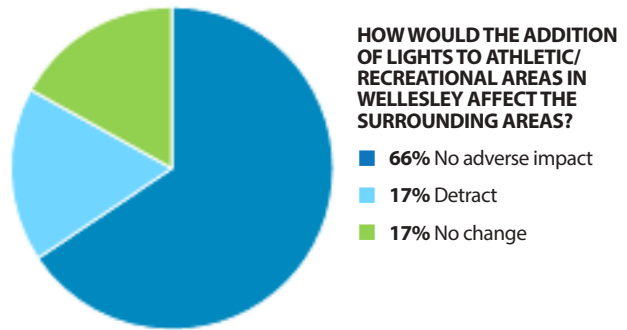
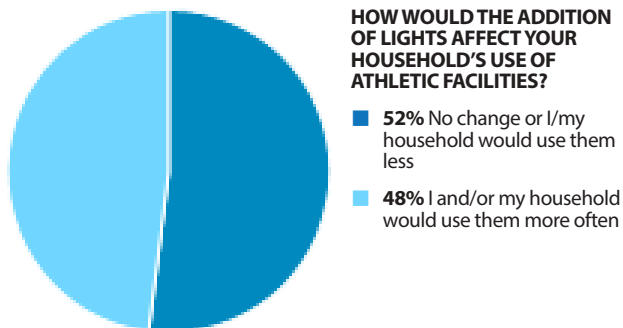
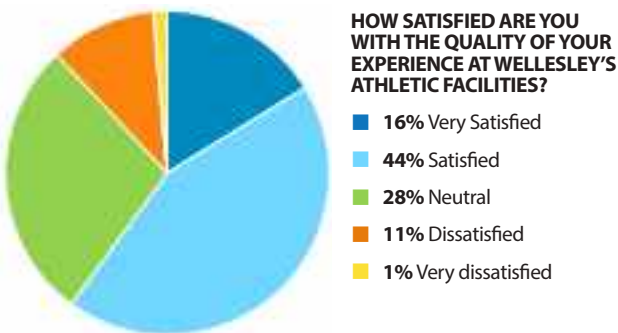
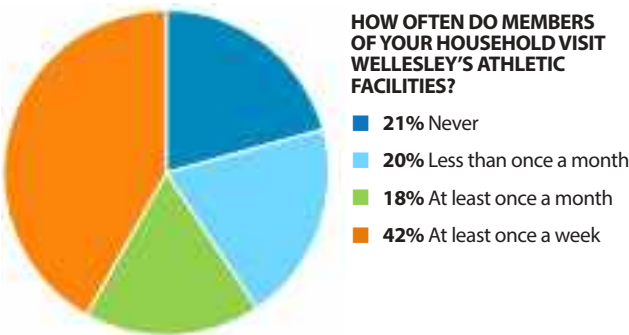
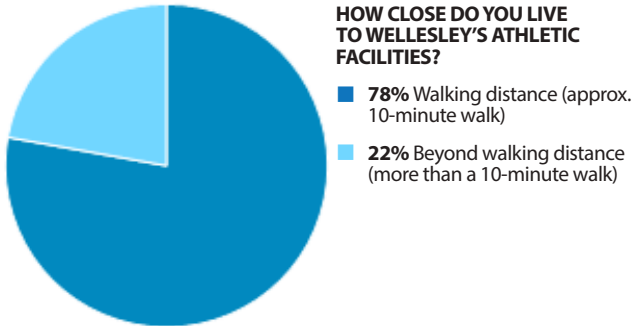
- 26% Very satisfied
- 47% Satisfied
- 24% Neutral
- 3% Dissatisfied
- 1% Very dissatisfied

### CONCERNS ABOUT PLAYGROUNDS

- There was general satisfaction with playgrounds, but some respondents find the design and equipment “boring” and would like to see more innovative options, such as splash parks for water play. “Not enough creative and innovative structures—all of them are the same and there are so many awesome new models around other cities “

- Concerns include trash and litter, lack of bathrooms, more handicap/stroller accessibility, insufficient shade, lack of water fountains at some playgrounds.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT ATHLETIC FACILITIES



### CONCERNS ABOUT ATHLETIC FIELDS AND ACTIVE RECREATION AREAS

- Positive:** Some positive comments—“Playing fields are very good overall.”
- Tennis courts:** Some in bad condition; concerns that nonresidents can reserve courts for long periods.
- Indoor sports space:** “The town desperately needs a new full sized basketball court/multi-use gymnasium for the youth and high school (and adult) use.” “How about open court basketball at a different school / court Monday–Friday?”
- More active recreation opportunities for adults:** “There is strong evidence that regular exercise leads to better outcomes in terms of health and happiness. I would like to see Wellesley improve its facilities (and access to facilities) for adult exercise and sports... seems that kids get priority almost to the exclusion of adults; bummer: we still like to play, too!”
- Review after 900 Worcester Street facility is open:** “Let’s see how town residents take to the athletic complex on Route 9 before we start talking about additional new athletic/playing fields.”
- Insufficient field space for town athletic programs:** Providing field space to external/club organizations is a concern; need lighted High School field complex; many sports vying for practice and game time; insufficient attention to girls sports.
- Too much focus on field sports:** “I do not support giving up natural open space to create more playing fields. It results in loss of habitat and narrows the utility of the land to those involved in specific sports.” “Stop the madness with emphasis on field sports!”

## Workshop

A public workshop held in May 2107 (described in more detail in Chapter 4) focused on natural resources, conservation, parks, and recreation. It was attended by participants focused primarily on natural resources and open space conservation. Participants, organized into six table groups, ranked their top three priorities. They included several priorities with a recreational orientation.

- Focus on existing assets—trails, open space, parks
- Improve pond facilities
- Athletic facilities
- Trails maintained and expansion
- Resolve tension between recreation drive for revenue with NRC preservation of green spaces and passive recreation space

## E. Strategies And Actions To Achieve The Goals

### GOAL 1: THE TOWN PROVIDES RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE, FACILITIES, AND PROGRAMS FOR FAMILY, YOUTH AND ADULT ACTIVITIES, BOTH TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL.

#### Policies

- Preserve a balance between active and passive recreation.
- Preserve a balance between individual activities and team or group activities.

#### STRATEGIES

##### A. Maintain and improve active recreation areas, including athletic fields and programs.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Continue to improve Morses Pond swimming and boating areas, activities, and operations while continuing to manage it in an environmentally sound way.</i>	2018-2022	NRC; Recreation Commission; DPW
<i>ii. Upgrade the Morses Pond bathhouse and provide better amenities, such as a snack bar or food truck.</i>	2018-2022	Recreation Commission
<i>iii. Consider allowing the Recreation Commission to use a portion of fees collected for capital improvements and amenities. These projects should be identified in the commission's strategic plan [see Chapter 14 on town government strategies].</i>	2018-2022	Recreation Commission; Town Meeting
<i>iv. Create a report with data and analysis on the demand for and use of athletic fields and sports facilities such as tennis courts, both Town-owned and owned by other organizations. An analysis that includes the characteristics of the organizations [school, adult, predominantly non-Wellesley residents, etc.], requests for use granted and denied, and so on, can provide a foundation for making decisions on priorities.</i>	2018-2022	Playing Fields Task Force; Recreation Commission
<i>v. Consider options for an indoor gymnasium suitable for community use as well as school use in upcoming school construction planning and design, without negatively affecting school operations and safety.</i>	2018-2022	School Committee; Board of Selectmen; Permanent Building Committee;
<i>vi. Commission a survey of a representative sample of Wellesley adults to aid in decision making about the balance of active and passive open space and the potential uses of the North 40. A scientific survey with a sample designed to reflect the composition of the Wellesley population may help in decision making.</i>	2022-2028	NRC; Recreation Commission

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
vii. <i>Include innovative designs and activities when making playground improvements.</i> Consider splash/spray parks, inclusive playgrounds for children of all abilities, adventure playgrounds, theme play, and so on.	2022-2028	NRC; Recreation Commission; DPW

**GOAL 2: THE OPEN SPACE TRAIL SYSTEM IS INTEGRATED WITH AN OVERALL PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK.**

***Policies***

- Support volunteer trail creation and enhancement.
- Town trail management is coordinated for consistency.
- Establish a coordinating system for trail management and marking that deters encroachment and enhances safety

**STRATEGIES**

***A. Give priority to trail expansion that connects with town-wide networks.***

Responses to the recreation survey showed that residents are very interested in creating more trails and active transportation routes that create a network that connects across the town.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Focus on enhancing and expanding trail segments that link across the town.</i> The Trails Committee in its 2016-2020 plan identified several trail expansions with potential regional links to adjacent towns.	2018-2022	Trails Committee

***B. Coordinate trail development and maintenance requirements for consistency across management entities.***

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Within the Trails Committee, identify management inconsistencies and potential remedies that could support trail creation and maintenance.</i>	2022-2028	Trails Committee
ii. <i>Work with Town management entities to reduce inconsistencies</i>	2022-2028	Trails Committee and management entities.

**C. Expand and enhance the existing trails network within Wellesley and to adjacent towns, and establish management policies for trail monitoring, maintenance and development.**

The Trails Committee will continue to focus on nature trails and connecting them to trails in adjacent town. Residents who participated in the

Unified Plan planning process supported the idea of a town-wide network that can include trails on park and conservation property. The Trails Committee should be represented in efforts to develop a town-wide network of active transportation (pedestrian and bicycle). See Chapter 10 for a strategy to create safe links between existing pedestrian and bike segments.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. Document management policies for trails- monitoring, maintenance and development.	2018-2022	Trails Committee
ii. Consult with the Trails Committee about opportunities to link trails in parks and conservation areas with pedestrian and bike networks in surrounding areas. This would also include preserving and improving the existing trail system in the North 40, connecting it to town-wide and regional trails.	2018-2022	Mobility Committee, North 40 Committee, to include Trails Committee representative

**GOAL 3: TOWN RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY.**

**Policy**

- Evaluate facilities and programs regularly to respond to demographic and other changes in community demand.

**STRATEGIES**

- A. Improve the data collection system about the use, satisfaction, and demand for recreation facilities and programs, as well as changing needs.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. Monitor usage and demand at the 900 Worcester Street facility to inform Town recreation planning. Require the management to share data on membership and usage for different sports and activities.	2018-2022	Facility operator; Recreation Commission
ii. Survey Wellesley residents every five years about their recreational needs as part of the OSRP update. Be sure to collect demographic information to understand if changing characteristics of the population are affecting recreation needs.	2018-2022	NRC; Recreation Commission
iii. Use brief surveys of satisfaction and desired improvements for every Recreation Department program. A simple digital survey accessible from mobile devices could be developed to be used by multiple programs and easily analyzed.	2018-2022	Recreation Commission

**GOAL 4: THE TOWN MAINTAINS A STATE-APPROVED OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN.**

**Policy**

- Provide resources to update the OSRP to retain eligibility for grants.

*[This section also appears in Chapter 4 -Natural Resources and Conservation.]*

**STRATEGIES**

- A. Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan in a timely manner to inform NRC, Recreation Commission, and Town strategic planning and to obtain state approval for eligibility for state funding.**

The current OSRP was adopted in 2015 and will expire in April 2021. The previous plan was adopted in 1994, twenty-one years earlier. Timely updates will inform NRC, Recreation Commission and Town understanding of open space and recreation needs.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Review the OSRP plan at least once a year to measure progress and identify any needed changes to the inventory and action plan. Annual consultation between the NRC and Recreation will enhance communication about balancing natural resources and passive recreation issues with active recreation issues</i></p>	<p>2018-2022</p>	<p>NRC; Recreation Commission</p>
<p><i>ii. Program the full update of the document for FY 2021.</i></p>	<p>2018-2022</p>	<p>NRC and Recreation Commission; Trails Committee; and consult with other boards</p>

## PART III

# How We Live

## CHAPTER 7 HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

- Amend the zoning bylaw to allow for more diverse housing options.
- Update the Town's Affordable Housing Policy.
- Pursue a variety of strategies to help Wellesley meet state affordable housing goals for Chapter 40B, the comprehensive permit law, for example:
  - » Mixed-use redevelopment of Town-owned property, such as the Tailby Lot, and Wellesley Housing Authority developments
  - » Upzone the office parks for redevelopment including mixed use and multifamily housing
  - » Invest more town funding in affordable housing development
  - » Exploration of housing on a portion of the North 40 parcel
- Connect neighborhood destinations such as parks, schools and retail areas with safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes

## CHAPTER 8 PUBLIC HEALTH

- Foster formal and informal connections among neighbors and peers to strengthen social capital and intergenerational ties.
- Adopt an age friendly and intergenerational approach to the development of community buildings and spaces.
- Support the mental and emotional wellness of children and youth, reducing the potential for self-harm, increasing opportunities among all youth, and promoting the town as a Stigma-Free Municipality.
- Continue the focus on school-based social and emotional instruction and engage in continuous communications about this work with all residents.
- Promote unstructured play and offer time and space for it to occur.
- Promote walkability, physical activity, and exposure to outdoor natural environments.
- Enhance tree protection and planting.
- Implement best practices related to the elimination of gas leaks.
- Integrate use of a health and equity impact checklist into local decision making.

## CHAPTER 9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Support a diverse array of independent businesses in the commercial villages by working with merchants' associations, recruiting desired business types, enhancing walkability, and improving other physical conditions.
- Provide for zoning amendments and identify other changes to encourage mixed-use development, particularly housing, in commercial areas.
- Invest in proactive economic development by creating an economic development policy group and identifying staff support.
- Study options and take steps to upzone/rezone office districts to promote redevelopment and enhanced non-residential tax base
- Implement best practices related to the elimination of gas leaks.
- Integrate use of a health and equity impact checklist into local decision making.

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# *Housing and Neighborhoods*

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**W**ellesley's fundamentally residential character has been established for decades and is not anticipated to change. The town's housing comprises predominantly single-family houses that are owner-occupied, well-maintained, and expensive. Of the town's 10.49 square miles, 69 percent is zoned residential; of that area, over 92 percent is occupied by single-family houses. While the number of housing units grew substantially between 1940 and 1960, the rate of new housing creation declined in every decade up to 2000. The net number of units grew again in the decade 2000-2010, when Wellesley gained primarily condominium and multifamily units. Between 2010 and 2017, the net number of housing units declined, according to Town data. Much new residential construction in Wellesley since 2010 has involved a process of redevelopment, as smaller single-family and two- and three-family houses have been torn down and replaced with larger houses, but this activity does not result in net new growth in housing units.

The Town's neighborhoods are generally identified in relation to commuter rail stations, commercial villages, old subdivision names, or elementary school areas. Physically, two major east-west arteries divide the town: the commuter rail tracks and Worcester Street/Route 9. The physical form of neighborhoods is influenced by lot size and the age of construction. The neighborhoods with the smallest

lots (10,000 sf) tend to have a grid street structure, while those with lot sizes from 15,000 sf to approximately one acre are characterized by curved streets and, in some places, culs-de-sac. In the Unified Plan process, the neighborhood-related issues that participants focused on were 1) housing replacement, housing choice, and housing affordability, which is the focus of this chapter, and 2) connectivity within and among neighborhoods, which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 10—Mobility and Circulation.

The housing issues identified in Wellesley’s 2007 Comprehensive Plan persist in 2017. A generally built-out character and very high housing prices have a variety of effects:

- Lots with smaller, older houses are more valuable for the land than for the building, making them candidates for “teardowns” and larger replacement houses. There were 614 house demolitions in the ten-year period from 2007 to 2016. The demolition review bylaw approved in 2017 will affect houses built before 1950, but not houses built in 1950 or later.
- Many residents in established neighborhoods are concerned about the size, lot coverage, and design of replacement houses. The Large House Review Bylaw, adopted in 2007 after adoption of the 2007 Plan, has had some effect, and while amended twice, does not control design and coverage to the satisfaction of some residents.
- Many residents expressed concern that rising house prices—the median for a single-family house reached \$1.4 million in 2017—have produced less income diversity. High prices also reduce housing opportunities for younger families and for empty-nesters who wish to downsize to a smaller single-family home.
- The cost of subsidies needed to create affordable housing to meet the state’s 10% goal under Chapter 40B has risen with housing costs. While Wellesley increased its percentage of subsidized housing under the law to 6.3% in 2017, at the time this Plan was being prepared the Town had not yet pursued the adoption of the Housing Production Plan (HPP) prepared in conjunction with the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. While housing development slowed during the Great Recession, a number of Chapter 40B housing proposals emerged in 2016-17. In late 2017, the Town engaged a consultant to prepare a HPP in 2018.

Just as the cost of land and the generally built-out character of the town create a need to balance conservation, passive recreation and active recreation, the same circumstances create the need to identify a broader range of housing opportunities.

During the Unified Plan process, participants in surveys and workshops expressed concerns similar to those ten years ago,

▶ EXHIBIT 7.1 **GROWTH IN WELLESLEY’S HOUSING STOCK**

YEAR	UNITS	% CHANGE
1940	3,905	[NA]
1950	5,199	33.1
1960	6,930	33.3
1970	7,785	12.3
1980	8,389	7.8
1990	8,764	4.4
2000	8,861	1.0
2010	9,189	3.7
2017	9,079	-1.2

Source: U.S. Census; Town of Wellesley (2017 data)



though with an even greater interest in creating affordable housing as a way to attain more diversity. With the emergence of a cluster of affordable housing (Chapter 40B) proposals in 2017, resident awareness of affordable housing issues has increased. Since at least 1989, when the Town adopted an affordable housing policy, Wellesley has made a public commitment to increasing its inventory of affordable housing. While some progress toward the state goal of 10% has been made, there is a consensus that it is time to act upon previously explored opportunities for affordable housing development in order to reach the 10% goal. This chapter again contains some of those same recommendations. In the words of the 2008 Town of Wellesley Community Preservation Plan: “in the final analysis, what is most important at this point in time is for the Town to signal a willingness to get beyond talk and to demonstrate a clear and viable plan addressing its shortage of community housing units in Wellesley.” (p. 24)

### ***Supporting town government concepts***

*The Unified Plan’s emphasis on making town government more customer-centric, data-driven and strategic, and transparent shapes several of this chapter’s strategies: creating opportunities for more empty-nester housing; adopting a measurable goal for affordable housing production; and creating concept plans for areas where more housing choice and mixed-use development is desired.*

## A. Housing and Neighborhoods in the Vision and Values



### VISION

In 2040, Wellesley is a town recognized for its welcoming community culture and... a quality of life that enhances the health and social well-being of its residents...



### VALUES

- **Diversity:** Establish, implement, and support ongoing initiatives to maintain Wellesley as a community that welcomes a diversity of people and households.
- **Sense of Community:** Foster a sense of community and community-building through support for inclusive services and facilities, town-wide events, multi-generational activities, and community gathering places.
- **Town Character:** Establish policies, practices, and criteria for the preservation of the character of the town’s residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and open spaces.

## B. Goals and Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<b><i>Maintain the predominantly single family character of established single-family neighborhoods.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve the character of single-family streets.</li> </ul>
<b><i>The Town has a housing strategy that employs a variety of mechanisms to increase housing choice in type and affordability.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore options such as accessory housing units, adaptive reuse of large homes for multiple dwellings, and the community land trust model.</li> <li>• Prepare regulations and standards to support aging in place.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Diverse housing types, such as townhouses, rental apartments, and condos, exist in commercial villages, office park areas, at locations on arterial roads, and through redevelopment of existing housing.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for more density and different housing types in areas accessible to services to promote mixed-use development with housing.</li> <li>• Support incentives to develop diverse housing types in appropriate locations.</li> </ul>
<b><i>At least 400 housing units permanently affordable to income-eligible households have been created by 2028.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support collaboration with regional housing groups.</li> <li>• Review and update Wellesley’s Affordable Housing Policy.</li> <li>• Adopt and implement a Housing Production Plan for affordable housing.</li> <li>• Give priority to affordable housing in CPA allocations for the next 10 years.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Make neighborhood destinations such as parks, schools, and retail areas accessible by walking and biking.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop/adopt a Complete Streets policy to create a network of safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes.</li> </ul>

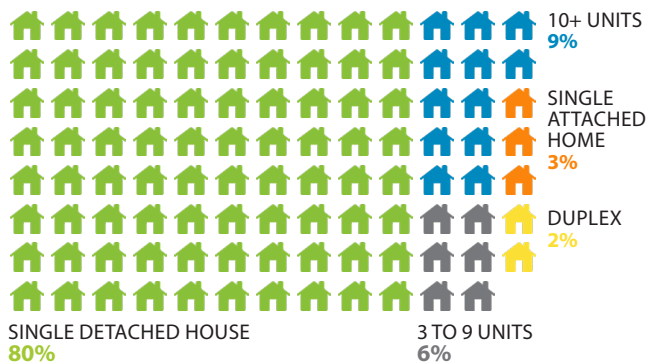
## C. Findings and Challenges

### FINDINGS

#### Overview

- Single-family, owner-occupied homes will continue to comprise the clear majority of housing in Wellesley. Most Wellesley residents live in single-family houses.
- There were 9,189 housing units in Wellesley according to the 2010 U.S. Census. According to town data there were 9,079 units in 2017.
- 77% of Wellesley households are owner-occupied.
- Wellesley is a mature community with limited options for developing new single family homes other than through redevelopment. According to a Planning Department analysis, under current zoning there is potential for 327 net new single family lots.
- While Wellesley has established a Large House Review Bylaw since the last comprehensive plan, teardowns and large replacement houses remain a concern for many people. The 2017 demolition

#### ▶▶ EXHIBIT 7.2 HOUSING BY UNITS IN STRUCTURE



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

review bylaw for houses built before 1950 may mitigate somewhat the high number of teardowns and replacement houses but will not affect houses built in the 1950-1970 period, which tend to be smaller than newer houses, or later construction.

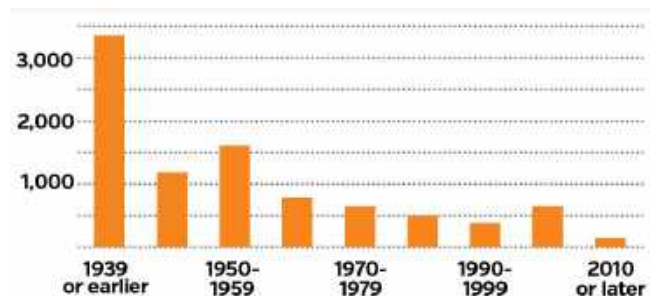
- Wellesley real estate is among the most expensive in Massachusetts and among the top five most expensive in Greater Boston. The median price of a single-family home is approximately \$1.4 million (2017 Town data) and the median price of condos is \$680,000.
- In fall 2016, the inventory of houses for sale was concentrated in two price ranges: a six-month supply

in the \$1.5 million to \$2 million range and a two-and-one-half-year supply of houses over \$3 million. The number of houses for sale at less than \$1 million had declined by 43% compared to the previous year.<sup>1</sup>

- Wellesley has a limited inventory of condominiums, rental housing, and multifamily housing units.
- The age composition of Wellesley’s population indicates that two age groups are moving out of town.
  - › Young adults from Wellesley move to go to college and/or to other cities or metro areas.
  - › Adults 70 years old and older are downsizing and moving to other locations.
- The age groups that are moving into Wellesley are adults in the 35- to 44-year-old range in households with their children.
- However, the majority of Wellesley households (66%) do not include children under 18.
- MAPC forecasts that between 2010 and 2030, the number of householders 30-60 years old will decline and the number of householders over 60 years old will increase.
- Older residents who wish to downsize to somewhat smaller and less expensive market-rate housing find it difficult to locate the kind of housing they prefer— one-floor houses at 1,500-2,000 square feet—which are not typical of existing housing in town.
- According to the 2016 Greater Boston Housing Report Card, between 2011 and 2016, Wellesley ranked sixth among Greater Boston communities in the number of building permits for new single-family houses. Many of these were replacement houses, so this number does not represent a significant increase in density or net number of housing units.

<sup>1</sup> Pinnacle Real Estate ([www.pinnaclehouses.com](http://www.pinnaclehouses.com))

#### ▶▶ EXHIBIT 7.3 HOUSING UNITS IN WELLESLEY BY YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION



## Affordable housing

- The cost of developing housing<sup>2</sup> depends on market factors and local government factors:
  - › Market factors: target rate of return; landowner willingness to sell; local rents and costs
  - › Local government factors: fees or affordable housing requirements; local planning decisions; additional planning approvals
- For legal purposes, the definition of housing affordability is based on three statistics: median household income, the percentage of household

▶ **EXHIBIT 7.4 FY2017 80% AMI–METRO BOSTON**

HOUSEHOLD SIZE / 80% OF AMI
1 person / \$54,750
2 people / \$62,550
3 people / \$70,350
4 people / \$78,150

income spent on housing, and the median cost of housing. Under most subsidy programs, housing produced with government financial assistance is targeted to people

whose household income is 80 percent or below the area median income (AMI).

- The median income level set annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD] is used as the benchmark for eligibility for below-market housing. For a family of three in Greater Boston in FY 2017, 80% of median income was \$70,350. (An estimated 20% of households in Wellesley have annual incomes less than \$75,000. Forty percent have incomes of \$200,000 or more.)
- According to 2014 data, nearly one quarter of Wellesley homeowners and one third of renters pay more than 30% of their income for housing costs, making them “housing cost-burdened.”
- Between 2007 and 2014, Wellesley increased its inventory of subsidized housing units by 159 units, approximately 22 units per year, according to state data.
- As of October 2017, 6.33% (575) of the housing units in Wellesley meet the State affordable housing goal for the purposes of Chapter 40B, the Comprehensive Permit Law. This percentage includes market-rate units in approved mixed-income developments. In

2007, 4.7% (416 units) of Wellesley housing units were considered affordable.

- Communities with 10% of affordable units are not subject to Chapter 40B.
- Since 2006, Wellesley has added 75 subsidized units in non-housing authority developments totaling 303 units. The subsidized units include:
  - › 36 age-restricted (55 years and older) units
  - › 57 rental and 18 ownership units
  - › 23 units in chapter 40B projects
  - › 48 units through inclusionary zoning
  - › 4 units funded by the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation
- The Town’s adoption of inclusionary zoning in 2005 and the Community Preservation Act resulted in incremental increases in affordable housing.
- The Community Preservation Act requires that at least 10% of the proceeds each year are dedicated to affordable housing.
- Wellesley continues to attract Chapter 40B proposals. Beginning in 2016 through July 2018, there were 6 proposed projects with a total of 259 units, both rental and ownership. By fall 2017, one project (90 units at Delanson Circle) had received project/site eligibility approval, while approval was initially rejected (later granted) for projects at 680 Worcester Street and 16 Stearns Road.

## Affordable Housing and Comparable Communities

- Several communities with market-rate housing costs comparable to Wellesley’s have been able to meet the state goal of 10% of units on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). The Towns of Concord, Lexington, and Lincoln, with median single-family sales at \$1.0 million to \$1.3 million and median rents over \$3,000 a month, met the goal as of 2014.
- Concord and Lexington have Housing Production Plans. In 2017, Concord invested \$2 million in an affordable housing project that will help the town keep its 10% subsidized housing goal after the 2020 census, which will establish the new baseline.

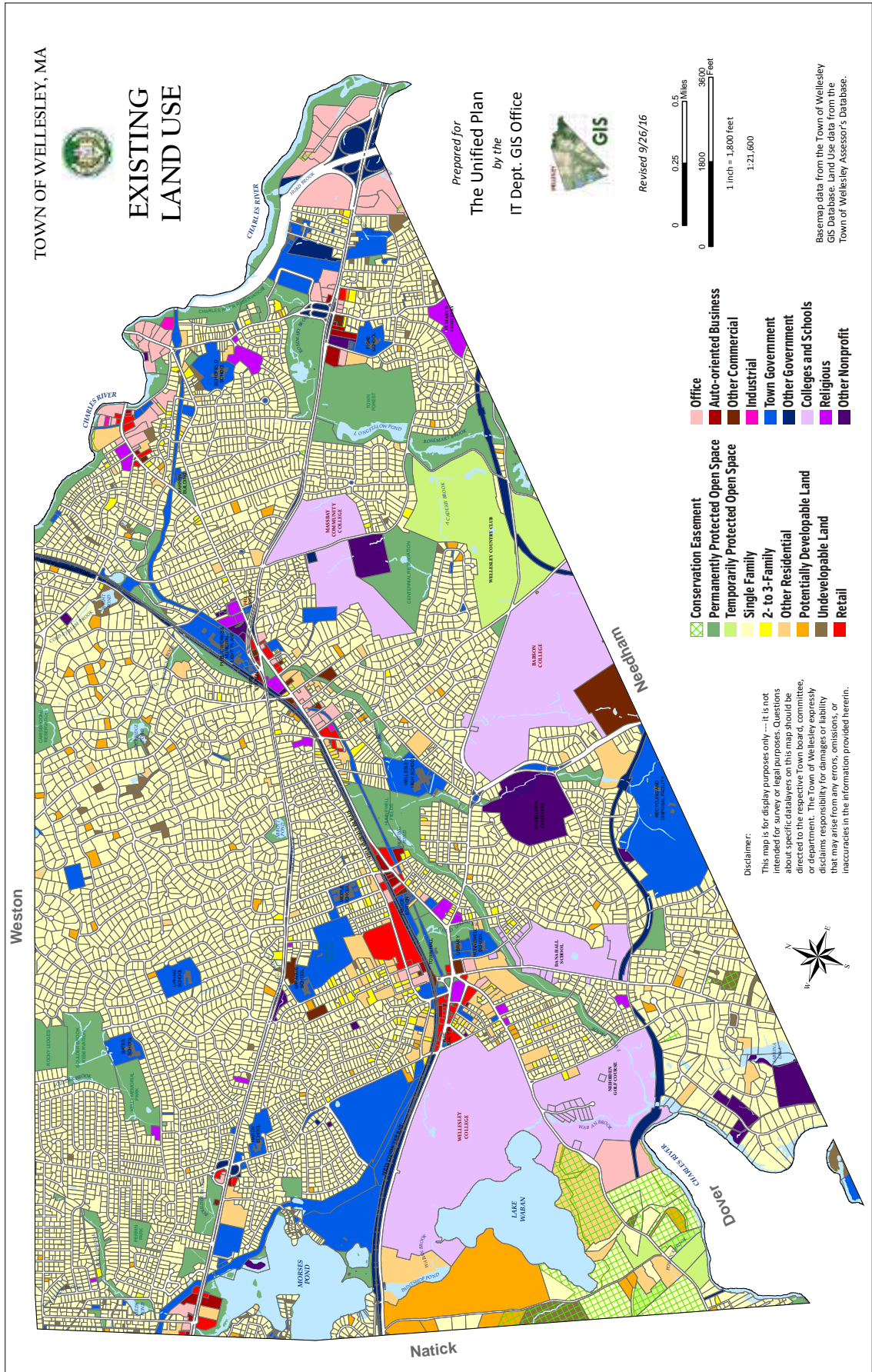
<sup>2</sup> 2016 Greater Boston Housing Report Card, p.69; citing Turner Center for Housing Innovation (Univ. of California-Berkeley)

## CHALLENGES

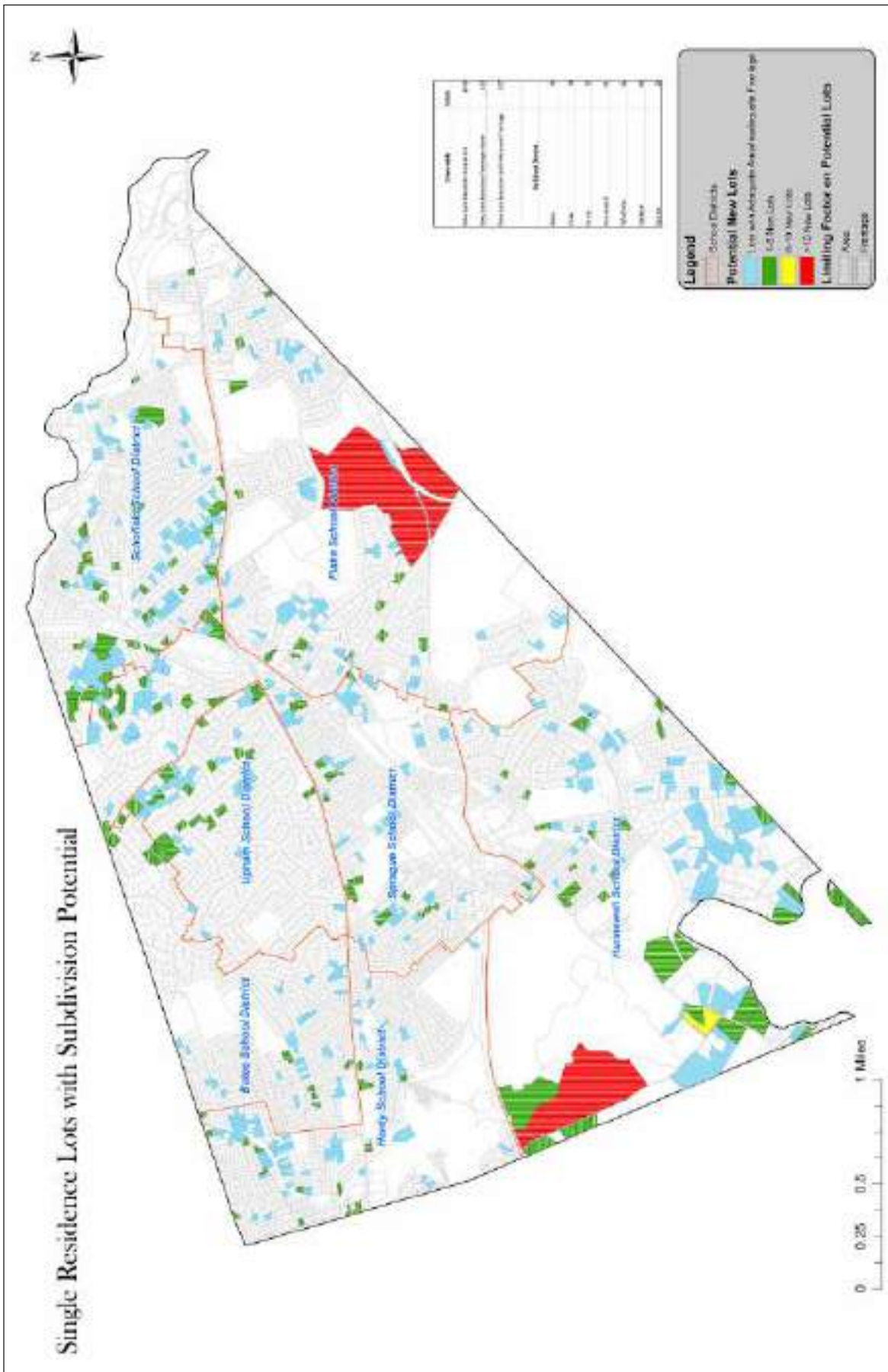
- Very high cost of housing and residential land
- The town is near buildout and most new construction results from tear-downs of smaller houses and replacement with larger houses on the lot.
- Developers look for rate of return that results in luxury development.
- Lack of suitable housing for downsizing households who want single-floor, mid-size, stand-alone housing (approximately 1,500-2,000 sf).
- High cost of producing affordable housing and reaching the state's 10% affordable housing goal.
- Mitigation of impacts of large replacement housing on neighborhood character, impervious surfaces, and tree canopy.
- Fine tuning of the Large House Review Bylaw to meet desired outcomes.
- Developing criteria for waivers of demolition delay requirements.
- Aligning zoning with actual and desired use of property.
- Connecting neighborhoods to local destinations and across rail and highway barriers.

### STATE POLICY ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING: WHAT IS CHAPTER 40B HOUSING?

- Chapter 40B, also known as the Comprehensive Permit Law, was enacted in 1969 to encourage production of affordable housing in cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth. By reducing barriers created by local approval processes, zoning, and other restrictions through the approval of waivers, the intent was to help address the shortage of affordable housing.
- The goal is for communities to provide a minimum of 10% affordable units (based on decennial census counts), under a formula determined by the state. Municipalities can count group homes, accessory apartments, locally assisted units, and units funded under the Community Preservation Act toward their 10% goal.
- Under Chapter 40B, local zoning boards of appeals (ZBAs) can approve housing developments meeting affordability and other criteria administered by the state if at least 20-25% of the proposed units have long-term affordability restrictions. Affordable units must be restricted to households earning less than 80% of the area median income.
- The developer (a public agency, nonprofit organization, or limited-dividend company) has the right to appeal a project's rejection or imposition of uneconomic conditions in any community with fewer than 10% affordable units or 1.5% of its land area in affordable units.
- Chapter 40B typically results in the production of affordable housing developments that in most cases could not have been built under traditional zoning approaches.
- Market-rate units often serve middle-income singles, seniors, and families who make between 100% and 150% of the area median income. Nurses, teachers, retirees, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, office management staff, and working people with other occupations critical to our state's workforce reside in these homes.
- As of 2016, Chapter 40B had produced more than 68,000 housing units statewide, of which 52% are affordable. Developments built through Chapter 40B include church-sponsored housing for the elderly, single-family subdivisions that include affordable units for town residents, multifamily rental housing developments, and mixed-income condominium or townhouse developments.
- Many communities have used Chapter 40B to successfully negotiate the approval of quality affordable housing developments.
- More information is available at [www.mass.gov/hed/community/40b-plan/](http://www.mass.gov/hed/community/40b-plan/) or [www.chapa.org/sites/default/files/40%20B%20fact%20sheet.pdf](http://www.chapa.org/sites/default/files/40%20B%20fact%20sheet.pdf)



▶▶ EXHIBIT 7.6 SINGLE RESIDENCE LOTS WITH SUBDIVISION POTENTIAL



## C. WHAT THE COMMUNITY SAID

### Repeated themes

- More housing needed that accommodates more economic and age diversity
- More affordable housing is needed
- Housing for downsizing seniors needed
- Replacement houses have a negative effect on neighborhood character and the environment

### From Focus Groups and Interviews

“Many people leave Wellesley to downsize.”

“We don’t have an agreement about what we want the town to look like.”

“A beautiful landscape (at least historically) but if we continue to fill it up with oversized housing, it will become tacky in a high-end way.”

“Massive confusion about Large House Review...feels subjective and not objective.”

“The Planning Board should seek out parcels that are suited for denser development and proactively rezone those parcels to attract good development.”

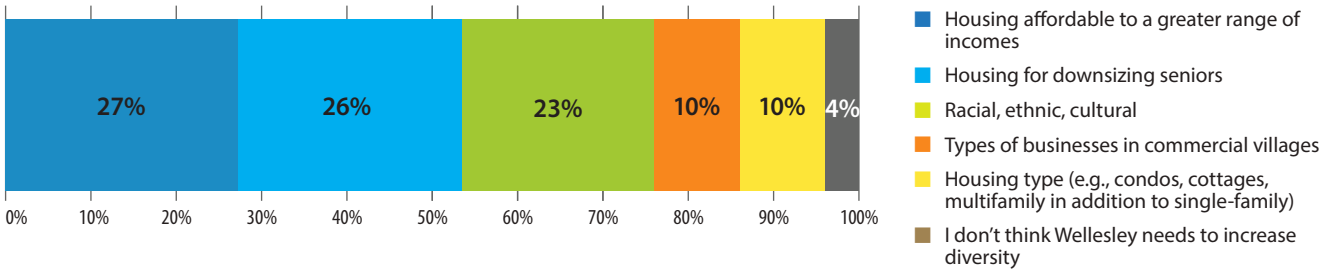
“Tree bylaw isn’t being enforced.”

### TABLE PRIORITIES FROM THE VISIONING FORUM

- Increase diversity of housing
- Housing—affordable, controlled demolitions, multi-unit
- Work on anti-mansionization and improve affordable housing, particularly for seniors
- Promote diversity—housing; encourage population diversity
- Housing—discouraging “mansionization” and promote diverse housing stock
- More affordable housing (mix, diverse, senior-friendly)
- Diversity—racial, socio-economic, ethnic, age
- Increase diversity: housing, ethnic, racial, income, shopping.
- Housing that promotes economic and age diversity
- Diverse neighborhoods; housing, schools, open space (village model)
- Housing choices—diverse size units and cost, down-sizable.
- Retail diversity.

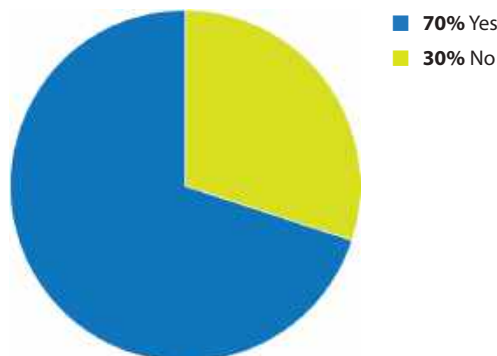
### FROM PRECINCT MEETINGS

Q: If you would like to see more diversity, what are the two most important types of diversity the town needs?

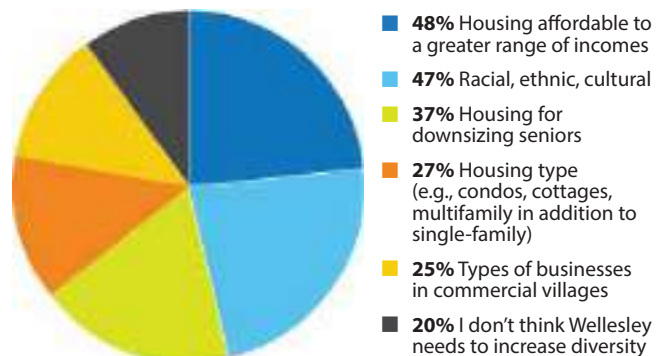


### FROM THE VISION/VALUES SURVEY (1,058 PARTICIPANTS)

Q: Some residents have said Wellesley needs more diversity. Do you agree?



Q: If you would like to see more diversity, what are the two most important types of diversity the town needs?



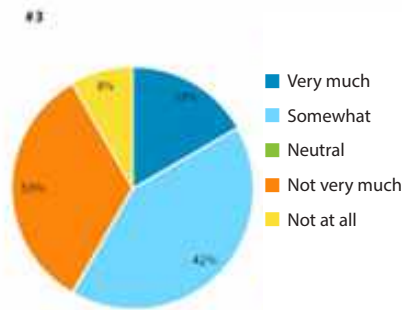
## Housing and Neighborhoods Workshop

### Survey of visual preferences

As part of the initial presentation in the community workshop on housing and neighborhoods, participants

participated in a brief visual preference survey about multifamily housing. The question for each of the images of different kinds of housing was: *How much do you like this place?* The response options were: *very much; somewhat; neutral; not very much; hate it!*

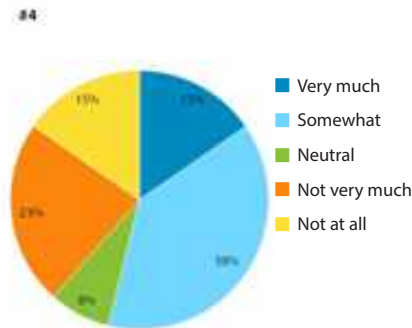
How much do you like this place?



#### Response

Generally favorable for this contemporary four-story apartment house with setbacks including trees and landscaping.

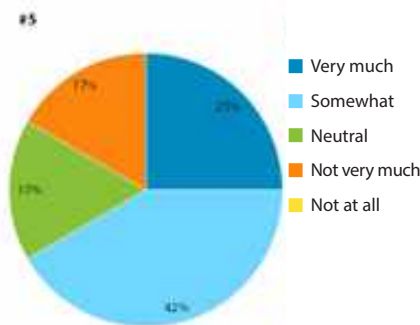
How much do you like this place?



#### Response

Moderately favorable for this wood modern three-story courtyard apartment house reminiscent of traditional triple decker design.

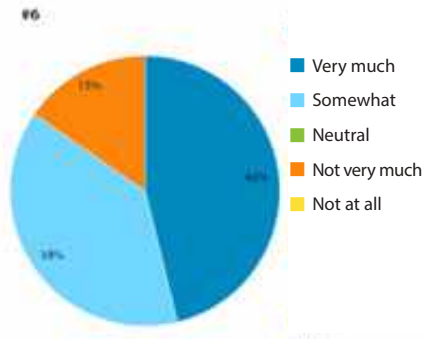
How much do you like this place?



#### Response

Favorable. Presented with an explanation of cottage developments as offering single family unit feeling with garden apartment density and common open space.

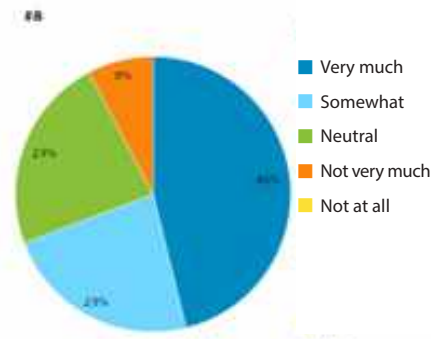
How much do you like this place?



**Response**

Very favorable. Presented as a "mansion-style" condominium option with multiple units within a building that looks like a large, single family house.

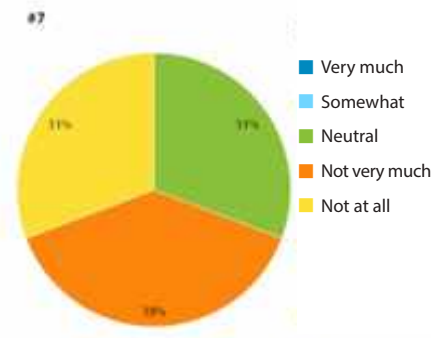
How much do you like this place?



**Response**

Very favorable. Apartments above storefronts.

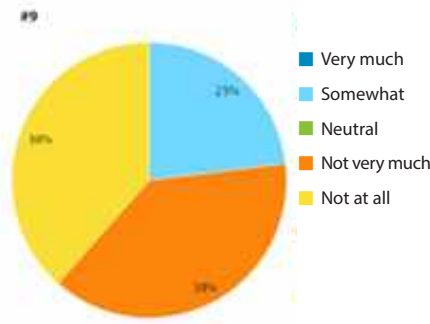
How much do you like this place?



**Response**

Generally unfavorable. Large three-story wood apartment house with limited setbacks, landscaping, detailing and variation in massing.

**How much do you like this place?**



**Response**

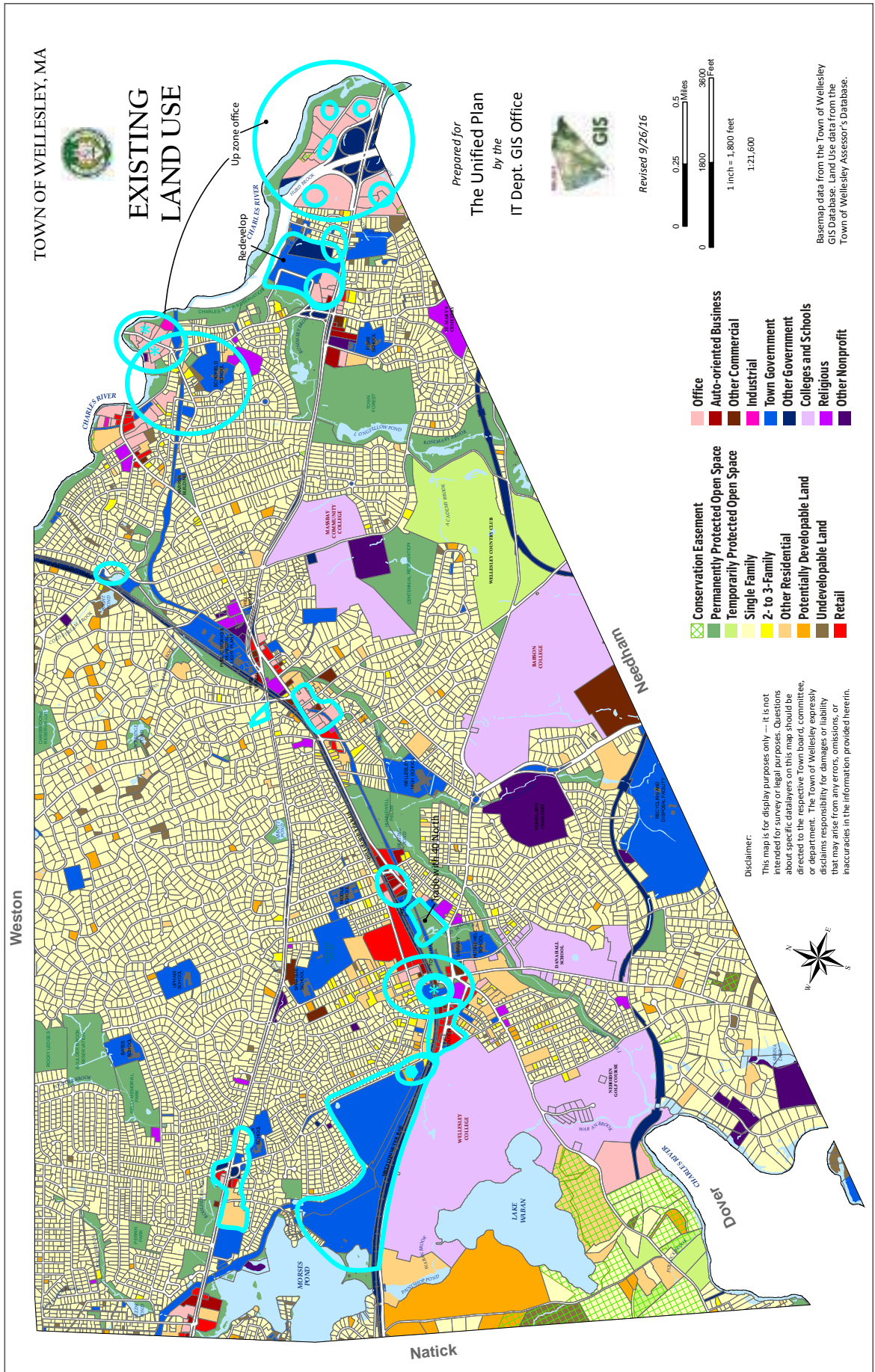
*Generally unfavorable. Apartments in an office-park style building.*

**Workshop: table discussion question results**

- Should preservation of single-family character be emphasized as a goal in the Unified Plan or should there be more focus on “housing choice” - housing of different types and costs?
  - We are a single-family town and we want to keep it. Also having additional choices might be an alternative for those facing changes in life.
  - Yes
  - “Single-family character” does not preclude multifamily buildings. Multifamily buildings should blend in architecturally.
  - Yes, preserve character... limited land.
  - We like place #6 in survey... large “single family looking” home with multiple units.
  - Maintain character in certain areas; develop different types in dense areas where appropriate-emphasize different types and cost in areas where there is access to transportation services
- Do you think Wellesley should make a decision to invest more over the next 10 years in affordable/ subsidized housing to reach the Ch. 40B threshold? To provide more housing opportunity, regardless of Ch. 40B? If so, what kinds of vehicles should be used- higher CPA funding? A community land trust?
  - Yes (to all three parts)
  - Move toward threshold... not have to meet it.
  - We should work towards goal; get more creative in using town land (land swaps?)
  - Use more upzoning.

- What does the phrase “neighborhood character” mean to you?
  - It means “status quo”—keep Wellesley character as it is
  - Family
  - Schools (small, neighborhood)
  - Open land, playgrounds, parklands
  - Walkability
  - Core of amenities (shopping)
  - Convenient within area
  - Retaining “small” homes
  - Walk to school
  - Small three-section schools
  - Architectural detail, walkable, houses in scale, quintessential New England charm; mix of trees and houses

Exhibit 7.7 shows a composite map of locations that workshop participants identified as suitable for more housing choice—higher-density and multifamily development.



## E. STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

### Policy

- Preserve the character of single-family streets

### GOAL 1: MAINTAIN THE PREDOMINANTLY SINGLE FAMILY CHARACTER OF ESTABLISHED SINGLE FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS.

### STRATEGIES

- A. Maintain single-family zoning that preserves single-family character from the street, while allowing for limited additional units in certain cases.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Amend zoning to allow for one accessory unit above garages or in other limited locations on a single-family lot with appropriate limitations on massing and dimensions. Accessory apartments provide more housing choice and support more income and age diversity in town. They can be counted toward the town's Chapter 40B affordable housing percentage if owners participate in a program for income eligible tenants.<sup>3</sup></i>	2018-2022	Planning Board
<i>ii. Explore amending zoning to allow identified historic single-family homes or those in the demolition-delay process to be redesigned and used for condominium units while preserving their historic exterior and providing for parking to the side or rear. Expansion of the structure to the rear could be allowed up to a reasonable percentage in relation to the lot size. Criteria could include a limit the percentage of additional living area allowed; building facades within public view to retain historic character; green building and permeable parking requirements.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board; Historical Commission

### GOAL 2: THE TOWN HAS A HOUSING STRATEGY THAT EMPLOYS A VARIETY OF MECHANISMS TO INCREASE HOUSING CHOICE IN TYPE AND AFFORDABILITY.

- Prepare regulations and standards to support aging in place.

### STRATEGIES

- A. Amend the zoning bylaw to allow for more diverse housing options.**

### Policies

- Explore options such as accessory housing units, mansion-style condos, cottage communities, and the community land trust model.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Amend zoning to allow multifamily development at appropriate locations on major streets. Ideally, this development should be within walking distance of public transportation and other services. However, it should not be the only criterion used for multifamily development.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board
<i>ii. Amend zoning to allow multifamily residential development in current office park areas, including mixed use options. Include design guidelines with concept designs and incentives.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board

<sup>3</sup> Accessory apartments could be allowed by right as long as they participate in the affordable housing program and are subject to appropriate design standards. The affordable housing program would require a deed restriction limiting rent to be consistent with affordable housing guidelines for tenant households with incomes at or below 80% of the area median. The Town could then use the state's Local Initiative Program to count affordable accessory units toward the Town's Chapter 40B affordable housing inventory.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>iii. Explore adopting a bylaw that allows for cottage communities. Cottage communities typically provide housing with a single-family feel but a garden-apartment density, and include both joint and individual open space. The bylaw should include design guidelines for fitting cottage communities into Wellesley's existing subdividable lots. [See box at the end of this chapter.]</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board

**B. Develop a housing plan for aging in place in Wellesley.**

The Commonwealth, a number of individual communities, and AARP have developed aging in place plans and toolkits.<sup>4</sup> In the community surveys and workshops during the planning process, some participants expressed the need for housing that would allow Wellesley empty-nesters to stay in town in somewhat smaller housing. To some, downsizing means

a two- to three-bedroom, single family house of 1,500 to 2,000 square feet at a reasonable price. Unfortunately, the combination of very high land and housing costs (resulting from high demand) with a near built-out town (under current zoning), makes it difficult to find sites that could meet these criteria. Condominiums, rental apartments, and cottage communities may be more realistic options.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Work through the Council on Aging to develop a plan for aging in place.</i>	2018-2022	Council on Aging; Planning Board
<i>ii. Review and amend regulations and standards, as needed, to allow for modifications and new construction for aging households.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board
<i>iii. Identify developers with experience building for aging households to discuss market and other requirements for successful empty-nester housing.</i>	2018-2022	Council on Aging; Planning Board

**C. Explore creating a public-private community land trust to create affordable housing.**

**COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS**

A community land trust (CLT) is a nonprofit organization formed to hold title to land to preserve its long-term availability for affordable housing and other community uses. A land trust typically receives public or private donations of land or funds, or uses government subsidies to purchase land on which housing can be built. The homes are sold to low- and moderate-income families, but the CLT retains ownership of the land and provides long-term ground leases to home buyers. The CLT also retains a long-term option to repurchase the homes at a formula-driven price when homeowners later decide to move, in order to preserve permanent affordability. Community land trusts can be used for homeowner single-family housing, multifamily rental developments, for condos, and for cooperatives. They can also serve scattered-site housing. [See [www.lincolinst.edu/pubs/dl/1395\\_712\\_City-CLT-Policy-Report.pdf](http://www.lincolinst.edu/pubs/dl/1395_712_City-CLT-Policy-Report.pdf)] Unless town-owned or donated land is used, the exceptionally high real estate costs in Wellesley would continue to be an issue. However, there are examples of CLTs in high-cost locations, such as San Francisco.

<sup>4</sup> Massachusetts State Plan on Aging 2014-2017, <http://www.mass.gov/elders/docs/state-plan-on-aging-2014-2017.pdf>; AARP, *Aging in Place: A Toolkit for Local Governments*, <http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/plan/planning/aging-in-place-a-toolkit-for-local-governments-aarp.pdf>; See Anne Sussman, "When I'm 84: Designers prepare for the silver tsunami," *Architecture Boston* (Fall 2013), <https://www.architects.org/architectureboston/articles/when-im-84>

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Create a committee, potentially including local faith communities that might be interested in working on a community land trust, to explore the feasibility of such an organization in Wellesley.</i> Although traditionally thought of as a way to produce affordable ownership single-family housing, community land trusts can be used in scattered-site ownership housing, condos, and rental housing.	2022-2028	Board of Selectmen; Wellesley Housing Development Corporation; nonprofit organizations

**D. Create a “soft-second loan” program for down payment and closing cost assistance with a revolving fund from the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Develop a program to assist young families, senior citizens, and Town employees who meet certain eligibility requirements with down payment and closing cost assistance for housing up to a cost and size to be determined.</i> Eligibility could include household incomes up to 120% of area median [i.e., both traditional “affordable” housing and “workforce” housing]. The soft second loan would be interest-free if the homeowner stays in the home at least five years. If the home is resold within five years, the loan would be payable at an interest rate to be determined.	2018-2022	Wellesley Housing Development Corporation

**GOAL 3: DIVERSE HOUSING TYPES, SUCH AS TOWNHOUSES, APARTMENTS, AND CONDOS, EXIST IN COMMERCIAL VILLAGES, OFFICE PARK AREAS, AT LOCATIONS ON ARTERIAL ROADS, AND THROUGH REDEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING HOUSING.**

**Policies**

- Zone areas appropriately to promote mixed-use development with housing.

- Support incentives to develop diverse housing types in appropriate locations.

**STRATEGIES**

- A. Identify town-owned locations suitable for multifamily or townhouse development.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Issue an RFP for mixed-income housing and parking development of the Tailby Lot and the Railroad Lot with design guidelines.</i> The Tailby Lot has been studied by the town for housing development in the past. If underground parking (which can cost as much as \$30,000 per space) is less viable with a mixed-income project, the Town could collaborate with a developer to finance the parking.	Early action item 2018	Board of Selectmen; Planning Board
ii. <i>Develop design guidelines and prepare RFPs for mixed-income, multi-family housing on other suitable sites.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Department
iii. <i>Amend zoning in Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills, and Linden Square to create incentives for redevelopment that includes housing above storefronts.</i> Although commuter rail access is available in these locations, parking management must be part of the planning, including options such as shared parking and possible Town financing of structured parking.	2022-2028	Planning Board

**B. Upzone the office parks for redevelopment and allow mixed-use and multifamily housing.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. Commission concept plans for redevelopment of office districts such as Walnut Street, Williams Street, and other locations to study potential options for density, design standards (including green standards such as energy-efficiency and green stormwater management), parking and transportation management.	2018-2022	Planning Board
ii. When upzoning office park areas to permit more height and density, include mixed-use development, townhouses, and multifamily housing as allowable uses, with design standards and incentives based on the concept studies.	2018-2022	Planning Board

**Housing Diversity and Housing Density: Design Makes the Difference**

Housing diversity entails creating more choices for different types of housing. Today, planners and architects often refer to the “missing middle”—housing types between detached single family houses and mid- to

high-rise buildings in cities. How housing is designed in relation to its neighbors and the public realm is ultimately more important than density numbers. The same housing density can look very different depending on design.



Image ©Opticos Design

Three different density levels can be represented by different designs and neighborhood character.



*8 Units Per Acre*



*12 Units Per Acre*



*20 Units Per Acre*



Source: [www.mass.gov/envir/smart\\_growth\\_toolkit/pages/mod-40R.html](http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/mod-40R.html)



## COTTAGE COMMUNITIES

Cottage communities are infill developments that can fit into existing blocks. [“Infill” refers to new housing on vacant or underused lots within an existing built-up area.] The housing is designed in a cottage style compatible with Wellesley housing types, and typically modest in scale—approximately 1,200 sf, though occasionally larger. They are built in densities similar to garden apartments but preserve the atmosphere of single-family neighborhoods. This housing is especially suitable for singles, couples, retirees, and single-parent families. An example in Massachusetts is Concord Riverwalk (<http://www.concordriverwalk.com/neighborhood/overview>), which includes one- to three-bedroom units. Design characteristics include:

- Developments are built in clusters of 4-12 units on existing blocks
- Integrated design provides shared functional open space, off-street parking, external and internal site access, and consistent landscaping.
- The units may be separately platted or developed as condominiums.
- A transition from public to private space—from the street through a low gate to a common open space to a small yard for each unit surrounded by a low fence or hedge—gives each residence a defined private space. Active spaces in the house look out on the common area, providing “eyes on the street.”
- Houses are sited to promote privacy by matching the side of a house with more windows to the more closed side of the neighboring house.



- Individual units are marked by variety in design, color, materials, and other aspects to provide visual interest, while retaining a general cottage character (elements such as porches, dormers, bay windows, visible trim, etc.).
- Off-street parking for the development is screened and located away from the street.

The plan at left shows a cottage community at a density of 12 dwelling units/acre. Units measure between 1,049 and 1,090 square feet. <http://www.cottagecompany.com/Communities/Ericksen-Cottages/Ericksen-Cottages-Site-Plan.aspx>. Other sources and more information are available at [www.rosschapin.com](http://www.rosschapin.com) and [www.cottagecompany.com](http://www.cottagecompany.com).

**GOAL 4: AT LEAST 400 HOUSING UNITS PERMANENTLY AFFORDABLE TO INCOME-ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS HAVE BEEN CREATED BY 2028.**

**Policies**

- Give priority to affordable housing in CPA allocations for the next 10 years.
- Consider redevelopment of Wellesley Housing Authority properties.

Wellesley needs to build more affordable housing in order to meet the state goal of 10% of total housing units eligible for the state’s Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) under Chapter 40B. The SHI percentage is based on the housing unit totals in the decennial census, so the 6.3% in 2018 is based on the 2010 census total housing units. Because the 2020 census will show a modest increase in

the number of housing units in Wellesley, it is expected that the town will need to produce approximately 400 additional units eligible for the SHI in order to reach the 10% goal.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Update the Town’s Affordable Housing Policy.**

Wellesley’s Affordable Housing Policy was adopted by 1989 Town Meeting and amended in 1997. The Policy has a statement of commitment to low- and moderate-income housing and reference to MGL 40B definitions of affordable housing. The “Criteria for the Development of Affordable Housing” in some cases may benefit from review and revision in the context of Wellesley’s real estate market.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Review and update the Affordable Housing Policy.</i> Suggested issues for review and revision include: define what “urban scaled” means or what is desired/not desired; less emphasis on 100% affordable and more emphasis on mixed income housing (including workforce housing); more emphasis on making progress, as well as reaching the 10% goal.	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; WHDC; Planning Board;

**EXISTING WELLESLEY CRITERIA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

1. The predominantly single-family residential character of Wellesley shall be preserved.
2. Urban-scale projects are to be avoided.
3. Preferences shall be given to projects where 100% of the units satisfy Town housing goals, however, the Town recognized the potential necessity of including mixed income housing in order to ensure a development’s overall economic viability.
4. Any affordable housing shall, to the maximum extent possible, remain affordable in perpetuity.
5. Insofar as it is legal, Wellesley residents shall be given priority in the marketing of affordable housing units.
6. Preservation of open space and protection of natural resources shall be important considerations in the Town’s land use planning.
7. Development of affordable housing should not overburden existing utility systems or other public facilities that serve the Town, including services, streets, the public water supply and sewers to a greater extent than would any other development.
8. Wellesley’s Fair Housing Policy shall be respected.

**B. Join regional organizations focused on affordable housing to help manage affordable housing issues.**

The WestMetro HOME Consortium is administered by the City of Newton with the following additional members: Bedford, Belmont, Brookline, Concord, Framingham, Lexington, Natick, Needham, Sudbury, Waltham, Watertown, and Wayland. The Consortium applies for federal grants and loans for affordable housing projects developed by nonprofit and for-profit housing developers. These federal funds help leverage additional funding for affordable housing development. The Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO), administered by the Town of Concord, provides

member communities with affordable housing information and support, including proactive monitoring, program administration, project development and resident assistance. The members are Acton, Bedford, Burlington, Concord, Lexington, Sudbury, and Weston. The Office was formed through an inter-municipal agreement facilitated by MAPC. (<https://www.rhsohousing.org/about-rhso>) Resident services are available to owners of deed restricted properties and tenants of affordable housing, including capital improvements and home repair, eviction prevention, fuel assistance, loan modification, property tax exemptions, refinancing, and resale.



ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Join the WestMetro Housing Consortium.</i>	2022-2028	Board of Selectmen
<i>ii. Join the Regional Housing Services Office.</i>	2022-2028	Board of Selectmen
<i>iii. Work with Metro West Collaborative Development (MWCD) to assist in producing affordable housing.</i>	2022-2028	Board of Selectmen

**C. Pursue redevelopment of Wellesley Housing Authority properties into mixed-income developments.**

The Barton Road Development is a low-density, single-story housing authority property. It could be redeveloped into a higher-density, mixed-income development accommodating the existing housing authority apartments, workforce apartments, and market-rate



apartments. Because Wellesley is considered a very attractive place to live for a wide range of reasons, the town could be very successful in attracting developers and tenants for mixed-income development. The Housing Authority’s Morton Circle development should also be studied for potential redevelopment at higher density.

Some years ago, the Community Preservation Committee funded a study for the Housing Authority and the WHDC about creating more affordable or mixed-income units at Barton Road and modernizing the Housing Authority’s Linden Street property (which was ultimately funded with a state grant). Although the study recommended redeveloping Barton Road, the Town and Housing Authority have yet to pursue this option.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Commission a concept plan study for redevelopment of the Barton Road Family Development into mixed income housing. The study should evaluate redevelopment opportunities that would create housing for households with incomes 80% or below area median income, 80% to 150% of area median income (Wellesley workforce housing), and market rate housing. The concept plan should preserve the existing number of Housing Authority units, at a minimum.</i>	2018-2022	Housing Authority; Planning Board
<i>ii. Based on the results of the study, write and issue an RFP for redevelopment of the Barton Road development.</i>	2018-2022	Housing Authority
<i>iii. Identify other Housing Authority properties for their suitability for redevelopment and pursue concept plans, design standards, and RFPs, as appropriate.</i>	2022-2028	Housing Authority

**D. Invest more town funding in affordable housing development.**

Total Community Preservation Act funds for 2017 were almost \$1.5 million. By law, at least 10% of CPA funds must go to affordable housing or what the Wellesley Community Preservation

Committee calls “community housing,” defined as housing for households at or below 100% of area median income. As is the case in many suburban communities, CPA funding has tended to focus on open space and recreation projects, and CPA funding was important to the

Town’s \$36 million purchase of the North 40 parcel from Wellesley College. The funding was contingent on retaining 50% of the land in open space.

Many participants in the Unified Plan process expressed a desire for more diversity in Wellesley and identified very costly housing as a barrier to increased diversity. Other

residents are concerned that the town gives up development controls over Chapter 40B projects as long as it does not meet the 10% goal for affordable housing. By making a decision to invest more town funds in affordable housing, through CPA or otherwise, the Town can enhance diversity and potentially attain the 10% goal.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Assign a greater percentage of Community Preservation Act funding to affordable housing for the next ten years.</i>	2018-2022	Community Preservation Committee; Town Meeting
<i>ii. Increase the subsidy level that the town is willing to invest in specific housing units or housing developments that include affordable housing. Buying property and building or renovating housing in Wellesley is expensive. However, higher subsidies, tied to permanent affordability, may be worthwhile in some cases to create more affordable housing.</i>	2018-2022	WHDC
<i>iii. Identify tax title or Town-owned properties that might be suitable for affordable housing development. The NRC also has an interest in tax title properties adjacent to protected open space, so there should be coordination with the NRC on these properties.</i>	2018-2022	WHDC; Board of Selectmen; NRC

***E. Explore development of mixed-income housing on a portion of the North 40 parcel as a part of a detailed land use plan to be commissioned by the Board of Selectmen.***

The North 40 parcel was acquired for \$36 million so that the Town will be able to control the use of this 46-acre parcel, including ensuring that some of it will remain natural open space. Early discussions about potential uses in addition to natural open space included affordable housing and playing fields (as well as a new school, which is no longer proposed for this location in the short term).

If housing choice and affordability is an important goal to the Town, the North 40 provides a rare opportunity in an almost built-out town to provide more housing options. The parcel is located within walking distance of commuter rail, Wellesley Square, and Linden Square, making it suitable from a transportation and services point of view for housing. A mixed-income development that is well-planned and well-designed could help the

town reach the 10% affordable housing goal and provide more housing diversity. The North 40 concept plan developed for the town in 2014 showed two housing clusters totaling 80 single family lots at 5,000 sf each on about 10 acres of land. By providing different housing types, the overall housing footprint could be reduced. For example, if six acres of the parcel were to be developed as cottage housing or townhouses at 12-18 units per acre, only 13% of the North 40 could accommodate approximately 70-100 housing units. Since the units would be smaller than most Wellesley housing, they would be unlikely to have much impact on school enrollment. Downsizing seniors might find them appealing. Transportation management (discussed in detail in Chapter 10) would need to be part of the project.

The Town could preserve more flexibility around affordability by retaining ownership of the land and/or creating a Community Land Trust for the part of the North 40 with housing land uses. For example, the Town could choose to charge a land rent for market

rate housing that would still make the housing more affordable than typical housing that includes the land costs. For permanently affordable units, the Town could donate the land to a condominium association of cottages or townhouses, or it could donate the land to

a community land trust. If developed under Chapter 40B guidelines, some of the units could be market rate and some could be permanently affordable, but all would be counted towards Wellesley’s subsidized housing inventory for the purposes of Chapter 40B.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Explore the inclusion of mixed-income housing in the land uses for the North 40.</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; Planning Board
<i>ii. Study and evaluate options that would most benefit the town in terms of goals for affordability, housing choice and diversity, and finances.</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; Planning Board
<i>iii. If affordable housing development is deemed appropriate, prepare housing concept plans for the North 40 in order to provide clear direction and design guidelines in an RFP for developers.</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; Planning Board

**F. Prepare an Updated Housing Production Plan and submit it to the state for approval.**

The Town will prepare a Housing Production Plan during 2018 for submission to the state for approval. The framework for an HPP is included in this Unified Plan.

An HPP requires the Town to commit to actions that will produce a minimum number of units of Chapter 40B-compliant housing over the next five years. In order to show progress, the HPP must include a numerical goal for annual housing production that results in an increase in SHI- eligible units by at least 0.5% of total census units. The plan must include

a detailed strategy for production of eligible units including identification of changes in zoning needed to meet the housing production goal; identification of specific sites where the Town will encourage “friendly 40B” applications; preferred characteristics such as infill, cluster, adaptive re-use, transit-oriented, or mixed-used development; identification of municipally-owned land for RFPs to develop SHI-eligible housing; and participation in regional collaborations addressing housing development.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Prepare a Housing Production Plan consistent with the housing goals and strategies in this Unified Plan and state requirements.</i>	2018	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen
<i>ii. Adopt the plan and submit it to the state.</i>	2018-2019	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen
<i>iii. Establish systems within the Town and/or through joining regional housing groups [see Goal 4, Strategy 3] to implement the Housing Production Plan.</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen

**GOAL 5: NEIGHBORHOOD DESTINATIONS SUCH AS PARKS, SCHOOLS, AND RETAIL AREAS ARE ACCESSIBLE BY WALKING AND BIKING.**

**Policy**

- Develop a network of safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Identify priority neighborhood destinations for the network.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. Work within the context of the “low stress” network development discussed in Chapter 10.	2018-2022	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen; Trails Committee

**B. Maintain the neighborhood district character.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. Create or update plans for securing neighborhood character through destinations such as retail, schools, parks, and libraries.	2018-2022	Planning Board; Board of Selectmen



# Public Health and Wellness

The purpose of the Public Health and Wellness element stands as an inventory of how natural, built, and social environments are contributing to the health<sup>1</sup> of town residents. The Public Health and Wellness element is concerned with understanding current health conditions and behaviors, risks and opportunities presented by community barriers and assets, and the potential to promote healthier outcomes for current and future residents, regardless of their income, education or ethnic background.

The Public Health and Wellness element informs and connects to other elements of the Unified Plan. It presents new data or different perspectives on how current conditions in other elements, such as Housing, Transportation, and Open Space, can contribute to healthier outcomes for residents. This element also provides evidence-based and -informed strategies that should inform policies, projects, and decisions connected to implementation of the Unified Plan. Lastly, the element integrates the perspective of local public health by including the Wellesley Health Department and Board of Health in the planning process about the future of the town and its residents.

*This chapter of the Unified Plan was prepared by the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission through a grant to the Wellesley Board of Health. The chapter summarizes a longer report that appears as an appendix to the Unified Plan.*

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this chapter, health is defined as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Source: World Health Organization

Development of the Public Health and Wellness element involved a review of relevant health and socioeconomic data and of literature on the ways physical and social environmental factors affect people's health. It also involved engagement with a Health Working group and the broader community. These processes produced the Vision and Values for the element.

## A. Public Health and Wellness in the Unified Plan Vision and Values\*



### VISION

In 2040, Wellesley is recognized for a quality of life that enhances the health and social well-being of its residents.



### VALUES

- **Sense of Community:** Foster a sense of community and community-building through support for inclusive services and facilities, town-wide events, multi-generational activities, and community gathering places.
- **Healthy Lifestyles:** Enhance the health and wellness of residents through public health initiatives, educational, social and recreational opportunities; create the conditions for healthy lifestyles through easy access to healthful food, medical and psychological care, support systems, non-motorized transportation options, and town facilities.

## B. Goals And Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<b><i>Wellesley fosters formal and informal connections among neighbors and peers to strengthen social capital and intergenerational ties.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt and incorporate deliberate approaches that increase inclusivity and reduce the risk of social isolation.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley supports the mental and emotional wellness of children and youth to reduce the potential for self-harm and to increase opportunities for positive social interaction among all youth in town.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enact changes that decrease the incidence and rates of poor mental health and associated behaviors, especially for those 18 years of age and under.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley prioritizes walkability and open space to promote physical activity and exposure to outdoor natural environments.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase exposure and access to green spaces and active transportation facilities in order to provide all residents the opportunity for associated positive health benefits like reduced stress, opportunities for physical activity, reduced risk of injury from traffic crashes, and more social connections.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley addresses environmental hazards to reduce resident exposure to substances that diminish the quality of life in town.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize or eliminate exposure of residents to environmentally hazardous materials and pollutants.</li> </ul>

\* A stand-alone Health Element, developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, appears in Appendix A.

<p><b>Wellesley increases the availability of indoor and outdoor recreational space so that all residents have places to be physically active, to socialize, and to relax.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance school, municipal, and community needs for use of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities like school gyms, playing fields, and park spaces.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Wellesley considers health impacts of proposed projects and policies by integrating a health and equity lens into local decision-making.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systematize the consideration of health and equity impacts as part of decision making on new projects, programs, and policies.</li> </ul>

## C. Findings And Challenges

### Findings

- Evidence shows that how we plan and build communities affects the health and wellness of residents. Although these figures are not exact, collective research focused on the history of what causes disease suggests that roughly 60% of our health is determined by social, environmental, and behavioral factors shaped by the context in which we live and the choices we can afford. Source: County Health Rankings.
- According to data on hospitalizations, health behaviors, and other key indicators of the health status in Wellesley, the town is generally healthier than other towns in the Commonwealth across nearly all health indicators. Wellesley also tends to be healthier than other towns in Norfolk and Middlesex counties, and even outperforms comparison communities for certain key indicators, including aging and mortality. The town did not perform statistically significantly worse than communities statewide on any indicator. An important caveat is that these data do not take into account the distribution of various conditions in Wellesley, and therefore they don't identify any populations that are disproportionately burdened by poor health or worse opportunity. Sources: Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative.
- The proportion of youth that is overweight or obese in the town has remained consistent over the last decade, and the number of students who report exercising more than 60 minutes five or more days a week has increased over the last five years. However, youth in the MetroWest region, including Wellesley, have been becoming increasingly stressed and depressed over the last 10 years, and the percentage who report suicide attempts, self-injury, or the contemplation of suicide has not declined over this same period (2006-2016). Source: MetroWest Adolescent Survey.
- Wellesley's older adults are overwhelmingly healthier than the state average, even when compared to similar measures. In particular, Wellesley is the only one of the comparison towns to perform statistically significantly better than the state for the one-year age-adjusted mortality rate. The only issues where Wellesley performs similarly to the state are the percentage of older adults who drink excessively and the percentage who were injured in a fall in the previous 3 months. Source: Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative.
- Based on an indicator of the distribution of income, Wellesley's income distribution is estimated to be more equal now than it was five years previously. Although this is important—because disparities in the distribution and access to goods and resources is linked to worse health for the overall population—it must be interpreted with caution, because it doesn't describe *how* the town became more equitable. For example, the equalizing of the distribution could be due to moderate-income families' leaving Wellesley or to a greater proportion of wealthy individuals moving into the community.
- There were more than 4,300 reported roadway crashes between 2010 and 2014. Of these, 14 percent (614) resulted in injury or death. Ninety percent of the crashes involved two or more vehicles, with the remainder involving bicyclists or pedestrians. Four people died in the crashes, including one pedestrian fatality.

## Challenges

- Increasing rates of stress and mental health issues, particularly amongst youth aged between 9th and 12th grade.
- Potential for social isolation among current older residents (65 years old and older) of the town who live alone and given the projected increase in older adults
- Potential for social isolation among residents who have limited income, transportation, or housing options in the town. These groups face barriers in accessing opportunities in town and realizing the health benefits that accrue with these beneficial opportunities.
- Traffic safety, real and perceived, among non-motorists which has an effect on whether residents feel comfortable choosing to walk or bike to their destination and in the case of families, allowing their children to walk or bike in the town.
- Climate change, which has the potential to exacerbate health conditions due to higher temperatures, increased precipitation, extreme weather events, and new disease vectors.
- Environmental health realities and concern as more residents are exposed to potentially harmful materials like pesticides and to air pollutants such as vehicle emissions and gas leaks.

## D. What The Community Said

The Health and Wellness element involved meetings of a health-specific working group, facilitation of a stand-alone public workshop, and participation in Steering Committee meetings and general workshops. Through these engagements, working group members and other participants highlighted issues most important to them.

- **Pollution**
  - › Reduce, and eliminate where possible, the potential for exposure to harmful materials in the town. Include pesticides and chemical exposures from gas leaks and vehicle emissions.
  - › Clean up sites, such as Paint Shop Pond, that are or may be environmentally contaminated.
- **Social Isolation and Barriers**
  - › Address how this does and can affect older adults.

- › Identify how to include residents who have limited incomes and may be physically isolated due to available housing options.
- › Expand consideration of who may be socially isolated to include new mothers and caretakers, as they may be overlooked while experiencing similar issues due to what is happening in their lives (e.g., at home with newborn child, caring for a parent with dementia, etc.).
- › Address Route 9 as a social barrier, as it physically separates the north and south sides of Wellesley.
- **Mental health**
  - › Reduce rates of stress and mental health issues, particularly among young residents in the 9th through 12th grades.
  - › Recognize the causes and impact of poor mental health generally and provide examples of specific ways to respond and support those who experience it.
- **What works in Wellesley:**
  - › Reflect characteristics of successful efforts and projects in Wellesley. Characteristics of successful past efforts are 1) building on a shared vision, 2) using a transparent process to advance and implement recommendation, and 3) identifying action that addresses multiple needs and opportunities at the same time. As an example, the Fuller Brook Park project addressed a critical stormwater issue for the town while helping to meet several other goals, including access improvements for people with physical disabilities, maintenance of historic elements, and creation of off-road recreational amenities.
- **Walkability, Traffic, and Safety:**
  - › Increase walkability so that the town achieves higher rates of physical activity among residents.
  - › Maintain and enhance current sidewalk infrastructure.
  - › Focus particularly on walking accessibility and safety for children, adolescents and older residents.
  - › Improve perceptions of safety, as well as eliminating the potential for serious crashes, for those walking and biking in town.
  - › Reduce vehicle speeds on arterials—particularly Route 9—and local roadways.
- **Unstructured Play and Socializing**
  - › Create spaces for structured and unstructured recreational activities, particularly for youth.

- › Create more places for people of all ages to meet one another and build relationships. Look for opportunities like small outdoor meeting spaces in each neighborhood as well as town events and programs that bring together residents from various communities in Wellesley.
- **Open Space and Water Resources**
  - › Maintain and increase the amount of greenery and green spaces in town. Residents appreciate these natural assets, whether they're located on public or private property.
  - › Protect water resources, including the 10 ponds in town and the Charles River, and the lands adjacent to them, which protect the health of the aquifer that supplies town's drinking water.
- **Disparities**
  - › Create more opportunities for those who experience disparities in the town, such as people with limited incomes, residents in subsidized housing, and people with disabilities. Opportunities include improved transportation access, improved access to full-service grocery stores, and greater inclusion in town activities and benefits.
- **Operationalize Planning for Health**
  - › Educate town officials and residents about health

issues and how the built, social, and natural environments contribute to them.

- › Develop methods, like a checklist, to make sure the town considers health explicitly in decision-making processes.

## E. Strategies And Actions To Achieve The Goals

### GOAL 1: WELLESLEY FOSTERS FORMAL AND INFORMAL CONNECTIONS AMONG NEIGHBORS AND PEERS TO STRENGTHEN SOCIAL CAPITAL AND INTERGENERATIONAL TIES.

#### Policy

- Adopt and incorporate deliberate approaches that increase inclusivity and reduce the risk of social isolation

#### STRATEGIES

### A. Promote public spaces in each neighborhood for residents to share experiences and strengthen social capital.<sup>2</sup>

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Identify or develop publicly-accessible spaces as physical community hubs in each neighborhood in Wellesley.</i> The purpose of the hubs, which could be a park, playground, or cafe, is to provide a known location for neighbors to connect with one another, formally and informally. These spaces could also be programmed to welcome new residents into the neighborhood and to host in-person “collider” events for sharing and learning about each other’s skills and interests.	2018-2022	Council on Aging; Youth Commission; Board of Health; Art Groups

## B. Sustain and enhance community arts programs with a focus on inclusivity.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Sustain current arts programming in town.</i> Evidence suggests that community arts programs can improve social networks and relationships and promote community involvement. See Chapter 5.	2018-2022	Library; Arts groups
ii. <i>Hold at least two arts programs each year that promote cultural equity.</i> These events would promote cultural inclusivity for everyone, especially those who have been historically underrepresented.	2018-2022 and ongoing	Library; Arts groups

<sup>2</sup> “Social capital refers to the collective value of all ‘social networks’ [who people know] and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other [‘norms of reciprocity’].” Source: <http://robertdputnam.com/bowling-alone/social-capital-primer/>

<sup>3</sup> County Health Rankings: What Works for Health. “Community arts programs.” <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/community-arts-programs>

**C. Adopt an age-friendly, intergenerational approach to the development of community buildings and spaces.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Adopt guidance related to universal design and accessibility for publicly-accessible buildings and spaces so that these places become more accessible and inviting to people of all ages and abilities. Consider seeking designation for town as age- and dementia-friendly.</i>	2018-2022	Town Meeting
<i>ii. Expand opportunities for children, youth, and older residents to connect and interact.<sup>4</sup> Examples include programs such as intergenerational mentoring<sup>5</sup> where older residents are matched as mentors to high school students, and mixed-use developments such as siting a daycare center in or alongside an assisted-living facility.</i>	2018-2022	Council on Aging; Youth Commission; Library

**GOAL 2: WELLESLEY SUPPORTS THE MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLNESS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH TO REDUCE THE POTENTIAL FOR SELF-HARM AND TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES AMONG ALL YOUTH IN TOWN.**

**Policy**

- Enact changes that decrease the incidence and rates of poor mental health and associated behaviors, especially for those 18 years old and under in Wellesley.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Promote Wellesley as a stigma-free municipality.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Conduct an annual town-wide communications campaign to reduce the perception of stigma for receiving mental and emotional support. The initiative, which may be new or expand on existing efforts<sup>6</sup>, should include information about mental health literacy and language, peer mentoring, and how parents and older adults can model stigma-free behavior.</i>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Board of Health
<i>ii. Hold annual community conversations to discuss mental health challenges in the community [e.g., suicide] and reinforce a town-wide stigma-free approach by sharing resources and supportive behaviors [e.g., Wellesley Acts].</i>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Board of Health

<sup>4</sup> Grantmakers in Aging. “Children, youth, families ... and aging” (toolkit). <https://www.giaging.org/resources/gia-toolkit/children-youth-and-families-and-aging/>

<sup>5</sup> County Health Rankings: What Works for Health. “Intergenerational mentoring.” <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/intergenerational-mentoring>

<sup>6</sup> The Wellesley Health Department currently provides funding for mental health support in the community and has developed a resource guides for parents and residents of all ages: <http://wellesleyma.gov/204/Mental-Health-Resources>

**B. Continue focus on school-based social and emotional instruction and engage in continuous communications about this work with all residents.<sup>7</sup>**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Enhance public school programs in place to provide social and emotional support (e.g., BRIDGE program). Enhance these programs, as well as others,<sup>8</sup> as MetroWest or town data indicate that the percentages of youth living with depression or other mental health issues are significantly reduced, with the goal of eliminating the issue. The school system should also consider implementing a universal school-based suicide awareness and education program, if not already in place.<sup>9</sup> Measure progress through reductions in reported percentages of youth considering harmful behaviors or mental health issues according to town (e.g., Stanford Survey) or MetroWest Health Foundation surveys.</i></p>	<p>2018-2022 and ongoing</p>	<p>Board of Health</p>

**C. Promote unstructured play and offer time and space for it to occur.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Identify spaces and provide resources that support more unstructured play among youth and children in town. There is evidence that associations exist between unstructured, self-directed play and higher rates of creativity, pro-social behaviors, and rates of physical activity<sup>10</sup>—all outcomes that are also associated with better mental health outcomes. Explore making more space available for unstructured play (e.g., playgrounds and fields), more time (e.g., extended recesses, after-school programs), and support for parents (e.g., informational materials and volunteer supervisors).</i></p>	<p>2018-2022 and ongoing</p>	<p>Board of Health</p>

**GOAL 3: WELLESLEY PRIORITIZES WALKABILITY AND OPEN SPACE TO PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND EXPOSURE TO OUTDOOR NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS**

**Policy**

- Increase exposure and access to green spaces and active transportation facilities in order to provide all residents the opportunity for associated positive health benefits like reduced stress, opportunities for physical activity, reduced risk of injury from traffic crashes, and additional social connections.

<sup>7</sup> County Health Rankings: What Works for Health. “Community arts programs.” <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/community-arts-programs>

<sup>8</sup> Local non-profits, such as Community Investors (<http://communityinvestors.net/>), also provide programs for and focus resources on improving adolescent wellness.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/universal-school-based-suicide-awareness-education-programs>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4483712/>

## STRATEGIES

### A. Adopt policies that promote and protect active transportation.

ACTIONS	WHEN & WHO
i. <i>Adopt a Complete Streets policy to ensure creation or preservation of sidewalks, side paths, bicycle facilities, and transit stops.</i> In addition, adopt a Vision Zero approach <sup>11</sup> with a goal of eliminating crash-related fatalities and serious injuries. Evidence on both policies indicates that they are associated with increases in physical activity and reduction in crash-related injuries and death. <sup>12, 13</sup>	See Chapter 10–Mobility
ii. <i>Adopt a data-driven traffic safety policy with the goal of eliminating fatalities and injuries from roadway crashes in Wellesley.</i>	See Chapter 10–Mobility

### B. Create a sidewalk-improvement fund.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Establish a sidewalk-improvement fund for the town to provide a mechanism for waiving sidewalk requirements (where allowable) and to collect a payment in lieu of funds, which would be deposited into an enterprise fund.</i> The enterprise fund can then be used to invest in sidewalk infrastructure in key locations (e.g., identified locations in the Complete Streets prioritization plan). The Town of Stow has a sidewalk improvement fund that can serve as an example for local action.	2018-2022 and ongoing	Board of Selectman; DPW

### C. Enhance tree protection and planting.

ACTIONS	WHEN & WHO
i. <i>Enhance enforcement (in accordance with tree-preservation and -protection bylaw) to ensure protection of trees and significant vegetation that could be affected by public or private developments.</i> In addition, provide more resources for and promote the town’s tree-planting program. These actions would maintain and expand exposure to green spaces and help mitigate the impacts of urban heat islands, <sup>14</sup> which affect people with chronic diseases like diabetes and asthma. <sup>15</sup> The Town should diversify species used in the planting program to reflect anticipated future climate conditions (such as higher average temperatures) and anticipated new vectors (such as invasive insect species). <sup>16</sup>	See Chapter 4–Natural Resources

<sup>11</sup> Vision Zero sets a target of eliminating all serious injuries and deaths due to road traffic crashes. The approach focuses on how we design and operate our roadway system so that we prevent the potential for death or serious injury for roadway users, especially those who are most vulnerable. First adopted in Sweden, Vision Zero has reduced deaths from Swedish road traffic crashes by 50% since 2000. Changes in planning and design, technology, education, and enforcement have together created a system that protects the lives of motorists and non-motorists alike.

<sup>12</sup> Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention, “The Community Guide: Physical Activity.” <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-built-environment-approaches>.

<sup>13</sup> Swedish Transport Administration, “Analysis of road safety trends 2014 - management by objectives for road safety work towards the 2020 interim targets” [https://trafikverket.ineko.se/Files/sv-SE/12138/RelatedFiles/2015\\_103\\_analysis\\_of\\_road\\_safety\\_trends.pdf](https://trafikverket.ineko.se/Files/sv-SE/12138/RelatedFiles/2015_103_analysis_of_road_safety_trends.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> Environmental Protection Agency, “Using Trees and Vegetation to Reduce Heat Islands,” <https://www.epa.gov/heat-islands/using-trees-and-vegetation-reduce-heat-islands>.

<sup>15</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Climate Change and Extreme Heat: What you can do to prepare,” <https://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/pubs/extreme-heat-guidebook.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> United State Department of Agriculture, “Climate Change Tree Atlas,” <https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/atlas/tree/#>

## D. Create incentives for preserving natural resources on development sites.

ACTIONS	WHEN & WHO
<p><i>i. Adopt guidance—regulatory or promotional—for maintaining as much natural, healthy vegetation as possible on developments site, especially redevelopment projects.</i> Instances of clear-cutting of neighboring properties have resulted in increased water runoff in addition to the reduced aesthetic appeal resulting from the removal of trees and ground cover.</p>	See Chapter 4–Natural Resources and Chapter 12–Sustainability

### GOAL 4: WELLESLEY ADDRESSES ENVIRONMENT HAZARDS TO REDUCE RESIDENT EXPOSURE TO SUBSTANCES THAT REDUCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE

#### Policy

- Minimize or eliminate exposure of residents to environmentally hazardous materials and pollutants.

#### STRATEGIES

##### A. Implement best practices for elimination of gas leaks.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Assess and update regulations and practices in order to reduce exposure to harmful pollutants while modernizing infrastructure.</i> Specific supporting activities include sustained coordination between road maintenance and utility infrastructure construction; priority for repairs of high-volume leaks in sensitive locations (e.g., near elementary schools); and adoption of protective policies that expedite the repair of gas leaks. Refer to MAPC’s assessment guide for additional supporting activities: <a href="http://fixourpipes.org/best-practices/">http://fixourpipes.org/best-practices/</a></p>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Board of Health; DPW

##### B. Promote best practices for pest management on private properties.

ACTIONS	WHEN & WHO
<p><i>i. Identify policies and materials that can encourage private land owners to adopt practices that eliminate the use of pest-control substances with toxic and environmentally hazardous materials.</i> Reduced use of these toxic materials is associated with positive effects on people with chronic diseases (e.g., asthma) and lessens exposure to potential carcinogens. Use existing regulations as well as state resources to showcase integrated pest management (IPM) as a preferred approach.</p>	See Chapter 4–Natural Resources and Chapter 12–Sustainability

##### C. Protect water resources.

ACTIONS	WHEN & WHO
<p><i>i. Give priority to policies and land protection (e.g., easement, purchase) that prevent development of potentially environmentally harmful uses on lands adjacent to water resources and water-recharge areas.</i></p>	See Chapter 4–Natural Resources and Chapter 12–Sustainability

<sup>17</sup> Environmental Protection Agency, “Introduction to Integrated Pest Management,” <https://www.epa.gov/managing-pests-schools/introduction-integrated-pest-management#Benefits>

<sup>18</sup> Massachusetts Executive Office for Administration and Finance, “Integrated Pest Management,” <http://www.mass.gov/anf/budget-taxes-and-procurement/procurement-info-and-res/procurement-prog-and-serv/epp-procurement-prog/green-products-and-serv/specific-epp-statewide-contracts/integrated-pest-management.html>.

<sup>19</sup> For reference: MDPH conducted a survey to assessing capacity of local health departments to address climate change in 2013. The report is a useful guide for preparation: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/environmental/exposure/climate-change-report-2014.pdf>

## D. Prepare for climate change impacts on health.

ACTIONS	WHEN & WHO
<p>i. <i>Develop an action plan that addresses potential impacts of climate change on health and resiliency of town residents.</i> Climate change will exacerbate existing health conditions, such as asthma and cardiovascular disease, and lead to the emergence of new vector- and water-borne diseases. Wellesley’s local public health infrastructure should have the resources to plan for and prepare for these potential impacts.</p>	See Chapter 12.

### GOAL 5: WELLESLEY OPTIMIZES THE AVAILABILITY OF INDOOR AND OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL SPACE SO THAT ALL RESIDENTS HAVE PLACES TO BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE, TO SOCIALIZE, AND TO RELAX.

#### Policy

- Find balance between school, municipal, and

community needs for use of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities like gyms, playing fields, and park spaces.

#### STRATEGIES

##### A. Review existing and consider additional shared use opportunities at recreational facilities.

ACTIONS	WHEN & WHO
<p>i. <i>Investigate existing shared use opportunities that provide for resident and community access to public indoor and outdoor facilities for exercise and other social and recreational activities<sup>21</sup>.</i> Use existing guides, such as the toolkit from the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation at the Harvard School of Public Health<sup>22</sup>, to assess current arrangements and consider updates to reflect recommended standards and practices.</p>	See Chapter 6.
<p>ii. <i>Consider establishing arrangements for the shared use of public indoor and outdoor recreational facilities for which no such arrangement currently exists.</i></p>	See Chapter 6.

## B. Implement Supportive Community Programs for All Ages.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p>i. <i>Establish municipal- and community-led programs in publicly-accessible spaces and at times convenient for residents.</i> Some programs should occur during open periods made possible by shared use agreement. These programs should have reduced or subsidized costs and be available for smaller groups who can use the space(s) at the same time. Variations on this could involve shared events for youth and older residents in order to encourage more intergenerational interaction; making space available for older residents and those with limited incomes to engage in group exercise; and programs for at-home parents with young children who are seeking to meet neighbors and socialize.</p>	2022-2028	Recreation Commission; Youth Commission; Council on Aging; Library

<sup>20</sup> For reference: MDPH conducted a survey to assessing capacity of local health departments to address climate change in 2013. The report is a useful guide for preparation: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/environmental/exposure/climate-change-report-2014.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/shared-use-agreements>

<sup>22</sup> Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation and the Harvard School of Public Health, “Massachusetts Joint Use Toolkit,” <http://www.chlpi.org/joint-use-toolkit/>

**GOAL 6: WELLESLEY CONSIDERS HEALTH IMPACTS OF PROPOSED PROJECTS AND POLICIES BY INTEGRATING A HEALTH AND EQUITY LENS INTO LOCAL DECISION-MAKING.**

**Policies**

- Systematize the consideration of health and equity impacts as part of decision-making on

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Use a checklist to assist in decision-making.**

ACTIONS	WHEN & WHO
<p><i>i. Use a checklist to assist in understanding how municipal decisions affect health conditions in the town.</i> A prototype checklist is presented in the Appendix to this chapter as an initial model to assist in local decision-making on proposed projects and policies in Wellesley. Decision-makers and residents can use this checklist to assess proposals quickly and have an informed discussion about potential positive and negative effects on public health generally and in relation to specific people in the town [e.g., people of color, older adults, households with limited incomes, etc.].</p>	<p>See Chapter 13.</p>

**B. Conduct equity impact assessments.**

ACTIONS	WHEN & WHO
<p><i>i. Develop and apply an equity impact assessment tool for proposed policies and projects in the town.</i> The tool would explore how a project may disproportionately impact populations already experiencing disparities. Initial assessments should focus on significant proposals and be voluntary to explore how the process and assessment findings work within Wellesley decision-making processes. A model to consider is Race Forward’s Racial Equity Toolkit [developed for Seattle] which lays out a process and offers a ready to use worksheet.<sup>23</sup></p>	<p>See Chapter 13.</p>

**C. Increase resources available for community health and to enhance the health department’s role in community planning.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Consider increases in funding and support for the Wellesley Health Department to sustain existing programs and enforcement activities while allowing staff engagement in implementation of the Unified Plan.</i> Staff from the Health Department can act as stewards of the Health and Wellness Element and use the process to engage other partners from the community health and health care sectors.</p>	<p>2022-2028</p>	<p>Board of Health, Board of Selectmen, and Town Meeting</p>

<sup>23</sup> City of Seattle, “Racial Equity Toolkit to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs, and Budget Issues,” <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/opi/healthequity/resources/seattle-toolkit.html>

## Example of a Health/Equity Checklist for Development

### 1 Housing quality and design

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal address the housing needs of older people and disabled individuals, (e.g., smaller units, assisted living, and connections with supportive services)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include homes that can be adapted to support independent living for older and disabled people?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include a range of housing types and sizes, including affordable housing responding to local housing needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

<sup>24</sup> Source: The checklist design and contents are based on the London Healthy Urban Development Unit Rapid Health Impact Assessment Tool: <http://www.healthyrbandevelopment.nhs.uk/our-services/delivering-healthy-urban-development/health-impact-assessment/>.

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal contain homes that are highly energy efficient (e.g. a high LEED rating, ENERGY STAR compliant, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 2 Access to healthcare services and other social infrastructure

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal provide or retain connections to social or supportive services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal assess impacts on healthcare services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal assess the capacity, location and accessibility of other local community institutions (e.g., schools, social care and community facilities)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal explore opportunities for shared community use and co-location of services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

### 3 Access to open space and nature

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal retain and enhance existing open and natural or recreational spaces?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
In areas with limited green space, does the proposal provide new open or natural space, or improve access to open spaces or off-road trails?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal provide a range of play spaces for children and young people?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal provide links between open and natural spaces and community institutions like schools?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Are the open and natural spaces welcoming and safe and accessible for all?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal set out how new open space will be managed and maintained?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

#### 4 Air quality and Noise

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal minimize construction impacts such as dust, noise, vibration and odors?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal minimize air pollution caused by vehicular traffic?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal minimize night time light pollution?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 5 Accessibility and Active Transportation

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal prioritize and encourage walking (such as through sidewalks, sidepaths, or trails)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal prioritize and encourage cycling (for example by providing secure cycle parking, cycle lanes, or shared use paths)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal connect new active transportation facilities and internal routes to local and strategic cycle and walking networks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include traffic management and calming measures to help minimize road injuries and increase feelings of safety from vehicle traffic?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Is the proposal connected to public transport or local shuttle services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal encourage active transportation by reducing distance and barriers to local goods and services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal seek to reduce car use by reducing parking requirements and/or supporting shared parking and car services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal allow people with disabilities to access buildings and places?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 6 Crime Reduction and Community Safety

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal incorporate elements of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) (e.g., natural surveillance, maintenance schedule, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal incorporate design techniques to help people feel secure?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include attractive, multi-use public spaces and buildings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Has engagement and consultation been carried out with the local community?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 7 Access to Healthy Food

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal facilitate the supply of local food (e.g., community garden plots, community farms, and/or farmers' markets)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Is there a range of retail uses, including food stores and convenience stores that offer healthy and/or local foods?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal avoid contributing to a concentration of fast food establishments?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 8 Access to Work and Training

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal provide access to local employment and training opportunities, including temporary construction and permanent 'jobs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal provide childcare facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include managed and affordable workspace for local businesses?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include opportunities for procurement of goods or services from local businesses?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 9 Social cohesion and age friendly neighborhoods

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal connect with existing neighborhoods (e.g., layout and facilities which avoid physical barriers and obstacles, land uses and spaces which encourage social interaction)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include a mix of uses and a range of community facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal provide opportunities for the voluntary and community organizations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal create environments that people of all ages and abilities can access and enjoy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

**10 Resource Utilization and Sustainable Design**

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal incorporate renewable energy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal ensure that buildings and spaces are designed to reduce energy needs in winter and summer seasons (e.g., building orientation, ventilation, shading, landscaping)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal maintain or enhance biodiversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal incorporate sustainable stormwater drainage techniques?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	



# *Economic Development*

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**A**lthough most Wellesley residents think of the commercial villages as the focus of the town's economic development, Wellesley is also an employment center. In addition to the colleges, there is major office development at the eastern end of the town near I-95. Commercial development benefits the Town by generating tax revenues yet not requiring many of the services residents expect, such as the public schools. Residents ideally want the commercial villages to be occupied by independent businesses that can meet their needs. There is also a desire for more gathering places, including family-friendly cafés and restaurants, and some residents think the alcohol rules in Wellesley are out of date. High rents for Wellesley storefronts can attract real estate offices and banks that many residents feel do not serve local needs or contribute to the vibrancy of the commercial villages.

The Town of Wellesley's approach to economic development has traditionally been hands-off, perhaps only reacting when symptoms of a larger problem have grown more visible. There is no staff with direct responsibility for economic development. Staff of the Selectmen's Office and Planning Department work with merchant groups on an ad hoc basis. Temporary committees are formed in retail downturns when empty storefronts proliferate and are disbanded when the storefronts gain tenants. There is no recruitment of desired businesses. The Town pays little attention to the office parks and office buildings, most of which were built decades ago. The 2007 Comprehensive Plan recommended that

Wellesley hire a part-time or full-time economic development staff person to work with retailers and the non-retail businesses. This plan reiterates that recommendation.

Wellesley is very lucky to have its traditional commercial villages, as well as two grocery stores and other clusters of retail, but Wellesley residents cannot assume that traditional retailing will continue as usual. Retail all over the country is going through complex transformations—online shopping; excess capacity; and consumers’ shifting their spending from things to experiences, such as dining and travel. In 2016, Americans spent more money in restaurants and bars than they did in grocery stores.<sup>1</sup> Storefront rents in Wellesley are high, which can make it difficult for independent retailers to enter the market. Commercial districts in many Massachusetts towns and cities have found success with cooperative management and events, “buy local” campaigns, incentives to support independent retailers, and more “experiential” shopping. This requires somebody to manage the retail sphere. A successful model that has been used around the country is Main Street America’s approach to revitalizing commercial districts, which could be modified for Wellesley.



Main Street America approach to keeping commercial districts healthy, from [www.mainstreet.org/mainstreetamerica/theapproach](http://www.mainstreet.org/mainstreetamerica/theapproach)

The office districts provide different kinds of opportunities for Wellesley. Most of the office construction dates from the 1980s, though some buildings have been renovated. The proximity of I-95/128 makes the locations very attractive and also limits the impact of these developments on Wellesley’s traditional residential neighborhoods. The office buildings attract tenants today because of the location. New office development along I-95 in neighboring communities is increasing competition for tenants. By changing the zoning to allow more density and multifamily development, along with appropriate design guidelines, the Town will benefit over time from more tax revenue as redevelopment occurs.

### **Supporting town government concepts**

*The Unified Plan’s emphasis on making town government more customer-centric, data-driven, and strategic, and transparent is reflected in several of this chapter’s policies and strategies: creation of a database of Wellesley businesses; organized liaison with businesses; proactive rather than reactive approach.*

<sup>1</sup> Derek Thompson, “What in the World Is Causing the Retail Meltdown of 2017?,” *The Atlantic*, (April 10, 2017), <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/04/retail-meltdown-of-2017/522384/>

## A. Economic Development in the Vision and Values



### VISION

In 2040... Wellesley is a town recognized for its dynamic and thriving business community...



### VALUES

- **Business-Friendly:** Support existing and new businesses in commercial areas that complement and enhance our community, while protecting quality of life and environmental resources.
- **Collaboration:** Leverage resources and expertise of local private businesses and institutions, as well as neighboring towns and regional agencies, to achieve mutual goals.
- **Town Character:** Establish policies, practices, and criteria for the preservation of the character of the town’s residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and open spaces.

## B. Goals and Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<i>Wellesley commercial villages have a diverse array of independent businesses and retain their small-business, walkable character</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and support small business development to serve residents and visitors.</li> </ul>
<i>Wellesley commercial areas have a mixture of uses.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote mixed-use development and redevelopment at key sites in commercial areas.</li> </ul>
<i>An economic development staff member actively advances Town economic development goals by working with retail, service, office and institutional groups and businesses.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider establishing an economic development position, either full- or half-time.</li> </ul>
<i>Wellesley’s office districts have new zoning to support redevelopment to increase tax revenue potential and meet other town goals.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support rezoning of single-use office districts.</li> </ul>



## C. Findings and Challenges

### Findings

- Wellesley is an employment center as well as a bedroom community, with most jobs in the Wellesley Office Park, the town’s colleges, and the commercial village districts.
  - More people are employed in the education, insurance, health care, and professional services sectors than in retail. The biggest private employers are Sun Life Assurance and Wellesley College.
  - A substantial minority of the Wellesley labor force works in town. In 2000, MAPC data showed home-town employment as 35%. More recent data based on the percentage of the labor force that works at home or walks to work, suggest that this relatively high percentage employed in Wellesley continues to be the case.
  - As is the case in many affluent communities, the commercial villages tend to attract upscale stores and some chain retail because store rents tend to be high, which is related to high real estate values in the town. High rents can be a barrier to entry for new independent retailers
  - Some residents find it more difficult to do simple errands for daily life in the villages without having to drive.
  - The biggest business sectors in Wellesley are educational services, finance and insurance, healthcare and social assistance, and professional, scientific and tech services. Together these types of businesses provided 64% of the 16,710 jobs in Wellesley as of September 2016.
- Wellesley has three traditional commercial/retail villages: Wellesley Square, Wellesley Hills, and Lower Falls. In addition, Linden Square, and the Fells area on Weston Road offer retail shopping.
  - Nineteen percent of Wellesley’s retail establishments are eating and drinking places like restaurants, 18% are home furnishing stores and 13% sell apparel and accessories.
  - Primary centers of employment in Wellesley include the three colleges, the office parks at Walnut Street and William Street (across I-95/Rt 128) and the retail centers like Wellesley Square and Linden Square.
  - Employed Wellesley residents tend to work in knowledge-worker positions in education, health care, professional services, finance, and management. Wellesley residents typically have a lower unemployment rate than the state average: 2.5% in Wellesley compared to 2.7% in Massachusetts in late 2016, according to the Massachusetts Department of Labor and Workforce Development.



- Keeping a local retail and business mix in the commercial villages that is also responsive to changes in the marketplace.
- Keeping retail that supplies daily needs in the commercial villages.
- Attracting desired retail when storefronts become empty.
- Maximizing the benefit to the town of the office park properties.
- Redeveloping older office properties.
- Creating mixed-use opportunities for both commercial and housing benefits.

## D. What The Community Said

### Themes

- Right mix of resident-serving businesses in commercial villages
- More gathering places like restaurants and cafes—focusing on “experience” retail and services
- Need for an arts/performance space as an anchor

### Comments from focus groups and interviews

“Maintain the charm of downtown....love places to gather like restaurants with outdoor seating.”

“There’s a function that retail plays in building community.”

“Make sure we are replacing [retail] vacancies with the right stores....We need to coordinate more with landlords.”

“We could become a destination for retail...a performance space would anchor businesses for the evening.”

“The tax burden on single story commercial buildings is nearing Boston levels....Single story buildings [need to] increase in height to 3-4 stories.”

“The Town should facilitate redevelopment of the office park with infrastructure and zoning. The offices are aging and need renovation. Local people go there to set up offices.”

### Workshop

- Economic development is very important to Wellesley—for quality of schools and services
- Retain the character of commercial centers
- Bring business development to the Rte. 128 area
- Parking is essential—consider upper deck parking.
- The majority of participants agreed that the Town should be more proactive about economic development and have a staff person with responsibility for it.

### Business survey

A business survey was sent to business groups and owners. There were 48 responses, of which 45% were located in Wellesley Square, 60% had been in Wellesley ten or more years, and 53% were Wellesley residents.

- Best thing about having a business in Wellesley:

- › Location, convenience, amenities
- › Living and working locally
- › Access to affluent customers and their support for local business
- › Downtown area still has character
- › “The community. The businesses are finding it difficult to remain in business with the competition from the Internet. We need to make the business areas more friendly and accessible.”

- Biggest challenges:

- › High rents
- › Lack of parking
- › “Parking, traffic, inability to apply for permits electronically, and having to deal with myriad departments without a single point of contact, and not having a single person...who can coordinate and make decisions.”
- › “Summers—with so many people going away, July & August are tough”
- › “The profound change in shopping habits of the American consumer. Everyday more consumers shop online, and by aggressively handing out parking tickets the town is scaring away the few remaining customers who shop in brick & mortar stores.”

### WHAT IS A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID)?

- BIDs are authorized by M.G.L. Chapter 400.
- A contiguous geographic area in which at least 75% of the land is zoned or used for commercial, retail, industrial, or mixed uses.
- Established through a local petition, representing at least 60% of property owners and at least 51% of assessed valuation, and public hearing process.
- Delineation of boundaries
- Proposed improvement plan and budget
- Assessment/fee structure.
- Rights and powers include retaining or recruiting business; promoting economic development; managing parking; and leasing, owning, acquiring, or optioning real property.

[http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart\\_growth\\_toolkit/pages/mod-bid.html](http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/mod-bid.html)

## E. STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS

### GOAL 1: WELLESLEY COMMERCIAL VILLAGES HAVE A DIVERSE ARRAY OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESSES.

#### Policy

- Promote and support small business development to serve residents and visitors.

### STRATEGIES

- A. Support merchants' associations and the Chamber of Commerce to support retail in the commercial districts.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Help organize merchants' associations in retail villages other than Wellesley Square or the development of a town-wide merchants' association encompassing all retail areas.</i>	2022-2028	Selectmen's Office; Planning Department; Economic Development staff
<i>ii. Assist these groups in programming events for retail areas.</i>	2022-2028	Selectmen's Office; Planning Department; Economic Development staff
<i>iii. Consider establishing a Business Improvement District to help fund management of retail areas.</i> Because the Wellesley retail areas are relatively small, it might be possible to create a set of linked BIDs with the same manager to include all commercial villages and retail areas.	2022-2028	Selectmen's Office; Planning Department; Economic Development staff
<i>iv. Create bike and pedestrian facilities to promote access and work with property owners and businesses to improve parking management.</i>	2018-2022	Mobility Committee; DPW
<i>v. Implement the Wellesley Square Wayfinding and Branding Project by installing signage. <a href="http://wellesleyma.gov/963/Wellesley-Square-Wayfinding-and-Branding">http://wellesleyma.gov/963/Wellesley-Square-Wayfinding-and-Branding</a></i>	2018-2022	Planning Department; DPW
<i>vi. Expand wayfinding signage to other commercial areas of Town (Lower Falls, Wellesley Hills, Linden Square, Fells)</i>		Selectmen's Office; Planning Department; DPW

**B. Recruit desired business types to empty storefronts.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Work to recruit restaurants, cafes, and other “gathering places” or “experience” businesses to the commercial villages by creating relationships with restaurant brokers.</i>	2018-2022	Economic Development staff
<i>ii. Provide incentives, such as tax abatements or rental assistance for limited periods for desired independent business types to locate in the commercial villages.</i> High rents in Wellesley can be a barrier to small businesses starting out. Incentives for a limited period, such as payment of a percentage of rent for two years, could help new independent businesses establish themselves and prove they have a market.	2022-2028	Board of Selectmen; Town Meeting; Economic development staff
<i>iii. Review alcohol service and common victualer regulations and modify them, if needed, to attract desired businesses.</i> Rather than focusing primarily on parking and traffic, address common victualer issues under zoning.	2022-2028	Economic development staff; Board of Selectmen; Town Meeting

**GOAL 2: WELLESLEY COMMERCIAL AREAS HAVE A MIXTURE OF USES.**

**Policy**

- Promote mixed-use development and redevelopment at key sites in commercial areas.

**STRATEGIES**

- A. Provide for zoning amendments and identify other changes to encourage mixed-use development, particularly housing, in commercial areas.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Explore the potential of “friendly 40B” mixed-income development in commercial areas.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board
<i>ii. Study the potential of allowing sufficient height and density in commercial villages to attract interest in redevelopment that includes upper-story housing, connectivity and parking solutions.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board
<i>iii. Amend the zoning bylaws and provide design guidelines for mixed-use development to avoid adverse impacts on nearby neighborhoods.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board
<i>iv. Consult with commercial property owners in developing regulations and frameworks for mixed-use development.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NEARBY NEEDHAM**

The Town added a full-time economic development director in 2007. Responsibilities include:

- Staffs economic development committees
- Serves as economic development liaison to local, state and federal agencies and groups that offer programs that enhance municipal economic development
- Provides assistance and support to local businesses when they interact with town departments

- Coordinates and communicates activities of various business and economic development groups in town
- Provides limited staff support to these groups where needed
- Works with Town departments to streamline permitting or make changes to the regulatory environment if they are acting as barriers to appropriate business development
- Maintains a real estate and business data base
- Researches economic trends and targets appropriate industries and land uses

**GOAL 3: AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STAFF MEMBER ACTIVELY ADVANCES TOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS BY WORKING WITH RETAIL, SERVICE, OFFICE AND INSTITUTIONAL GROUPS AND BUSINESSES.**

**Policy**

- Consider an economic development full- or half-time position.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Invest in proactive economic development by creating an economic development policy group and identifying a staff person.**

As is the case with mobility (see Chapter 10), economic development is intertwined with the

responsibilities of a variety of existing Town boards, commissions, and departments. The activities of an economic development staffer could include:

- Developing a database of businesses in town
- Maintaining regular communication/ liaison with business owners and property owners
- Providing permitting assistance for businesses
- Working on commercial village programming with merchants
- Recruiting desired business types or opportunities (e.g., coworking space, cafes, family-friendly restaurants)
- Leading an area and market study for upzoning/rezoning office districts

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Create an Economic Development Policy Committee under the Board of Selectmen to guide economic development activities.</i> The Committee should include representatives from the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Board of Public Works, and departmental staff.	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen
iii. <i>Hire an economic development specialist.</i> The Town may wish to begin with a half-time position and then evaluate the need for a full-time position.	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen



**GOAL 4: SUPPORT AND ENHANCE THE BUILD-OUT POTENTIAL OF NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY TO INCREASE TAX REVENUE POTENTIAL AND MEET OTHER TOWN GOALS.**

**Policy**

- Support additional allowed density in existing non-residential areas based on a study of potential benefits and adverse impacts.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Study options and take steps to upzone/rezone office districts**

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHO</b>
<i>i. Commission a study on the redevelopment of Wellesley's office districts.</i> Consult with property owners and tenants and include the potential for multifamily residential and service retail in the office districts, as well as appropriate environmental protections.	2018-2022	Planning Board; Economic Development Policy Committee
<i>ii. Prepare a market study and area plan.</i> Include considerations of transportation, parking, height and density, design and landscape, and infrastructure needs.	2018-2022	Planning Department; Economic Development staff person
<i>iii. Consider creating a TIF district to finance any needed infrastructure and/or public realm (streetscape and open space) improvements.</i> Tax-increment financing (TIF) is a redevelopment tool that allows for the increased value after redevelopment to be captured for public improvements in the redevelopment area. See MGL c.40, sec 59.	2022-2028	Planning Board; Planning Department; Economic Development staff person
<i>iv. Amend the zoning bylaw and other regulations to create the regulatory framework to allow redevelopment.</i> Require or provide incentives for “green” approaches to stormwater management, transportation, parking, and resource efficiency in order to make the redevelopment a model of sustainable development.	2018-2022	Planning Board

## PART IV

# Sustainable Systems and Networks

## CHAPTER 10 MOBILITY AND CIRCULATION

- Support a multimodal transportation system focused on neighborhood access to the commercial villages and town destinations and use multimodal level of service measures (MLOS) when making street improvements.
- Adopt a Complete Streets program and achieve certification with MassDOT to become eligible for funding to develop a safe and convenient multimodal system.
- Establish a mobility policy committee to provide ongoing policy guidance for town coordination and investment in transportation.
- Develop a bicycle and pedestrian network using “bicycle boulevards” and the “less-stress routes” approach of targeted investments in safe connections between existing low-stress streets and paths.
- Develop concepts and design for safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Route 9 and the railroad tracks.
- Pursue additional parking options for commercial villages, including management, structured parking, and bicycle parking.
- Seek improvement of transportation flow on regional routes by working with regional and state transportation agencies, publicizing bus access to commuter rail, and similar measures.

## CHAPTER 11 PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Continue to maintain a facilities master plan and capital improvements program (CIP), and identify how projects in the CIP are related to achievement of the Unified Plan vision and goals.
- Continue to maintain school excellence by proceeding with the adopted HHU Master Planning report through a feasibility study and implementation.
- Continue to maintain exceptional library services through use of technology, updates to meet evolving patron needs.
- When planning for improvements or new facilities, explore options to include community enrichment spaces and resources (such as meeting space, a gymnasium, and arts and culture space).
- Adopt a holistic and systematic evaluation rating system for infrastructure to create a common set of evaluation metrics across town government.
- Implement best management practices for stormwater that promote infiltration and improve water quality.

## CHAPTER 12 SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCE, AND GREEN PRACTICES

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state goals.
- Develop a yearly campaign with partners to raise public awareness about options to live more sustainably.
- Incorporate energy conservation and renewable energy sources into all existing and new Town facilities to reduce GHG emissions and work toward the maximum feasible and effective renewable electric energy use for town facilities to meet goals consistent with state goals in the coming decade.
- Incorporate sustainability and resilience, as appropriate, into the mission of every Town department and committee.
- Expand the number of electric vehicle charging stations in Wellesley.
- Promote green and sustainable building practices in the private sector through the Town’s development standards.
- Continue organic integrated pest management practices on all town properties.
- Raise public awareness and promote private landscape practices that are pesticide-free, avoid excess fertilizer runoff, avoid the use of invasive ornamental plants, and promote infiltration of stormwater.
- Take advantage of state and regional programs to prepare for climate change.

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# *Mobility and Circulation*

**M**obility affects everything and everyone in Wellesley: how people get to town destinations and travel to and from outside locations; the young, the old, the disabled and everyone else. Mobility is not just about traffic congestion and cars and trucks. It is not an issue only for the Board of Selectmen or Public Works. Today, communities of all types are pursuing the development of multimodal transportation networks, which address pedestrian and bicycle networks (known as “active transportation”) as well as transit and automobiles. Multimodalism means having an integrated approach to transportation—providing transportation choice. Wellesley’s transportation and mobility choices can affect town character, public health, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. The majority of participants in the Unified Plan process supported enhancing pedestrian and bicycle networks. As other towns develop their active transportation networks, Wellesley must keep up in order to be competitive.

### ***Supporting town government concepts***

*The Unified Plan’s emphasis on making town government more customer-focused, data-driven and strategic, and transparent is reflected in several of this chapter’s strategies: adoption of multimodal level of service measures and an interdisciplinary approach to mobility.*

## A. Mobility and Circulation In the Vision And Values



### VISION

In 2040...Wellesley is a town recognized for its welcoming community culture and exemplary town services; a quality of life that enhances the health and social well-being of its residents; respect for the environment and support for sustainability, conservation, and protection of physical and historical assets.



### VALUES

**Connectivity of People and Places:** Provide safe, accessible, and efficient transportation choices including public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle pathways, to connect people to town destinations and the region.

## B. Goals and Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<b><i>Wellesley has a multimodal transportation system focused around neighborhood access to the commercial villages and town destinations.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support use of multimodal level of service measures for all traffic and transportation improvement studies and projects.</li> <li>• Support creation of a safe pedestrian and bicycle network that connects town destinations.</li> <li>• Implement a Complete Streets program.</li> <li>• Support a school traffic demand-management program.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Parking to support commercial districts is well-managed.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support additional parking options for commercial villages, including structured parking, bicycle parking, and development of parking management strategies.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Seek improvement of regional transportation connections, including traffic flow on regional routes and commuter rail.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance MWRTA bus service, especially improving first/last mile connections; improve public awareness of the resource.</li> <li>• Work with state and MetroWest subregion partners through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the regional transportation planning agency.</li> </ul>

## C. Findings and Challenges

### FINDINGS

- Two-thirds of Wellesley working residents drive to work alone, a relatively low number compared to similar communities.
- Almost 10% take public transportation, 13% walk to work, and fewer than 1% bike to work. Nearly 10% work at home. These data corroborate the economic data that suggest there is a significant number of people in Wellesley who also work in the town.
- There are nearly 2 cars per household.
- Four major roads carry regional traffic through Wellesley and experience the greatest congestion: I-95 at the town's eastern border; Route 9/Worcester Street; Route 16/Washington Street; and, to a lesser extent, Route 135/Central Street. Besides I-95, Route 9 and Washington Street are the busiest corridors in Wellesley. Peak traffic reaches over 50,000 daily trips near the intersection of Route 9 and Washington Street, and near the Wellesley Office Park off I-95.
- Traffic congestion around schools at the beginning and end of the school day accounts for approximately 30% of traffic in Wellesley on school days.
- The majority of reported accidents occur on Routes 9 and 16.
- Traffic signals on Route 16 are optimized to enhance traffic flow.
- Wellesley's alternatives to the car include three commuter rail stations along the Worcester-Framingham Line; MWRTA bus service that connects with the rail stations and the Woodland Green Line MBTA station; and college shuttle services for students.
- Bicycles can use the 26-mile, town-owned system of marked off-road trails, but there is only one on-road marked bicycle route on a segment of Washington Street and "sharrows" to indicate that bicycles can use the full lane when a bike lane is not available. A proposed bicycle network was mapped in 2013 by the Wellesley Bicycle Safety Committee.
- Some parts of Wellesley have ample pedestrian infrastructure like sidewalks and safe crossings, but such infrastructure is not consistent across all neighborhoods. There is also a lack of safe bicycle and pedestrian crossings of Route 9 and the rail line.

- Wellesley is not currently registered with the Massachusetts Complete Streets Funding Program and has not passed a Complete Streets policy, though Public Works staff has taken Complete Streets training and prepared a draft policy. The Bicycle Safety Committee recommended the town pursue Complete Streets initiatives in April 2015 and the Planning Board's Route 9 Enhancement Study and Plan also recommended the same.
- The 2011 report of the Transportation Working Group, *Developing Fixed-Route Bus Service in the Town of Wellesley*, recommended that Wellesley join the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA), which it did, and that a permanent "Transportation Analysis Group" (TAG) be established with membership from the Selectmen's Office, Planning Board, School Committee, Department of Public Works, Council on Aging, Sustainable Energy Committee, Police Department, and community representation. The TAG would provide ongoing assessments of transportation demands, pursue the provision of a fixed-route bus service, and, if such service is established, explore opportunities to expand public transportation modes and routes. The TAG has been on hiatus in recent years.

### CHALLENGES

- Additional improvements to traffic flow on arterial streets
- Keeping bridges and streets well-maintained
- Creating a safe and convenient bicycle network linking town destinations
- Enhancing pedestrian networks for safety and convenience
- Creating solutions to school traffic congestion
- Adopting a Complete Streets policy
- Providing sufficient parking where needed
- Improving trails and pedestrian and bicycle connections to abutting communities.

## D. What The Community Said

### **Comments from focus groups and interviews:**

- “Teenagers bike a lot...it’s a hassle to get around sometimes.”
- “We need outside the box parking options.”
- “Sharrows [road symbols for sharing the road with bicycle traffic] don’t cut it.”
- “Public transportation...I don’t take it, but I support it.”

### **Survey Responses**

Traffic and transportation issues were the second most-noted issues when respondents were asked about the one thing they would change about Wellesley. Please see a display of survey responses on the next page.

### **Sustainable Systems public workshop**

In the public workshop held on May 17, 2017, participants seated at tables were asked to identify locations on a map of the town and to identify the most important issues for vehicular traffic that the Town can influence:

- What neighborhood or town destinations would you and your family like to reach on foot or by bike?
- Where do we need safer and better connections for pedestrians and bikes?
- Where would you locate bridge or tunnel pedestrian and bike crossings of Route 9?
- What do you think are the most important issues for vehicular traffic that the Town can influence?

There was strong support for a more effective multimodal system of mobility networks. Comments included:

- Active transportation
  - › Side street network pedestrian/bike
  - › Safer infrastructure for bikes in business districts
  - › Side streets for bike routes
  - › Encourage other forms of transportation than vehicular
  - › Reduce single occupancy vehicle trips to schools and transfer station (trash pickup would significantly reduce trips)
- Public transportation
  - › Coordinate public transit with the colleges and with MWRTA

- › Develop train system
- › Public transportation (e.g., MetroWest bus) should be marked and promoted by Town
- › Public transportation
- › Support with resources and share information re: reliable transit coordinate w/ colleges, MBTA, Metro West
- › Lack of familiarity with #8 bus—no one knows it’s there
- › #8 bus responds to calls off its published route—this makes the bus unusable for most people
- › #8 bus doesn’t stop near Wellesley High School
- › The Town lacks an ADA accessible train station
- › Support transit

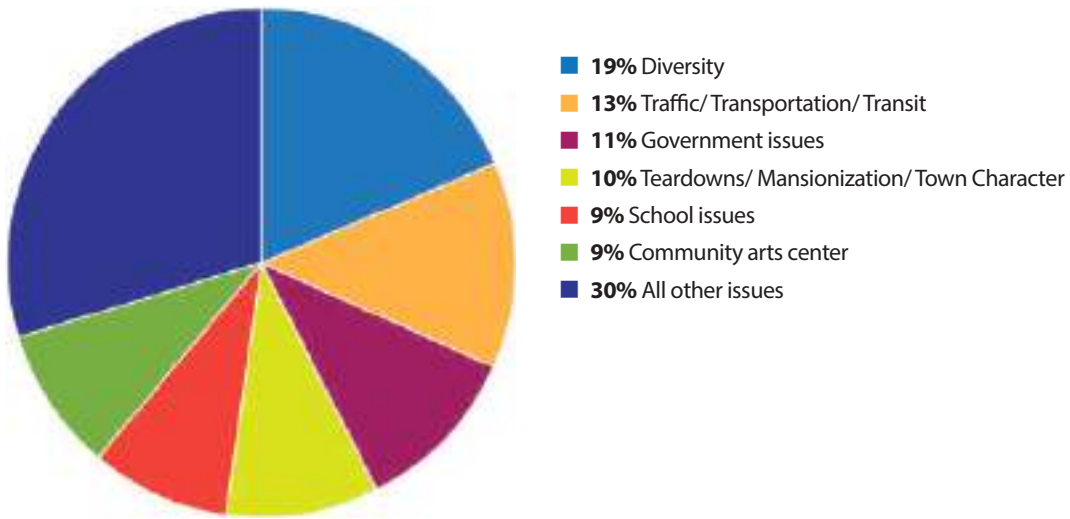
Several participants submitted comments on mitigating school transportation issues:

- Encourage walk/bike/carpool/bus to school to address school drop off/pickup
- Improve school bus participation—decrease price to make it affordable
- Organize walking and biking groups or incentivize for schools
- Kids have to be districted so they can walk to school—neighborhood schools should be preserved to retain walkability
- More involved carpooling from schools
- Increased busing—faster trips to school will increase participation to fund the increased buses (smaller but cheaper)

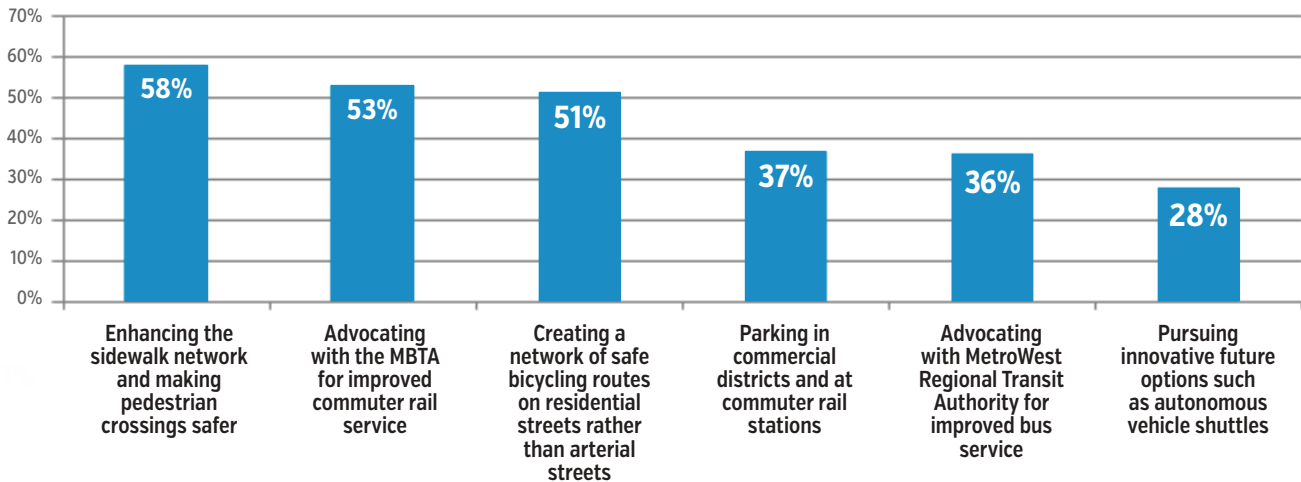
Comments on networks-connectivity-safety

- Pedestrian bridge over Rt. 9 E Kingsbury
- Route 9: safe for all users to travel and cross
- Route 9: safe for all users—drivers, cyclists, pedestrians.
- Route 9 is NOT a limited-access highway
- Traffic speed—reduce to 25 mph to make streets safer for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Excessive speed on all streets, including side streets
- Pros/cons of at-grade/tunnel/bridge crossing for traffic, safety

**Q: What one thing would you change about Wellesley?**



**Q: What kinds of transportation and connectivity improvements should the Town concentrate on?**



Vision and Values Survey (N=1,058)

**Other**

- Landscapers parking along narrow streets and speeding
- Parking enforcement—people park on both sides of street and block side roads
- Block off Central Street for Sundays or other regular times
- Rideshare—study impact of Uber, Lyft
- Buy in from stakeholders/schools, library

## E. Strategies and Actions To Achieve The Goals

### GOAL 1: WELLESLEY HAS A MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOCUSED AROUND NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS TO THE COMMERCIAL VILLAGES AND TOWN DESTINATIONS.

#### **Policies:**

- Support use of multimodal level of service measures for all traffic and transportation improvement studies and projects.
- Support creation of a safe pedestrian and bicycle network that connects town destinations.
- Coordinate a Complete Streets program with planning for a safe and convenient multimodal system.
- Support adoption of a 25 MPH speed limit for most streets.

## STRATEGIES

### A. *Establish a Mobility Policy Committee to provide ongoing policy guidance for town coordination and investment in transportation.*

The purpose of this committee is to ensure that Wellesley is developing an integrated multimodal transportation system that includes pedestrian, bicycle, and transit transportation modes and networks as well as vehicular traffic. The Mobility Policy Committee will incorporate and replace committees that focus on specific modes of transportation, such as the Transportation Analysis Group and Bicycle Safety Committee, or previous committees that focused on transit access. The Mobility Policy Committee should review and make recommendations about transportation-related projects proposed by town boards. From time to time, ad-hoc subcommittees may be needed, but they should always be responding to the broader committee so that the Town is always evaluating transportation issues within a multimodal framework that supports alternatives to single occupant vehicles and healthy lifestyles.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Establish a permanent Mobility Policy Committee with broad representation.</i> Membership should include representation from Board of Public Works, Planning Board, School Committee, the Board of Selectmen, the Sustainable Energy Committee, the merchants' associations, and representation from advocates for walking, biking, and transit. Senior staff from Planning, Public Works, and Police departments should also be members of the committee. The Committee should meet at least four times a year.	2018-2022	Board/ committee representatives, volunteers, and staff time
<i>ii. Identify coordinated multimodal approaches to mobility in Wellesley, including projects and demand management.</i>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee
<i>iii. Review and evaluate transportation projects and studies proposed for funding by Annual Town Meeting within a multimodal context;</i> requests for such projects and studies should be required to identify how they help advance a multimodal system.	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee
<i>iv. Work across departments and with other groups to develop coordinated traffic demand management (TDM) measures to reduce single-occupant vehicle traffic in Wellesley.</i> Strengthen access to other options for travel within Wellesley and to destinations outside Wellesley. Coordinate TDM measures to reduce school traffic should be initiated as a pilot project.	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
v. <i>Work with the MWRTA to promote use of bus routes, especially the #8 bus, which has stops at commuter rail stations and the MBTA Woodland Green Line Station.</i>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Mobility Policy Committee
vi. <i>Promote more car-sharing opportunities.</i>	2022-2028	Mobility Policy Committee
vii. <i>Monitor the progress of autonomous vehicle shuttles as a means of transportation in the Boston region.</i> When appropriate, study the potential of using autonomous vehicle shuttles for in-town transportation to connect residents to commuter rail stations, bus stops, schools, and village commercial areas.	2022-2028	Mobility Policy Committee

**B. Use Multimodal Level of Service (MLOS) measures when making street and road improvements.**

Traditional level of service (LOS) measures for streets and roads focus on speed and congestion conditions for vehicles. However, maximizing the mobility of motorized vehicles often worsens conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit. Multimodal LOS (“MLOS”) measures conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit, by examining the

presence and quality of pedestrian facilities; the speed, volume, separation distance, and portion of heavy vehicles in adjacent motor vehicle traffic; and the average delay that pedestrians and cyclists experience when they try to cross the road. MLOS examines the full array of transportation experiences, not just in motorized vehicles.<sup>1</sup> MLOS methodology is accepted and supported by transportation agencies, including MassDOT and Federal Highway.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. <i>Use MLOS to evaluate development projects and proposed major mobility improvements.</i>	2018-2022 and ongoing	DPW: Require for design projects
ii. <i>Study the pros and cons of establishing a 25 mph speed limit for all streets except where marked as a strategy to support MLOS.</i>	2022-2028	Mobility Policy Committee; staff or consultant time

**C. Develop a bicycle and pedestrian network using “bicycle boulevards” and the “less-stress routes” approach of targeted investments in safe connections between existing low-stress streets and paths.**

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities need to be connected networks that link the destinations that users want to access. In addition, they need to provide enough safety and convenience to attract users of varying levels of skill and confidence. The Town’s bike lane map created in 2013 focuses on collector streets. However, many people do not feel safe on streets that have significant vehicle traffic. In addition to relying

on striped bicycle lanes on major streets, the Wellesley network could be more effective by including routes on “bicycle boulevards.”

According to the National Association of City Transportation Officials, “bicycle boulevards are streets with low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated and designed to give bicycle travel priority. Bicycle boulevards use signs, pavement markings, and speed and volume management measures to discourage through trips by motor vehicles and create safe, convenient bicycle crossings of busy arterial streets.” NACTO has created an urban bikeway design guide that includes information on bicycle boulevards.

<sup>1</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2008. *Multimodal Level of Service Analysis for Urban Streets*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: <https://doi.org/10.17226/14175>; <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/14175/multimodal-level-of-service-analysis-for-urban-streets>



Bicycle boulevard. Source: <https://altaplanning.com/projects/palo-alto-bicycle-boulevards-feasibility/>

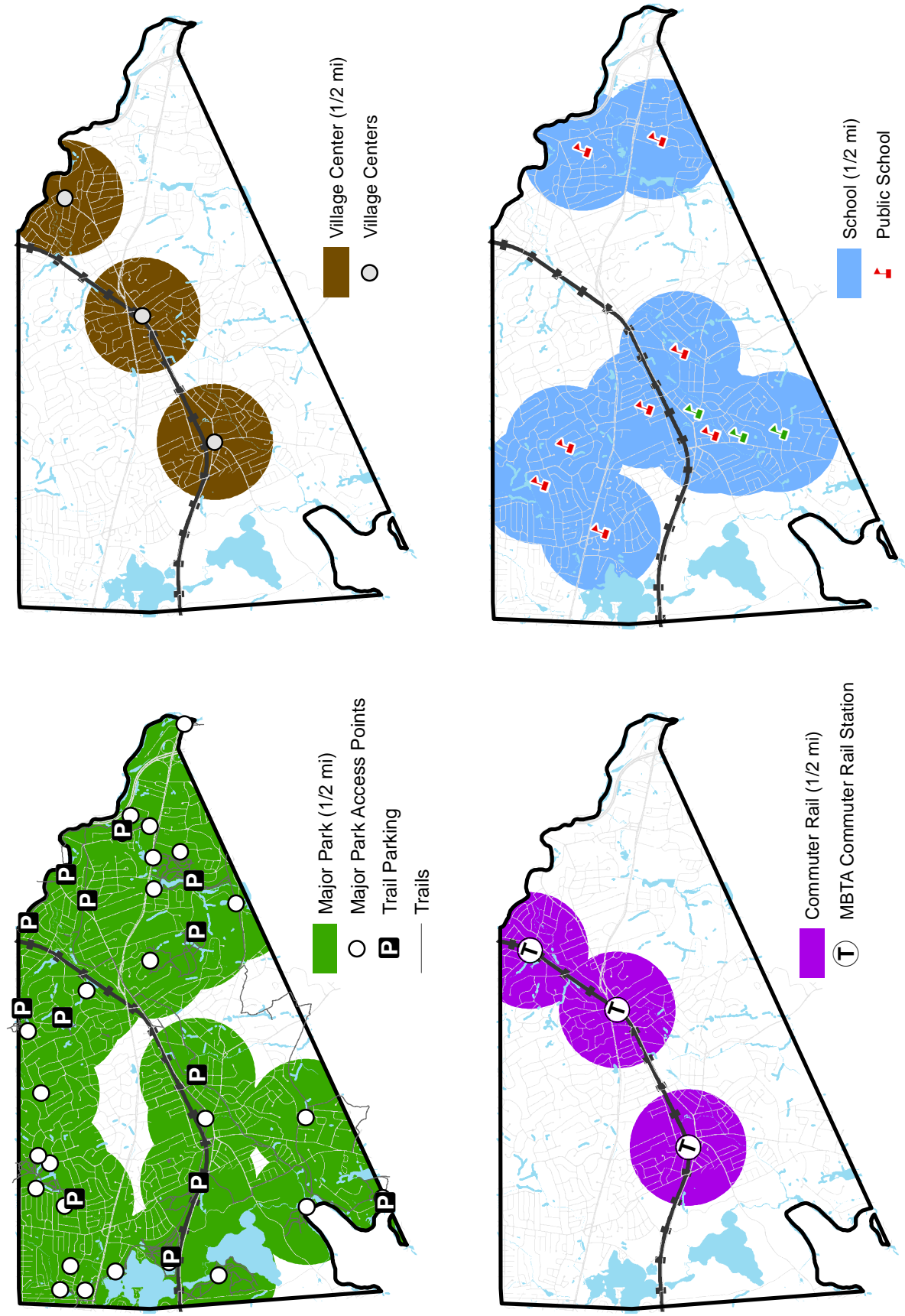
Local streets with little traffic and off-street paths may not create a full network because of a difficult crossing, a block or two of high traffic or no dedicated lane. A new approach to creating effective bicycle networks (which also works for pedestrian networks) is to focus on developing a “low-stress” network by improving selected high stress links and gaps to provide connections between the existing low-stress segments of the network. In this approach, connectivity is defined as “the ability to get between two points without exceeding a specified stress threshold and without exceeding the specified level of detour.” After

mapping of the bicycle network, stress levels are assigned to each segment:

- Level of traffic stress 1 (LTS 1) = tolerable to most children
- LTS 2 = tolerable to mainstream adult population
- LTS 3 = tolerable to “enthused and confident” cyclists who still prefer dedicated space
- LTS 4 = tolerable only by the “strong and fearless.”

Priority locations for connectivity improvements to strengthen pedestrian and bicycle networks can then be identified.

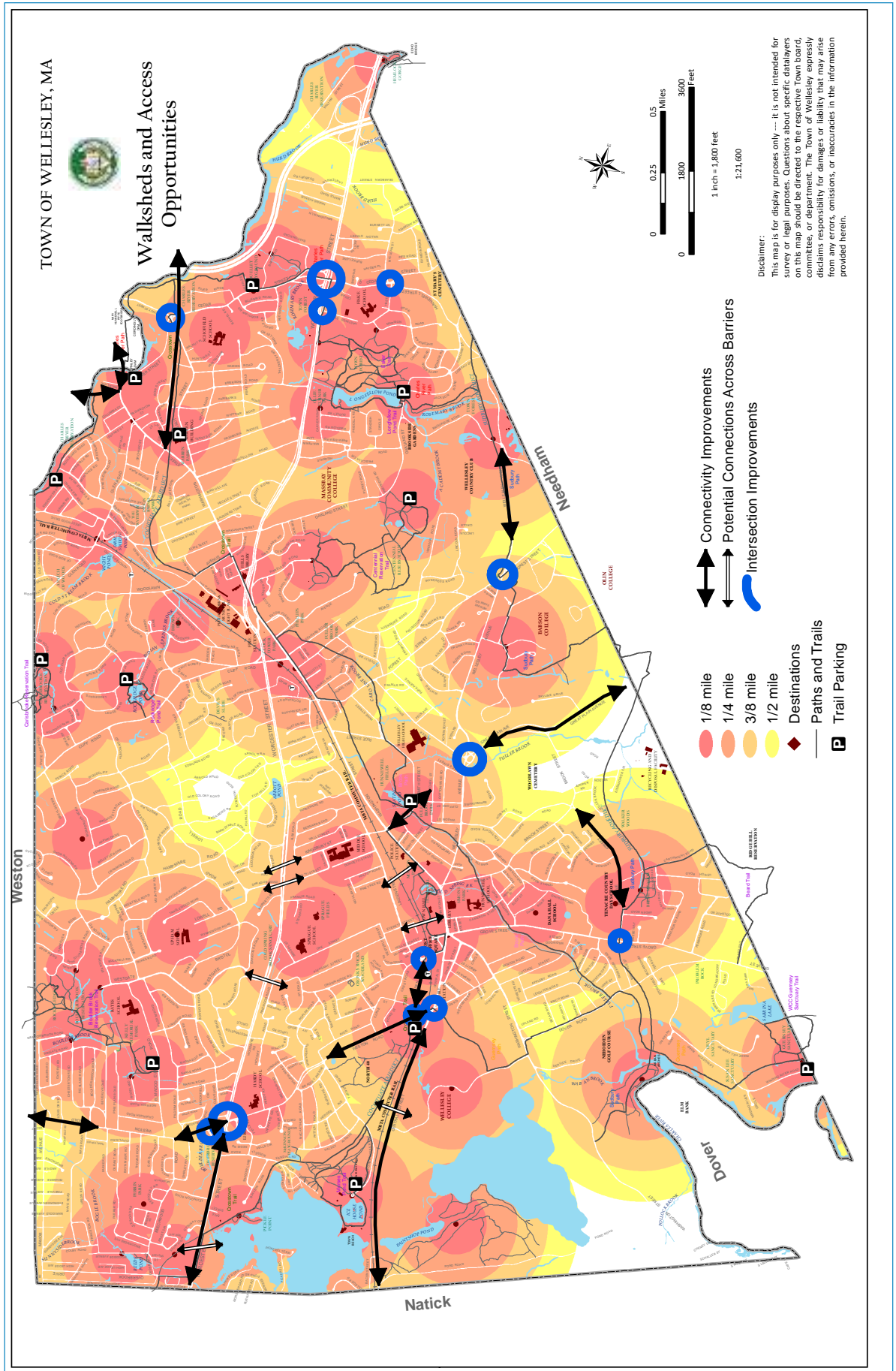
ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<p><i>i. Make a priority list of town destinations for the network.</i> High-priority destinations should include locations where strengthened pedestrian and bicycle networks can reduce in-town traffic, such as commuter rail stations and schools. Non-motorized access to the new athletic facility at 900 Worcester Street is problematic.</p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee
<p><i>ii. Prepare an RFP for a “less-stress routes” study for Wellesley bike and pedestrian routes.</i></p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee
<p><i>iii. Make recommended improvements, including signage, to lower the stress factor at the gaps between low-stress segments of the network.</i></p>	2018-2022	Department of Public Works
<p><i>iv. Consider adopting a 25 mph speed limit for most local streets.</i> Adopt appropriate speed limits for streets optimized for biking and walking.</p>	2022-2028	Mobility Policy Committee
<p><i>v. Create a monthly Sunday morning “ciclovia” or “cycleway” day.</i> This involves shutting down a route to auto traffic from 7 am to noon or 1 pm for use by bicycles. Potential bicycle boulevard routes could be chosen as test routes.</p>	2022-2028	Mobility Policy Committee; Police Department
<p><i>vi. Participate in the MetroWest Landline project to address priority trail gaps across the region and eventually connect trails and bike routes through Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, Natick, Southborough, Wayland, Wellesley, and Weston.</i> The Cochituate Trail’s Route 9 crossing is Wellesley’s priority gap in this system.</p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee



Walking Access to Town Destinations



► EXHIBIT 10.2 WELLESLEY WALKSHEDS AND ACCESS OPPORTUNITIES



**D. Develop concepts and design for safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Route 9 and the railroad tracks.**

The railroad tracks and Route 9 constitute barriers that are particularly difficult for

pedestrians and bicyclists to cross. Workshop participants suggested that the town should identify, plan for, and seek funding for improved pedestrian and bike conditions on existing crossings and new bridge or tunnel crossings for pedestrians and bicyclists.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. <i>Identify potential crossing areas for study.</i> Workshop participants identified several potential areas. [See Figure 10.2]	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee
ii. <i>Prepare an RFP for a feasibility study for potential pedestrian/bicycle crossings, including funding options.</i> Consider efforts around the MetroWest LandLine project and the Crosstown Aqueduct Trail connection at Route 9.	2022-2028	Mobility Policy Committee

**E. Develop a transportation demand management (TDM) program focused specifically on school traffic to reduce school-time traffic by at least 50%.**

School traffic accounts for one-third of all traffic in Wellesley. Unlike regional traffic that travels through town on Routes 9 and 16, school traffic is generated within the town, and the town potentially can reduce it.

The Safe Routes to School Program supports walking and biking to school and has been supported by federal funding for several years. According to the Massachusetts Safe Routes to Schools Program website, of Wellesley schools, only Schofield Elementary participates in this program Schofield Elementary ([www.massdot.state.ma.us/saferoutestoschool/Home.aspx](http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/saferoutestoschool/Home.aspx)).

Another organization that has worked with

schools throughout the state is WalkBoston ([www.walkboston.org/what-we-do/initiatives/safe-routes-school](http://www.walkboston.org/what-we-do/initiatives/safe-routes-school)).

Through the Mobility Policy Committee, the town could develop a School TDM program to reduce school traffic, including identifying a coordination mechanism—a School Traffic Management Association (STMA). TMAs are membership-based, public-private partnerships of businesses, institutions and municipalities with a legal agreement to promote and provide options for commuters that reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality ([www.masscommute.com](http://www.masscommute.com)). They are generally supported by and organized around employers. A Wellesley School TMA would have different characteristics, but the overall purpose would be similar.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. <i>Organize a School Traffic Management Association (STMA) to include the School Committee, the Board of Selectmen, PTOs, private schools, and nonprofit groups (such as health and recreation organizations and faith-based communities that might be interested in promoting or sponsoring aspects of the program).</i>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee; possible contract staff coordinator
ii. <i>Establish a Web presence for the STMA, where parents and students can identify ways to participate.</i>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee; IT

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<p><i>iii. Develop a variety of options and measure participation and impact on school traffic.</i> Coordinate school bus transportation, carpool programs, and safe walking, biking and crossing to reduce traffic at school opening and closing times. Options can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the public school bus program, with potential changes to make using school buses attractive to more families and students.</li> <li>Walking school bus programs: a walking school bus is a group of children that walks to school with one or more adults. It can be informal, with families taking turns walking their children to school, or be organized with a regular route, meeting points, timetable, and schedule of trained volunteers. Similarly, in a bicycle train, adults supervise children biking to school. A walking school bus kit is available at <a href="https://commute.com/downloads/WalkingSchoolBusKit.pdf">https://commute.com/downloads/WalkingSchoolBusKit.pdf</a></li> <li>Carpool ride-matching program: Online applications are available to match people who wish to carpool. Wellesley could sponsor a competition for high school students to create a simple app for school carpooling.</li> </ul>	2018-2022	STMA

**GOAL 2: ACCESS AND PARKING TO SUPPORT COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS IS WELL-MANAGED.**

**Policy**

- Support bicycle facilities, parking management, structured parking and shared parking near commercial areas.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Ensure bicycle access and parking in commercial villages.**

Safe routes to commercial villages coupled with bicycle parking can alleviate parking difficulties and reduce the town’s carbon footprint.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<b>i. Provide safe and convenient access to commercial villages, with signage, from existing and future bicycle routes.</b>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee; DPW
<b>ii. Provide bicycle parking in commercial villages.</b>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee; DPW

**B. Pursue additional parking options for commercial villages, including structured parking, bicycle parking, and development of parking management strategies.**

Safe routes to commercial villages coupled with bicycle parking can alleviate parking difficulties and reduce the town’s carbon footprint.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<b>i. Work with merchants and building owners to identify options, such as shared parking, employee parking lots, employee shuttles from remote parking.</b> For example, it may be possible to arrange for parking for Wellesley Square employees at Linden Square.	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee; Planning Department; Board of Selectmen
<b>ii. Include village parking opportunities in development of mixed-use projects with underground parking.</b> Development of the Tailby Lot could include parking for visitors to Wellesley Square businesses.	2018-2022 and ongoing	Mobility Policy Committee; Planning Department; Board of Selectmen

**GOAL 3: SEEK IMPROVEMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FLOW ON REGIONAL ROUTES.**

**Policies**

- Publicize MWRTA bus access to the MBTA.
- Work with state and neighboring towns through the MPO.

**STRATEGIES**

- A. Create a campaign to publicize MWRTA bus access to the MBTA.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<p><i>i. As part of the Town's transportation demand management program, to be organized by the Mobility Policy Committee, publicize bus access to commuter rail stations and the Woodland Green Line station. Collaborate with a variety of town groups, from the MLP to PTOs, village merchants, community television, and other groups.</i></p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee
<p><i>ii. Work with the MPO and neighboring towns to identify truck routes, locate commuter traffic routes away from congested areas, and establish corridor alliances with contiguous communities/subregions.</i></p>	2022-2028	Mobility Policy Committee
<p><i>iii. Advocate for improvements in MBTA commuter rail service.</i></p>	2022-2028	Mobility Policy Committee



# *Public Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure*

**W**ellesley residents are generally satisfied with Town services and facilities and are especially fond of the Wellesley Free Library, the Municipal Light Plant, and the Recycling and Disposal Facility (“RDF”). The Town’s creation of the Facilities Management Department (“FMD”) in 2012 has transformed the way it deals with capital planning, repairs and custodial maintenance, systematic energy efficiency, and management of major capital improvement projects. The FMD is an example of the Town’s recognition that an integrated approach across the traditional board and commission framework is needed in many situations—cost-effective, resource-efficient, and strategic. The FMD’s working relationship with the Permanent Building Committee has been made more efficient as a result of actions at 2017 Annual Town Meeting. This chapter suggests additional approaches to integrated evaluation and management of infrastructure and other projects across all town boards, commissions, and departments.

During the ten-year time horizon of this Unified Plan, the Town is poised to carry out a capital improvements program costing over \$190 million, as estimated by the FMD. Of that amount, 10 projects will cost more than \$2 million:

- Cash capital projects for the Main Library; miscellaneous school maintenance improvements; Middle School and High School

improvements

- Debt-funded projects for the Town Hall exterior and interior restoration and renovation; Hills Library exterior; school projects at the Middle School, Sprague, and Bates; and the Hunnewell/Hardy/Upham (HHU) renovations/new schools.

The costliest projects are the Town Hall project and the HHU projects. Some state funding will likely be available for new school construction.

In recent years, new and upgraded Town facilities have reflected the Town's increasing commitment to being a model of sustainability practices—in energy efficiency, resource conservation, and low-impact development practices. The Town has an opportunity to build on these commitments by taking a holistic and systematic approach to the evaluation and rating for sustainability benefits of all Town projects.

***Supporting town government concepts:***

*The Unified Plan's emphasis on making town government more customer-centric, data-driven and strategic, and transparent is reflected in several of this chapter's goals and strategies, including a townwide project-evaluation system; community meeting space initiatives and digital reservations; and improved public-facing digital systems.*

## A. Public Facilities, Services and Infrastructure in The Vision And Values



### **VISION**

Wellesley is a town recognized for its welcoming community culture and exemplary town services; commitment to education and life-long learning; and quality of life that enhances the health and social well-being of its residents.



### **VALUES**

- **Excellence in Service Delivery:** Provide a broad array of services to residents and other users of town services; maintain a strong customer-service orientation that strives for excellence in every aspect of service delivery.
- **Education:** Support best-in-class public education, library, recreational and senior services.
- **Town Asset Management:** Maintain, protect, preserve, and enhance the Town's physical assets, including facilities, infrastructure, parks, open space, and natural resources.
- **Collaboration:** Leverage resources and expertise of boards, departments, local private businesses and institutions, as well as neighboring towns and regional agencies, to achieve mutual goals.

## B. Goals and Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<b><i>Town-owned facilities are in good condition, functional, and resource-efficient.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a facilities master plan.</li> <li>• Continue asset management with proactive, preventive maintenance programs.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley maintains school excellence.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to implement the school system’s strategic plan.</li> <li>• Support implementation of the recommendations of the HHU report.</li> </ul>
<b><i>New schools and other facilities are designed to support additional community goals.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the development of multiuse facilities when investing in new schools and other town improvements.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley maintains exceptional library services.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support implementation of the Wellesley Free Library’s strategic plan.</li> <li>• Ensure that library facilities continue to serve residents’ needs for gathering places.</li> </ul>
<b><i>The Town has a system and process for evaluating proposed infrastructure projects for the full range of social, economic, and environmental impacts in project design, construction, operation, and cost.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support evaluation of proposed Town infrastructure projects across all departments for the full range of life-cycle costs and benefits.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley’s stormwater-management system incorporates best practices that promote infiltration and improve water quality.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make Wellesley a model of best practices in stormwater management for dense suburban communities.</li> </ul>
<b><i>The Town of Wellesley has up-to-date, 21st-century technology tools and processes.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support maintenance of a townwide technology plan to coordinate technology needs and upgrades for all Town departments, the school system, and the library for efficient service delivery and effective customer service for residents and others.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Town policies governing the maintenance and acceptance of private streets have been clarified.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop policies for town involvement in private road upgrades/maintenance and town acceptance of private streets</li> </ul>

## C. Findings and Challenges

### FINDINGS

#### ***Public Facilities***

- Wellesley has 30 public buildings, including schools and the Municipal Light Plant (MLP).
- The Facilities Management Department (FMD), created in 2012, operates and maintains all Town facilities except the MLP building, providing custodial service, maintenance, energy, capital planning and project management for 1.2 million square feet in 29 buildings: 10 schools, Sprague Field

House, 3 libraries, 2 fire stations, 1 police station, Town Hall, the Warren Building, Tolles Parsons Center, Moses Pond Bathhouse, 2 DPW garages, DPW administration buildings, and 5 RDF buildings.

- FMD developed the first five-year capital plan for Town buildings in 2012 and updates the capital plan annually in collaboration with school principals, municipal department heads, and FMD staff. The capital plan also looks forward an additional five years to include projects expected for that period.
- FMD focuses on preventive maintenance and “green” cleaning procedures and supplies. In the five years since its creation, FMD has caught up with much of

the deferred maintenance in Wellesley buildings and is now developing a comprehensive inventory and replacement system for major building systems and equipment.

- FMD has focused on energy-efficient systems, reducing energy use by 10% between FY2012 and FY2015, with continuing savings. The FMD energy-management cycle consists of analyzing energy use data, identifying energy-use anomalies, proposing energy-conservation measure (ECM) solutions, implementing the ECMs, optimizing the performance of the ECMs, and then performing preventive maintenance on the ECMs. ECMs include LED lights and building controls (HVAC).
- FMD has an asset-management system for the assets it manages: vehicles, furniture, and equipment. DPW has a separate asset management system for the assets it manages.
- The Permanent Building Committee provides design, financial and construction management services to Town boards, including hiring architects, consultants and project managers. The PBC evaluates requests for funds, approves final plans, and oversees the bid phase under public bidding laws.
- As of 2017 Annual Town Meeting, the Permanent Building Committee (PBC) works with the FMD to manage projects of \$500,000 or more. Two previous PBC staff positions have been moved to the FMD budget.

### ***Municipal Light Plant***

- The Municipal Light Plant (MLP) operation is in excellent physical and financial condition, with up-to-date infrastructure, \$65 million in assets and no debt.
- The MLP focuses on four goals: reliability, competitive rates, financial benefits to the Town, and public and employee safety.
- MLP provides very competitive electric rates to Wellesley customers, among the lowest in Massachusetts.
- The MLP has non-operating revenues that help it maintain low rates—for example, work at Devens, the Town of Acton, and with cellular towers.
- A 1 GB fiber backbone is in place, but MLP needs a partner for reliability.
- MLP is beginning a pilot Wi-Fi program in ten locations, including Town Hall.

- MLP provides a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) of approximately \$1 million to the Town. The Town also receives benefits such as fiber connectivity to all Town buildings, discounted electric rates, traffic signal maintenance, and the funding of energy-efficiency programs.
- A new MLP building was built in the last ten years.

### ***Public Safety***

- Wellesley has very low crime rates. According to FBI data, the violent crime rate is 0.86 per 1,000 persons compared to 3.91 per 1,000 persons for the State of Massachusetts. The property crime rate is 9.1 per 1,000 compared to 16.91 per 1,000 for the state. A recent analysis ranked Wellesley among the 100 safest communities in the United States with populations of more than 25,000 ([www.neighborhoodscout.com/blog/top100safest](http://www.neighborhoodscout.com/blog/top100safest) )
- The Wellesley Police Department has 50 FTE staff and 44 sworn officers operating out of one police station.
- The Fire Rescue Department has 57 FTE, including 35 firefighters, and has two fire stations, one at Central Street and Weston Road, and the other on Worcester Street in Wellesley Hills.
- The Fire Department is responsible for the Wellesley Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and the Fire Chief is the Emergency Management Director. The department trains citizen volunteers for the Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- The Fire Rescue Department also supervises a contract with Cataldo Paramedics.

### ***Engineering and Public Works***

- The Board of Public Works oversees the Department of Public Works (DPW). DPW provides water and sewer utilities, solid waste, essential public works, and engineering services. The DPW building was renovated and expanded within the last ten years.
- Water and sewer are enterprise funds whose services are funded by ratepayers and who can bond for capital improvements based on ratepayer receipts.
- Town tax revenues fund the following divisions (sometimes called “tax-impact programs”): Engineering, Park and Highway, Recycling and Disposal Management.

- Park and Highway maintains Town roads, sidewalks, curbs, catch basins, culverts, storm drains, and street name signs.
- The Recycling and Disposal Facility (RDF) for solid waste and recycling generates over 350,000 annual vehicle trips.
- The Engineering Division designs and manages DPW projects; provides engineering review to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, and other Town departments; implements the Town stormwater management plan; and maintains plans and files for deeds, easements, and construction.
- Recent projects include reconstruction of Kingsbury Street, construction of a new salt shed, renovation of the High School track and field, street resurfacing, sidewalk construction, Moses Pond invasive-weed harvesting, bulb planting, playground inspection and repairs.
- The Town is preparing to update and upgrade its stormwater management policies and activities in order to comply with federal and state regulations. DPW is beginning to implement green infrastructure designs such as bioswales and permeable pavement.
- DPW developed a benchmarking study with neighboring Natick and Needham and presented it to the Board of Selectmen. The three towns have agreed to continue to collaborate.
- DPW provides services for capital projects that are funded to the budgets of other boards and commissions, and bills those agencies for the work.
- The DPW's strategic plan goals for FY16 included:
  - › Reduction in hydrant and water system leaks to less than 12.5%
  - › Reduction in lost-time injuries and at-fault vehicle accidents
  - › Completion of tasks associated with Town projects
  - › Creation of a stand-alone Stormwater Program Budget, identify the impact of the EPA and DEP stormwater permit requirements, evaluate and identify a preferred funding model
  - › Completion of automatic meter system pilot program to determine scope of townwide water meter replacement
  - › Completion of RDF transition plan in anticipation of RDF superintendent retirement
  - › Construction of new salt shed

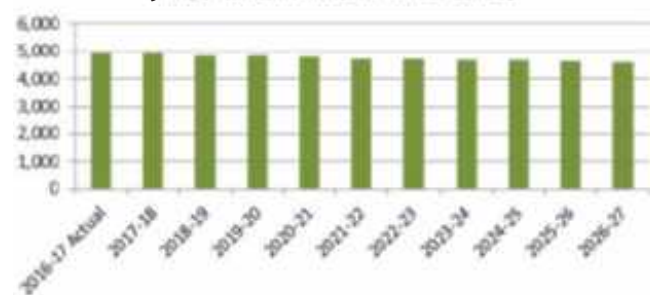
## ***New projects***

- An aquatic and ice rink facility at 900 Worcester Street is planned to be built and managed by a private company.
- The Tolles-Parsons Senior Center opened in September 2017 on Washington Street.
- School projects include middle school improvements and the anticipated reconstruction of at least two replacement elementary schools.
- The Town purchased the North 40 from Wellesley College, but there is no final determination how it will be used.

## ***Schools***

- Wellesley Public Schools has a strategic plan (funded in part by the Wellesley Education Foundation) and is publishing its first benchmarking progress report.
- Wellesley has 10 public schools (one preschool seven elementary, one middle school, and one high school) with a total enrollment slightly over 5,000 students.
- Enrollments in the last ten years have fluctuated between 4,800 students and 5,000 students. Projections forecast a downward trend in K-12 enrollment from 4,785 students in FY19 to 4,619 in FY21. The peak year of K-12 enrollment since the mid-twentieth century was 4,975 in 2016.
- The HHU (Hardy/Hunnewell/Upham) Master Planning Committee released a report in April 2017 with recommendations for building two schools with an expected cost of over \$100 million, and closing one school. This would reduce the number of elementary schools to six.
- The School Committee policy statement agrees

► EXHIBIT 11.1 **WELLESLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS MOST LIKELY PROJECTED ENROLLMENT**



Source: Future Think—Wellesley Public Schools enrollment projections

with the committee report that the Town should rebuild at least two schools, Hunnewell and either Upham or Hardy, in an order to be determined after further study, and agrees that the third school should be rebuilt if K-5 elementary enrollment exceeds 2,350 on a trending basis and/or the current school configurations are limiting educational needs. (<https://wellesleyps.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/HHU-Position-Statement-5-23-17.pdf>).

- In December 2017, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) invited the Upham School into their core program to provide state support and funding for renovation or rebuilding of the school. The site on which to build the school, likely either the current Upham site or the current Hardy site, has not yet been determined. No state funding is expected for the Hunnewell School.
- The School Committee plans to retain control of whichever school site is not rebuilt in case it is needed for a future school.
- Other future school projects include middle school infrastructure improvements.
- There are 6 private elementary, middle and/or high schools in Wellesley, with a total enrollment of 1,166 students, the largest of which is Dana Hall School.

### ***Wellesley Free Library***

- The Wellesley Free Library has three branches: the Main Branch, the Hills Branch and the Fells Branch. The Main Library and the Hills Branch are supported by town funding. The mission of the Wellesley Free Library is to serve as a community gathering place, a cultural destination and a gateway to ideas for residents of all ages and interests.
- 17,158 Wellesley residents have a library card
- FY 17 statistics for the library: 359,246 visits; 760,434 items checked out or renewed, of which 498,577 were books. Reference staff answered 106,089 questions and 36,452 patron visits to 1,503 programs.
- The library system gets almost 20% of its support from private sources.
- Increasing demand and changes in technology require increased budgets for upgrades.

- The library system has a five-year strategic plan, with an updated plan adopted in September 2017. The plan was developed in the context of the Wellesley Unified Plan’s Vision and Values statement. Library goals include:
  - › Expansion of meeting, study, and gathering space to meet community and user demand.
  - › Revitalization of the Fells Branch with integrated learning space for children and an adjacent children’s garden.
  - › Enhancement of communication and marketing of library services to the public
  - › Enhancement of communication with town boards and departments outside of the budgeting period and coordinate offerings with town departments
  - › Investment in technology for operational efficiencies and for technology services to users

### **CHALLENGES**

- Providing sufficient community meeting space
- Enhancing efficiency in service delivery and improvements
- Reaching consensus on future uses of the North 40
- Keeping up to date with technology for operations and for customer service
- Preserving programs of regular investment in infrastructure
- Evaluating operations and facilities for resource- and cost-efficiency across town government

## **D. What The Community Said**

### ***Comments from focus groups and interviews***

- “Public schools are some of the best in the state. We are creating the future right here in our students! Why not with the rest of the town?”
- “Younger families are chomping at the bit for facilities—hockey rink, fields, top-notch facilities. We have worse facilities than peer towns. There was a bare bones renovation at the football field.”
- “The new high school is not as good as Natick High.”
- “We are behind in infrastructure. The pipes will crumble someday... The bill is going to come due.”
- “The Facilities Management Department is a big plus. It made people understand the need for facilities maintenance.”

## Comments from public meetings and surveys

Public facilities and services were not a focus of respondent comments, as there appears to be general satisfaction with Town services. However, certain facilities are especially well-liked or considered important assets to the Town, such as the Library, the Municipal Light Plant (for its low electric rates), and RDF. Complaints about the condition or availability of facilities tended to focus on athletic fields and facilities and, to a lesser degree, schools. There were a few comments about the importance of maintaining and improving infrastructure, and survey respondents recognized the importance of infrastructure and physical assets to the town when asked to rank several issues in terms of importance to the respondent and importance to the town:

IMPORTANT TO ME	IMPORTANT TO THE TOWN
1. School system excellence	1. School system excellence
2. Sense of community	2. Sense of community
3. Sustainability and preserving resources	4. Infrastructure and physical assets
4. Infrastructure and physical assets	3. Sustainability and preserving resources
5. Enhancing diversity	6. Improving transportation and connectivity
6. Improving transportation and connectivity	5. Enhancing diversity
7. Support for businesses	7. Support for businesses
8. Regional partnerships	8. Regional partnerships

## Comments from Sustainable Systems workshop:

Participants were asked what Town services need improvement, reduction, or expansion?

- **Trash and recycling (See Chapter 12)**
  - › Trash collection
  - › Public recycling containers with public trash cans
  - › Trash collection/litter (lack of recycling facilities)
  - › Litter on public streets, parks, sports fields
  - › Public trash can overflow
  - › No public recycling

- **Transportation issues (see Chapter 10)**
  - › School bus—affordability and time
  - › Pedestrian and traffic access
  - › Townwide, frequent bus service (predictable times)
  - › Parking garages below ground
  - › Need more parking near T stations
  - › Underground parking lot across from library, behind Central St.
  - › Connect to Green Line in Newton
- **Landscape treatments (See chapter 12)**
  - › Reducing chemical treatments on lawns, landscaping
  - › Preserving wildlife
  - › Native plants incorporated into natural landscaping around municipal, residential, commercial buildings
  - › Combat invasive plants in Town
- **Energy efficiency and resource-efficiency issues (See Chapter 12)**
  - › Renewable energy sources
  - › 100% renewable goal for the town—municipal, residential, commercial
  - › School gardens for learning to supplement diet-and increase outdoor time
  - › Food recovery system for restaurants, schools, colleges, (with corporation of Health Dept.) so food waste is reduced
- **Other**
  - › Street lighting and light pollution
  - › Adopt rating system for municipal projects to ensure sustainability
  - › Develop 900 Worcester St. so that it does not adversely affect the town-wide energy reduction goal, does not adversely affect Route 9 traffic, preserves wetlands, and allows walkability and base this on sustainability guidelines.

## E. Strategies and Actions To Achieve The Goals

### GOAL 1: TOWN-OWNED FACILITIES ARE IN GOOD CONDITION, FUNCTIONAL, AND RESOURCE-EFFICIENT.

#### Policies

- Maintain a facilities master plan and five-year capital improvements program.
- Continue asset management with proactive, preventive maintenance programs.

## STRATEGIES

### A. Make capital improvements to town facilities to keep them in good condition.

The Facilities Management Department, established in 2012, prepares a five-year capital plan with an annual facilities maintenance capital request for ten fiscal years. The criteria and considerations that the FMD uses in developing the capital budgets are:

- Safety (life safety and environment health)
- Impact to the learning or work environment
- Energy efficiency and sustainability
- Preventive maintenance
- Service life exceeded
- Interim school measures (triage)
- Is a major renovation planned?

The FMD engages all stakeholders-- Department Heads, Principals, Directors, and custodians and the maintenance staff--to update the capital plan. Their FY2018-FY 2027 capital improvement requested budget, which covers the majority of the time horizon of this Unified Plan, shows a total of \$191.4 million dollars. Of that total, \$20.4 million would be cash capital projects, with half of the expenditure in the first five years, and \$171.0 million would be debt-funded projects, with the HHU projects accounting for an estimated \$105 million of that amount and 82% of the debt-funded capital improvements to be expended in the first five years.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Continue to maintain a facilities master plan and capital improvements program.</i>	2018-2022	FMD
<i>ii. Create a single, integrated, five-year capital improvement program (CIP) for all Town assets, identifying how projects are related to achievement of the vision and goals.</i> The current CIP, prepared by FMD, focuses on Town buildings. A CIP including all Town projects and relating them to achievement of Town goals would improve the annual budget process and town meeting.	2022-2028	FMD; DPW; Boards and Commissions
<i>iii. Use a systematic sustainability evaluation and rating process, such as Envision, to evaluate major projects</i> (See Goal 4 below), and LEED or comparable sustainability rating system for buildings.	2018-2022	Boards and Commissions; FMD; SEC
<i>iv. As needed and feasible, include community meeting space in improvement projects.</i>	2018-2022	Permanent Building Committee; FMD
<i>v. Renovate Town Hall as planned with a focus on customer service and reduction of duplicative resources (e.g., recordkeeping).</i>	2018-2022	Permanent Building Committee; FMD
<i>vi. Continue preventive maintenance and repairs to town facilities, and continue to focus on energy- and resource-efficiency.</i>	Ongoing	FMD

**GOAL 2: WELLESLEY MAINTAINS SCHOOL EXCELLENCE.**

**Policies:**

- Continue to implement the school system’s strategic plan.
- Support implementation of the recommendations of the HHU report

At the time of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, it was widely accepted that Wellesley High School was antiquated and needed major renovations or a replacement. A new school was built in 2012. Deferred maintenance also affected the Middle School and elementary schools and a continuing program of improvements has been underway and will continue. The major school facilities issue in recent years has been the question of

what to do about the Hardy, Hunnewell, and Upham elementary schools, three schools needing modernization. After a long 2016-2017 committee process, a plan to rebuild Hunnewell and either Hardy or Upham was recommended and accepted by the School Committee. A committee will oversee a feasibility study to decide which of the two will be rebuilt. The cost of the HHU program is estimated at \$105 million in the next ten years. The MSBA has invited the Upham School into their core program for renovation or rebuilding, which should provide substantial financial support for rebuilding a school on either the Upham or Hardy site. No state funding is expected for the Hunnewell School. The School Committee plans to keep control of the school property that will not be used.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Prepare a feasibility study for the school sites.</i> Include consideration of elements to meet additional community goals (see Goal 3 below), and sustainable building. Use a systematic sustainability evaluation and rating system, such as the Envision rating system (see Goal 5 below) and LEED.	2018-2022	School Committee; School Building Committee; Board of Selectmen; FMD; SEC
ii. <i>Based on the results of the feasibility study, proceed to design and construction of the schools.</i>	2018-2022	School Committee; School Building Committee; Board of Selectmen; FMD; SEC; PBC

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Proceed with implementation of the HHU Master Planning Committee report as adopted by the School Committee.**

**GOAL 3: WELLESLEY MAINTAINS EXCEPTIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES**

**Policies**

- Support implementation of the Wellesley Free Library’s strategic plan.
- Ensure library facilities continue to service gathering needs of residents.

The Wellesley Free Library is highly valued by the community. Identified as one of the top five

community assets, its services go far beyond books. Open seven days a week and serving residents of all ages, the library provides a unique opportunity for residents to connect informally and through scheduled activities. The library is therefore ideally positioned to respond to several community issues that surfaced during the planning process, such as social isolation among some residents and the need for more community meeting spaces. Additionally, by using new technologies to increase efficiencies, the WFL has been able to focus on steady improvements in customer service. As use of the library has rapidly intensified, these efforts have become more critical to providing exceptional library services.

Since construction of the main library in 2003, residents’ library needs have evolved. In 2017,

in conjunction with development of its five-year strategic plan, the library and FMD conducted a feasibility study to determine what renovations might be needed to better meet residents' demands. They are in the process of securing funds for targeted renovation designs.

## STRATEGIES

**A. Continue to use technology to free up library staff to better serve town residents.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Install an automated materials handler to improve productivity of circulation staff and allow for staff retraining and reassignment to high value tasks.</i>	2018-2019	FMD; Library

**B. Update/renovate main library to meet evolving patron needs (increased meeting space, common area for community gathering, interactive children's space).**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Based on the results of the feasibility study, proceed to design and renovation of the Main Library.</i>	2019-2021	FMD; Library; PBC

**C. Adapt the interior of Fells Branch Library expressly to meet needs of families with young children.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Prepare design and proceed to interior renovation.</i>	2018-2019	Private funds; Library

## GOAL 4: NEW SCHOOLS AND OTHER FACILITIES ARE DESIGNED TO SUPPORT ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY GOALS.

### Policies:

- Explore the development of multiuse facilities when investing in new schools and other town improvements.

## STRATEGIES

**A. Explore the “community schools” concept of partnerships to provide community enrichment spaces, as well as activities outside of school hours.**

### COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

A “community school” has extended school hours, facilities and activities for youth and adults in the community. For example, a school can have a gymnasium, a performance space or art studios that are available to the public, as well as youth development, family support and health and social services provided by local nonprofits.

<http://www.communityschools.org/default.aspx>

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>When planning for new schools, study the feasibility of providing community resources. Meeting spaces, a gymnasium, and arts and culture spaces have been suggested. Designs that allow for flexibility in uses over the long term should be explored.</i>	2018-2022	School Building Committee

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
ii. Consider inclusion of community meeting space in new projects for Town Hall, the library system, and other improvement projects.	2022-2028	Permanent Building Committee; Facilities Management Department
iii. Consider making any unused school available for other community purposes, such as an arts center and/or community meeting space. While the School Committee wishes to keep control of the property, it could permit improvements to accommodate other uses by the Town and/or nonprofit organizations.	2022-2028	School Committee; Board of Selectmen
iv. Prepare a report on demand for and availability of community meeting space in Wellesley. There is a general sense that the town is not able to meet increasing demands for community meeting space. As a major gathering space for the town, the Library has been studying the availability of meeting space, and its work can be the foundation for a report. The report should identify existing public and private space (such as at the Wellesley Community Center, faith communities, and so on); size, capacity, condition, and amenities (such as kitchens); and costs if relevant.	2018-2022	Committee managed by FMD; Library
v. Develop a section on the website identifying all community meeting space opportunities. This should include a description of space capacity, a sign up system and calendar for Town-owned spaces, and contact information for private space.	2022-2028	FMD with IT Department

**GOAL 5: THE TOWN HAS A SYSTEM AND PROCESS TO EVALUATE PROPOSED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS FOR THE FULL RANGE OF SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS IN PROJECT DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION, AND COST.**

**Policy**

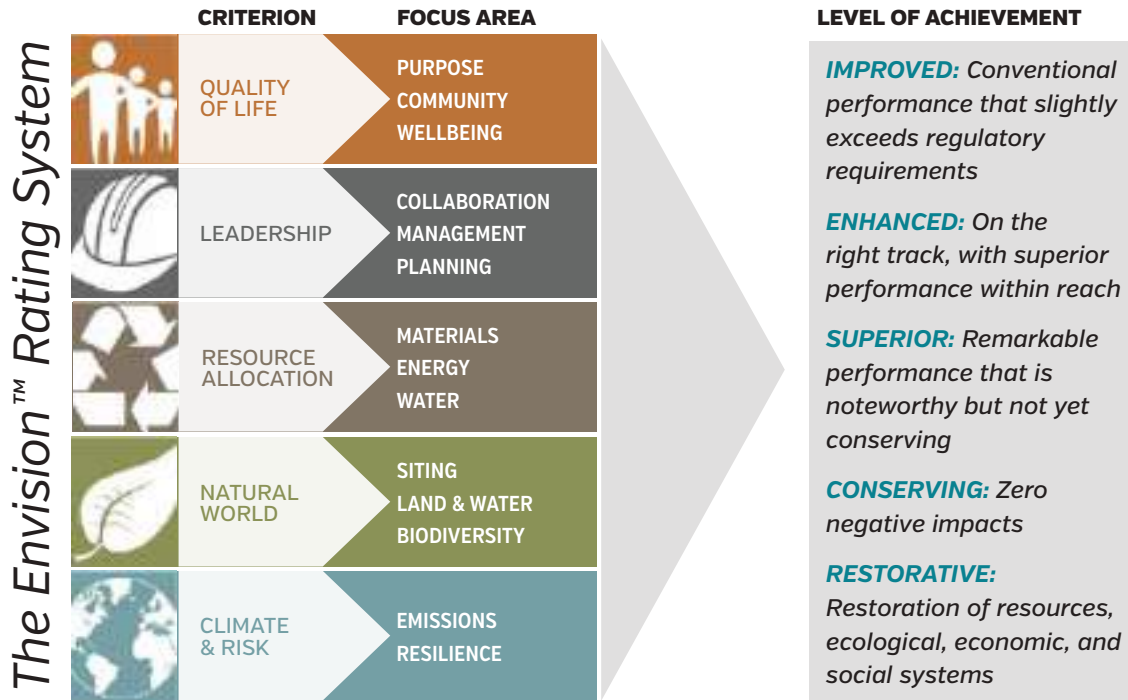
- Support evaluation of proposed Town infrastructure projects across all departments for the full range of life-cycle costs and benefits.

While the Town has taken many individual steps evidencing a commitment to sustainability, it does not yet have a systematic approach to evaluating sustainability benefits in infrastructure and facility design. Many communities have adopted policies for municipal building projects to meet specific

levels of sustainability performance (silver, gold or platinum levels) according to the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) program, regardless of whether there is a formal certification process. In recent projects, such as Wellesley High School, the Town has incorporated sustainability goals, such as high levels of energy efficiency.

A systematic approach to evaluating the benefits of proposed projects across all departments not only will enhance the ability of the Advisory Committee to comment on and advise Town Meeting, it will also engage boards and departments in an early evaluation of whether projects are the best solution to solve problems. A good rating system starts with the question “is this the right project?”—not just “how will we do this project?” The Sustainable Energy Committee is evaluating potential rating systems for the Town to use.

► EXHIBIT 11.2 OVERVIEW OF THE ENVISION RATING SYSTEM



**STRATEGIES**

**A. Adopt a holistic and systematic evaluation and rating system for infrastructure to create a common set of evaluation metrics across town government.**

An example of such a system that has been adopted by jurisdictions of varying sizes across the country is the Envision Rating System. Developed by the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure and the Zofnass Program for Sustainable Infrastructure at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, it is supported by more than 200 major multidisciplinary consulting firms. Envision provides a

systematic evaluation process for infrastructure or other major projects. Use of the system is free (certification requires a fee) and the system has been adopted by an increasing number of local governments of different sizes. The evaluation system provides an organized way to include:

- Clear and transparent processes
- Education and communication for all interested parties
- Alignment of priorities with the values of the community and stakeholders
- Satisfaction of the requirements of public and private providers of capital
- Business case analytic tools and economic process tools

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Study and adopt or modify for Wellesley a holistic and systematic sustainability rating system, such as Envision, and use it from the beginning of project consideration.</i>	2018-2022	FMD; DPW; Board of Selectmen; Town Meeting; SEC
<i>ii. Train town staff and board members in how to use the chosen system.</i>	2022-2028	Planning; FMD
<i>iii. Train town financial staff in the economic tools appropriate for life cycle analysis and evaluation of town facility projects.</i>	2022-2028	Board of Selectmen

Wellesley can fine-tune the Envision process to fit Town needs. Use of the process will provide comparable information across departments, boards and commissions to assist the Advisory Committee and Town Meeting when recommending and voting on program and capital budgets.

**GOAL 6: WELLESLEY'S STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM INCORPORATES BEST PRACTICES THAT PROMOTE INFILTRATION AND IMPROVE WATER QUALITY.**

**Policy**

- Make Wellesley a model of best practices in stormwater management for dense suburban communities.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Continue to develop and establish stormwater management practices and activities to be in compliance with and exceed stormwater regulations originally expected to take effect on July 1, 2017.**

The EPA has postponed required compliance on new stormwater regulations. Wellesley should work to meet and exceed potential requirements to become a model of stormwater management.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Implement best practices in stormwater management.</i> Provide public education, public participation, inspecting of outfalls for illicit connections, which may involve analytical testing of stormwater, construction-site management for stormwater control, and stormwater management for redevelopment and new development projects.	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; DPW; FMD
<i>ii. Review and amend local regulations to update and clarify requirements.</i>	2018-2022	NRC; Planning Board
<i>iii. Locate and cap illegal connections to the drainage system.</i>	2018-2022	DPW
<i>iv. Study the potential benefits of establishing a stormwater utility to fund stormwater programs.</i>	2023-2028	NRC; DPW; Planning Board; Board of Selectmen
<i>v. Promote and/or require the use of Low Impact Development (LID) and green infrastructure approaches to stormwater management in public and private development.</i>	2018-2022	Planning; NRC; DPW
<i>vi. Adopt a policy requiring the use of LID and green infrastructure in municipal projects.</i>	2018-2022	Permanent Building Committee; FMD; DPW
<i>vii. Identify impervious areas that can be removed for stormwater benefits, especially near natural resources and recreation areas, and include in project planning.</i>	2022-2028	NRC; DPW

## Calculating stormwater fees

An example house in Falls Church has a total impervious surface of 2,250 square feet (e.g. roof area, driveway, sidewalks and patio). To calculate the corresponding stormwater fee:

- Impervious area:**
- 1,100 sq. ft. for roof
  - 750 sq. ft. for driveway
  - 300 sq. ft. for patio
  - 100 sq. ft. for sidewalk
  - **2,250 sq. ft. total impervious area**

- **Divide** the impervious area by 200 ( $2,250 \div 200 = 11.25$ )
- **Round the result** to the next highest whole number (round 11.25 up to 12)
- **Multiply by \$18** to calculate the total annual fee ( $12 \times \$18 = \$216$ )



*Planting a tree could help earn a 10% credit.*

**Roof:** 1,100 sq. ft.

**Cistern:** An underground tank that collects runoff from impervious areas could earn up to a 70% reduction in impervious area.

**Patio:** 300 sq. ft.  
**Reduction:** Using permeable pavers rather than concrete earns a 120 sq. ft. reduction (40%) in impervious area.

**Installing a rain barrel** could help earn a 10% credit.

**Sidewalk:** 100 sq. ft.  
**Reduction:** Using permeable pavers rather than concrete earns a 40 sq. ft. reduction (40%) in impervious area.

**Driveway:** 750 sq. ft.  
**Rain garden reduction:** Collects runoff from the driveway, for a 300 sq. ft. reduction (40%) in impervious area.

**Off-site reduction:** Adding a rain garden or other stormwater facility that collects and treats off-site stormwater can earn up to a 70% reduction in impervious area.

## Stormwater credits

The City's stormwater credit policy provides up to 95% off the stormwater utility fee by adding property improvements, such as cisterns, rain gardens, and permeable surfaces. Credits are cumulative.

Voluntary water quality improvements can earn up to a 40% reduction in impervious area while improvements required as a condition of development can earn up to 20% reduction in impervious area.

An additional 10% to 30% percent can be earned by providing water quantity improvements that store stormwater runoff.

A 10% credit can be earned by performing stormwater quality improvement activities like planting trees and installing rain barrels.

Visit the City's website at [www.fallschurchva.gov/Stormwater](http://www.fallschurchva.gov/Stormwater) for more details about the Stormwater Utility Fee Credits Manual.

- To calculate fee reduction:**
- **Add** the impervious area draining to a facility, or multiple facilities (100 sq. ft. + 750 sq. ft. + 300 sq. ft. = 1,150 sq. ft.)
  - **Multiply** the impervious area by reduction percentage (voluntary, 40%) (1,150 sq. ft. x 0.40 = 460 sq. ft.)
  - **Subtract** the result from the original impervious surface (2,250 sq. ft. - 460 sq. ft. = 1,790 sq. ft.)
  - **Divide** by 200 and round to the highest number (1,790 sq. ft. / 200 = 8.9, rounded up to 9)
  - **Multiply** by \$ 18 to find the modified fee ( $\$18 \times 9 = \$162$ )
  - **Annual stormwater fee with credits reduced to \$162**

An example of stormwater fee calculations from Falls Church, Virginia.

**WHAT’S A STORMWATER UTILITY?**

Massachusetts General Laws authorize municipalities to establish a stormwater utility as an enterprise fund (like water and sewer) to fund the costs of stormwater management. [MGL Chapter 40 Section 1A, Chapter 40A Section 5, Chapter 44 Section 53F-1/2, and Chapter 83 Section 16]. The Metropolitan Area Planning Council has developed a Stormwater Utility/Funding Starter Kit. ([www.mapc.org/Stormwater\\_Financing](http://www.mapc.org/Stormwater_Financing))

Fees are typically linked to the amount of stormwater runoff produced by the impervious surfaces on a property. Credits are given for reducing impervious cover, conserving natural land, water harvesting

and reuse, groundwater recharge, low-impact development, and other measures.

**WHY IS A STORMWATER UTILITY A GOOD IDEA?**

The Town currently pays for stormwater management from the General Fund. While a stormwater utility may seem unpalatable as an “additional” fee, in fact it connects payment to the amount of stormwater produced on a property that has to be managed by public drainage systems. Bigger users of public drainage pay proportionately. A stormwater utility acts as an incentive for reducing impervious surfaces, retaining trees and plants on site, and promoting other green infrastructure strategies. Over time, the overall cost of stormwater management declines and water quality improves.

***B. Explore the benefits of participating in a regional collaborative for stormwater management and aquifer protection.***

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Use the relationships created through the DPW benchmark study to discuss the potential benefits of regional collaboration on stormwater management and aquifer protection.</i>	2019-2023	DPW

**GOAL 7: THE TOWN OF WELLESLEY HAS UP-TO-DATE, 21ST-CENTURY TECHNOLOGY TOOLS AND PROCESSES.**

***Policy***

- Support maintenance of a town-wide technology plan to coordinate technology needs and upgrades for all town departments, the school system, and the library for efficient service

delivery and effective customer service for residents and others.

**STRATEGIES**

***A. Create protocols for use of technology and digital platforms to communicate with residents and others.***

See additional information on technology and transparency in Chapter 14.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Develop systems for timely posting of board and commission materials and ease of use.</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; IT
<i>ii. Support staff time to keep web materials and digital communications up to date.</i>	2018-2022	All Boards and Commissions
<i>iii. Develop a robust e-government system that allows residents and others to easily conduct business with the Town online.</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; IT

**GOAL 8: TOWN POLICIES ABOUT THE MAINTENANCE AND ACCEPTANCE OF PRIVATE STREETS HAVE BEEN CLARIFIED.**

**Policy**

- Develop policies for town involvement in private road upgrades/maintenance and town acceptance of private streets

There are approximately 100 unaccepted private ways with varying conditions in Wellesley, but a uniform policy for acceptance has not yet been established. Similarly, the Town also lacks a system for maintenance of private streets. Massachusetts

towns have adopted a variety of policies and systems to accept private streets or provide public maintenance of private streets. For example, the Town of Dedham will pay 100% of the costs to bring private streets up to public standards, but limited funds result in long time backlogs. In many other cases, towns have betterment programs that require the beneficiary property owners along the street to pay some or all of the cost.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Review Town policies and bylaws on private streets.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Amend policies and bylaws to clarify and streamline the petition and acceptance process.</i> The Town needs to develop criteria for the petition and acceptance of private streets that are not part of new subdivisions. A majority of abutters on a private street can petition the Planning Board for acceptance. Criteria to be developed can then be applied by the Planning Board, Board of Selectmen, and Town Meeting to determine if the street merits public maintenance and if there is funding to bring it up to Town standards.	2022-2028	Planning Board; DPW; Board of Selectmen; Town Meeting
<i>ii. Consider implementation of a betterment system for petitions for public maintenance of private streets.</i> Betterment systems ensure that those who receive the benefits of private road improvements must pay some or all of the costs of these improvements. The Town could establish a formula for private funding of costs. Possible methods include establishment a fixed rate based on the average cost of the work and the length of road frontage; a rate based on the area of abutting land a fixed depth from the road; or a rate based on recent tax valuations of abutting properties. Approval for maintenance petitions would have to be obtained from the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen.	2022-2028	Planning Board; DPW; Board of Selectmen; Town Meeting
<i>iii. Revisit the bylaw and regulations associated with the Review of Adequacy process to ensure consistency with expectations.</i>	2022-2028	Planning Board; DPW; Board of Selectmen; Town Meeting



# *Sustainability, Resilience, and Green Practices*

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**T**he Town of Wellesley has made commitments to sustainability through the creation of the Sustainable Energy Committee (SEC), goals for reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2020, use of “green” products in maintenance services, a very effective recycling program, a food waste collection pilot program, and a school food waste recovery initiative, and incorporation of sustainable practices in Town projects.

Town government has been working diligently to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from buildings and Town-owned vehicles. The Town’s GHG reduction goals are intended to mirror state goals. The Municipal Light Plant purchases 5% renewable energy for municipal electricity use and customers of the Municipal Light Plan may opt in to renewable energy for their electricity, with about 1,000 customers (11%) choosing to do so in 2017. Babson and Wellesley Colleges have also opted for 5% renewable energy. The Municipal Light Plant elects 100% renewable energy for its own use. It also collaborates in projects such as solar panel installation for the 900 Worcester Street recreation facility. The Facilities Management Department is consistently reducing energy use in Town-owned facilities. Support for solar installation and net metering terms, free energy audits, and rebates for the purchase of energy efficient appliances are also available.

Transportation emissions are the most difficult for the SEC to measure and, in general, the most difficult to change. The state goals for GHG emissions are a 25% reduction from 1990 levels by 2020 and an 80% reduction by 2050. In 2014, the state had reached a 21% decline and was stalling in further reductions. Cars and trucks are now the top single source of GHG emissions in the state. Many observers say that a more aggressive transition to electric vehicles may be the best short-term solution to further significant reduction in GHG.

Because of its stewardship of Wellesley's streams, ponds, and wetlands, the Natural Resources Commission has long been concerned about the impacts of pesticides in nonpoint-source pollution—stormwater runoff. The NRC has an environmentally friendly landscaping program that works with residential property owners and successfully pushed for use of organic integrated pest management on Town property. The Department of Public Works has been preparing for more stringent federal stormwater regulations that became law in July 2017, but were postponed until July 2018.

The Unified Plan surveys and planning process indicate that for most residents, concepts of sustainability are related to preservation of natural open space and, for a somewhat smaller group, to GHG emissions reduction and energy efficiency. The Natural Resources Commission has programs to raise public awareness about nonpoint source pollution and promote ecologically sensitive landscape practices. Public awareness of green practices, such as low-impact development, is less prevalent.

### ***Supporting town government concepts***

*The Unified Plan's emphasis on making town government more customer-centric, data-driven and strategic, and transparent drives several of this chapter's goals and strategies, including identification of better data on transportation emissions for the SEC; more transparency about SEC data and reports; and raising public awareness about green practices.*

## **A. Sustainability, Resilience and Green Practices in the Vision and Values**



### **VISION**

In 2040, Wellesley is a town recognized for... its respect for the environment and support for sustainability, conservation, and protection of physical and historical assets...



### **VALUES**

**Conservation and Sustainability:** Make resource-efficient choices to conserve energy, water, and materials; improve water and air quality and reduce carbon emissions; develop and implement sustainable practices to adjust to changing environmental conditions

## B. Goals and Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<b><i>Wellesley reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions consistent with state goals.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicize Wellesley GHG emissions targets and performance to town residents and other energy users and promote opportunities to cut emissions.</li> </ul>
<b><i>The Town of Wellesley implements practices to conserve energy and use renewable energy.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to support energy conservation and use of renewable energy in Town facilities and operations and the Town fleet.</li> <li>Promote energy conservation and renewable energy use to town residents and businesses.</li> </ul>
<b><i>The Town of Wellesley implements and promotes resource conservation, waste reduction, and elimination of toxic products.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and maintain “green” operations and procurement practices.</li> <li>Continue waste reduction and sustainable materials management practices</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley is preparing for the impacts of extreme weather events and climate change.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support development of a vulnerability assessment and resilience plan.</li> <li>Participate in regional climate change planning efforts.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley is a Massachusetts “Green Community,” and pursues grants for sustainability projects.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively pursue opportunities through the Green Communities program to obtain grants to support energy efficiency initiatives.</li> </ul>

## C. Findings and Challenges

### Findings

#### ***Overview: Sustainability and Resilience***

- Sustainability is a set of policies and practices that result in meeting the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It includes promoting healthy environmental systems and habitats and supporting conditions for continued ecosystem services. Ecosystem services are the benefits to humans provided by a healthy ecosystem—for example, food and water, flood and disease control, and nutrient cycling.
- Resilience is the ability of a community to adapt and thrive in the face of extreme events and stresses. Resilient communities anticipate risks, plan to limit their impacts, and adopt strategies that integrate all community systems—civic, environmental, social and economic—to support recovery and growth.

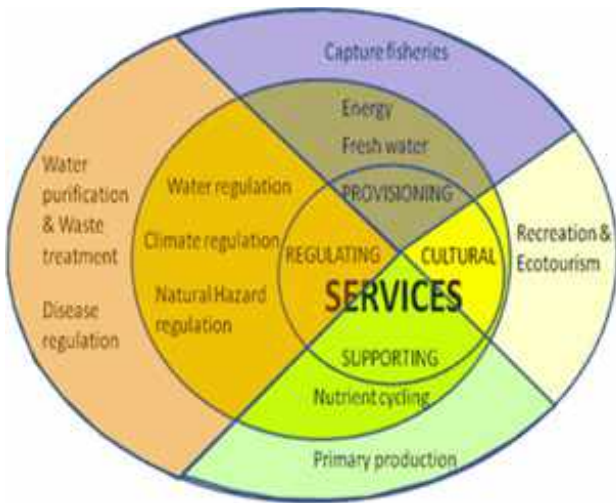
#### ***Energy conservation and reduction of greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions***

- There is scientific consensus that the increase in average temperatures since the 19th century is the

result of human activities’ emitting growing amounts of carbon dioxide and other gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and are therefore known as greenhouse gases.<sup>1</sup> The majority of greenhouse gas emissions result from buildings and transportation.

- Wellesley’s Sustainable Energy Committee (SEC) is responsible for the annual tracking of GHG emissions and for promoting sustainable practices, including conservation and efficiency measures, which will reduce GHG emissions.
- 2014 Annual Town Meeting established a goal of reducing GHG emissions 25% below 2007 levels by 2020.
- The Municipal Light Plant (MLP) manages electricity to work toward the Town’s goal. The MLP commissioned an independent study that found that MLP carbon emissions will be reduced by 29% from 2007 to 2018. Another two-part study, projected to be complete by fall 2018, will outline strategies for further emissions reduction during the periods 2018-2030 and 2031-2050.
- SEC presents annual reports to Town Meeting on GHG emission levels (in recent years). Data on building emissions is more readily available than on transportation emissions. The report to 2017 ATM appears in Exhibit 12.1.

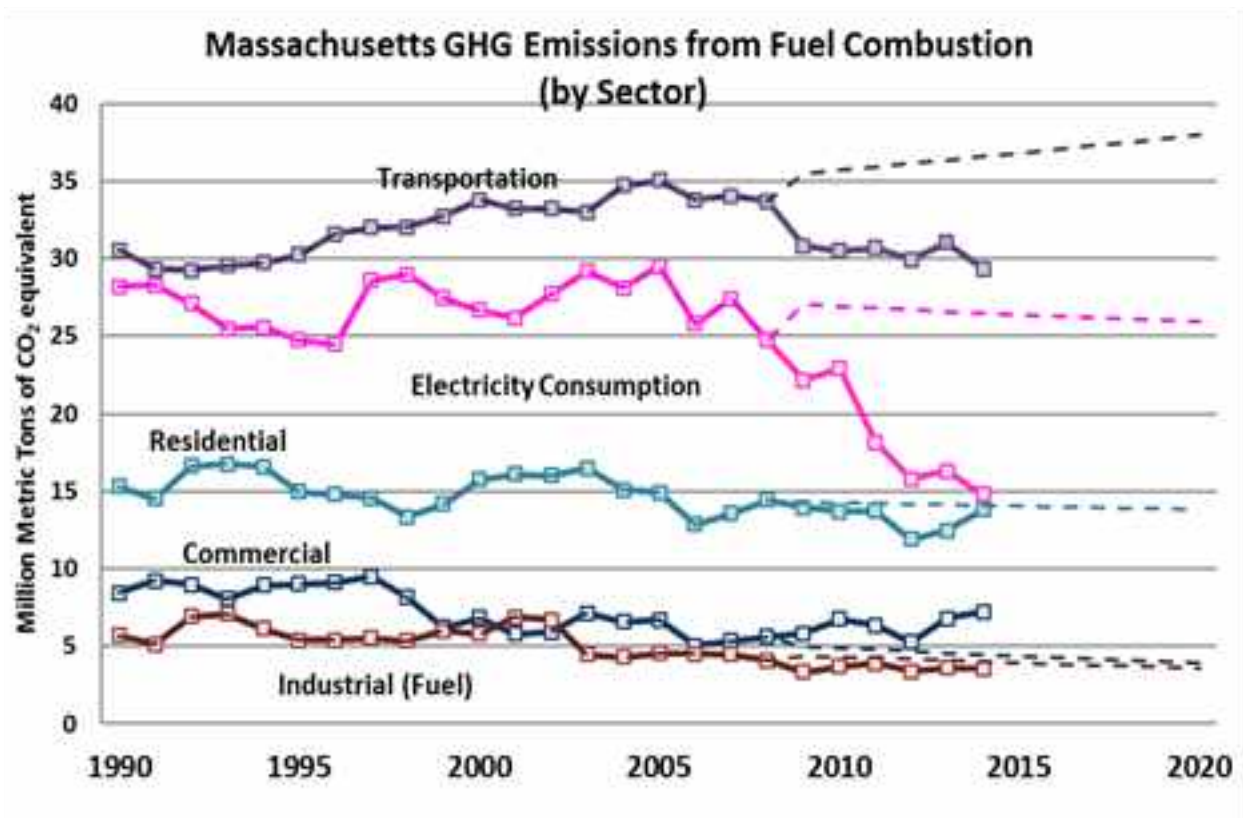
<sup>1</sup> <https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>



Healthy ecosystems provide benefits to humans, including water, flood and disease control, and nutrient cycling. [Source—Project Nereida at [nereidas-tech.eu/millennium-ecosystem-assessment/](http://nereidas-tech.eu/millennium-ecosystem-assessment/)]



Source: <http://bnac.ca/consumer-education/triple-bottom-line/>



Dotted lines represent “business as usual” projections.

EOEEA: [www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/climate-energy/climate/ghg/greenhouse-gas-ghg-emissions-in-massachusetts.html#2](http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/climate-energy/climate/ghg/greenhouse-gas-ghg-emissions-in-massachusetts.html#2)

<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions (eCO<sub>2</sub>) in metric tons</b>						
	<b>Share of Total 2016 Emissions</b>	<b>2016 Emissions</b>	<b>2015 Emissions</b>	<b>2015-2016 Percent Change</b>	<b>2007 Emissions</b>	<b>2007-2016 Percent Change</b>
<b>Electricity/Natural Gas/Fuel Oil</b>						
Residential	29.7%	105,879	112,341	-5.8%	132,862	-20.3%
Commercial	13.3%	47,406	48,457	-2.2%	57,922	-18.2%
Colleges	10.9%	38,970	39,250	-0.7%	45,886	-15.1%
Municipal	2.0%	6,994	7,816	-10.5%	9,87	-24.7%
<b>Building Subtotal</b>	<b>56.0%</b>	<b>199,248</b>	<b>207,863</b>	<b>-4.1%</b>	<b>245,957</b>	<b>-19%</b>
Waste	0.5%	1,853	1,756	5.5%	2,027	-8.6%
Gas/Diesel	43.5%	155,001	153,502	-0.3%	160,468	-3.4%
<b>Total Emissions</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>356,102</b>	<b>365,121</b>	<b>-2.5%</b>	<b>408,452</b>	<b>-12.8%</b>

Exhibit 12.1 Change in GHG emissions in Wellesley 2007–2016 (Sustainable Energy Committee)

- Solar panels have been installed at 94 residences, 2 municipal facilities (WHS and WMLP), 3 houses of faith (Wellesley Congregational Church, Temple Beth Elohim and Friends Meeting House), 2 businesses (Whole Foods and Drs. Ali, DMD) and at Dana Hall School. The Municipal Light Plant (MLP) is working with the 900 Worcester developer to lease rooftop space for MLP-owned and operated solar panels, which has the potential to double the total solar production in Town
- The MLP replaced all ornamental streetlights with LED lights in 2010-2011 (MLP funded \$397,700) and will replace high-pressure sodium cobra heads (approx. 3,100) by June 2018 (MLP funded \$512,400 with additional funding through a state grant and Town funds). As a result of the purchase of 5% of the town's annual electricity consumption in renewable energy (through both Town government and the voluntary renewable energy program), Wellesley was designated a 2017 EPA Green Power Community.
- The Facilities Management Department has incorporated energy-conservation systems and practices into its management of town-owned facilities, resulting in significant reductions in GHG emissions.
- Through the efforts of the SEC, the Town has just been designated a Green Community, which makes it eligible for grants to advance energy-efficiency policies, measures, services and facilities.
- Electric vehicle (EV) charging stations are located at the colleges and Whole Foods.
- Discussions are underway to develop sustainable building guidelines for Wellesley. At the request of the School Committee, the SEC developed sustainable criteria for use in site evaluation of the HHU alternatives. This work provides the basis for further development of sustainable building guidelines for all municipal building projects.
- Wellesley's Green Collaborative, initiated and facilitated by the SEC, has more than 30 participants including municipal departments, grassroots climate action groups, houses of faith, land conservation activists, garden clubs, and others.
- The Natural Resources Commission has led an initiative to address the approximately 200 gas leaks in the town. Gas leaks are the result of aging infrastructure that is leaking methane, contributing to global warming, killing trees, and affecting human health. In collaboration with the Selectmen and the grassroots group Sustainable Wellesley, the NRC organized a public forum on gas leaks in March 2017. The NRC has since commissioned a private study of gas leaks in Wellesley which revealed many more leaks than had been previously identified, including many in school zones. The NRC is acquiring a combustible gas indicator to test tree planting sites and collect data on the effects of gas leaks on public shade trees.

### ***Sustainable materials management***

- In 2016, Town Meeting passed a plastic bag ban.
- The 3R Working Group (Department of Public Works,

Natural Resources Commission, and SEC) created WasteWise Wellesley, a townwide program to identify and capitalize on win-win opportunities for sustainable materials management (SMM). WasteWise’s SMM goals are rooted in a systems-based approach to understanding greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions created by the production, consumption, and disposal of materials. Initiatives include food recycling and food waste diversion pilots at three elementary schools and the middle school and a pilot at the RDF to collect residential food waste that, in its early phase, is already removing more than 1 ton/week from trash and sending it to be used to power the generation of electricity.

- DPW is beginning to use green infrastructure best practices in stormwater management design.

### Climate change

- Wellesley, like all Massachusetts communities, is already experiencing some climate change impacts.
- While not expected to be directly affected by more dramatic impacts such as coastal sea level rise, Wellesley will experience impacts such as intense precipitation and more extreme storm events, which could result in flooding, increasing heat and the number of days above 90 and 100 degrees, more extreme storm events, and more frequent droughts.
- Massachusetts has already seen more warming than global averages, a 10% increase in precipitation over the last 50 years, and increased frequency of severe storms and flooding.
- In the coming decades, expected changes include

significant increases in temperature, both in summer and winter; increased annual average precipitation, though with important seasonal differences, such as more frequent and damaging ice storms and floods; earlier peak spring streamflow; more frequent droughts; and a longer growing season.<sup>1</sup>

### Challenges

- Accelerating the current rate of GHG emissions reduction in order to meet established Town goals. Organizing town-wide systems to support goals for energy- and resource-efficiency and green practices.
- Raising public awareness about town government and private practices that promote energy- and resource-efficiency.
- Increasing resilience by preparing for climate change impacts.

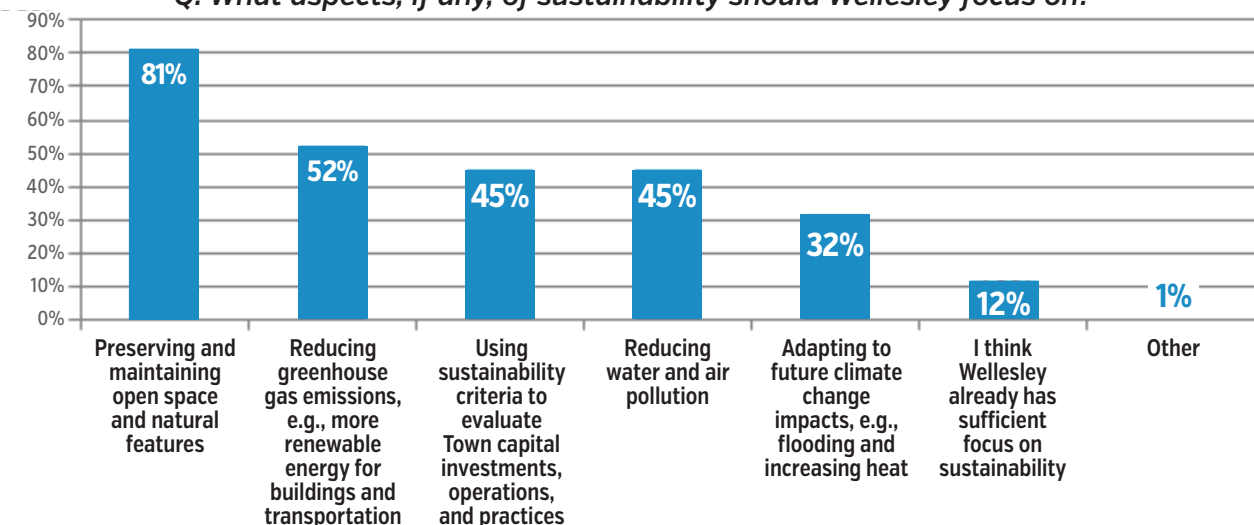
## D. What The Community Said

### Themes:

- Incorporate sustainability values into town decision making and operations and reduce GHG emissions
- Open space preservation and maintenance are key aspects of sustainability supported by the vast majority of participants in surveys and workshops.

<sup>1</sup> For details see MAPC, Metro Boston Regional Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Report, 2014, ([http://www.mapc.org/sites/default/files/RCCAS\\_full\\_report\\_rev\\_8-28-14.pdf](http://www.mapc.org/sites/default/files/RCCAS_full_report_rev_8-28-14.pdf))

**Q: What aspects, if any, of sustainability should Wellesley focus on?**



Vision and Values Survey (N=1,056)

## Survey

Please see the bottom of this page.

## Workshop themes:

- Town decision-making, policies and activities should be evaluated through a sustainability “lens,” with participation from all Town departments and attention to resource-efficiency, GHG emissions reduction, waste reduction, and use of non-toxic materials.
- Move towards a goal of 100% renewable energy.
- Raise public awareness about energy efficiency, waste management, alternatives to single occupant vehicles.
- Establish more electric vehicle charging stations.
- Protect aquifers and maintain clean water.
- Protect natural landscapes and habitat for resilience.

## E. Strategies and Actions To Achieve The Goals

### GOAL 1: WELLESLEY WILL REDUCE GHG EMISSIONS CONSISTENT WITH STATE GOALS.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Obtain better data on Wellesley GHG emissions, as available, especially for transportation.</i> Excise tax data can provide information on the number of vehicles garaged in Wellesley. Regional organizations such as MAPC and CTPS (the regional transportation planning organization) can also assist the SEC in developing better estimates.	2018-2020	Sustainable Energy Committee (SEC)
<i>ii. Develop a yearly campaign coordinated with the SEC, Town agencies, Green Collaborative organizations, and other groups, such as PTOs, to raise public awareness and look for new ways to create options for residents and businesses to live more sustainably.</i> Promote energy efficiency and renewable energy purchase initiatives offered by the MLP, DPW and others. Enhance the SEC presence on the Town website and communication channels, including posting SEC reports to Annual Town Meeting as separate documents and on a future open data platform.	2018-2022 and ongoing	Led by SEC
<i>iii. Coordinate the campaign with initiatives to promote safe and convenient walking and biking to town destinations and the proposed School Transportation Management Association.</i> (See Chapter 10.)	2018-2022	SEC collaboration with proposed Mobility Committee
<i>iv. Implement the recommendations for GHG emissions reduction 2018-2030 in the MLP study to be completed in 2018.</i>	2018 and ongoing	MLP

## Policies:

- Publicize Wellesley GHG emissions targets and performance to town residents and other energy users and promote opportunities to cut emissions.

Massachusetts’ 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act requires the state to cut emissions 25 percent statewide from 1990 levels by 2020 and by 80 percent by 2050. Town Meeting set a goal of 25 percent emissions reduction from 2007 by 2020. Both the state and the Town have had more success in reducing emissions from buildings. Cutting transportation emissions continues to be more challenging.

## STRATEGIES

### A. Promote residential energy efficiency and renewable energy programs and alternatives to town residents.

The MLP offers several programs to residential customers that reduce the use of fossil fuels.

**GOAL 2: THE TOWN OF WELLESLEY IMPLEMENTS PRACTICES TO CONSERVE ENERGY AND USE RENEWABLE ENERGY, AND IS A MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE FACILITIES AND PRACTICES.**

**Policies**

- Continue to support energy conservation and use of renewable energy in Town facilities and operations and the Town fleet.
- Support use of a rating system, such as Envision, for sustainable infrastructure to evaluate and compare all proposed infrastructure projects.
- Incorporate “green” building design and practices into all Town facilities, including retrofits as well as new construction, using LEED or other building rating system.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Incorporate energy conservation and renewable energy sources into all existing and new Town facilities to reduce GHG emissions and work towards the maximum feasible and effective renewable electric energy use for town facilities by 2028.**

As of December 2018, 100 cities and towns in the US have committed to making the transition to 100% renewable electricity, typically by 2030 or 2035. Six communities, including Burlington, Vermont, which has a municipal utility, have already achieved 100% renewable electricity. Town facilities in Scituate, on the South Shore, are powered by solar and wind power.

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHO</b>
<i>i. Incorporate sustainability and resilience, as appropriate, into the mission of every Town department and committee. The SEC can develop a set of questions or criteria help each group identify how sustainability is relevant to the mission.</i>	2020 and ongoing	SEC; boards, commissions, and departments
<i>ii. Continue and maintain energy-efficient systems in existing Town facilities through the Facilities Management Department.</i>	2018-2022	FMD
<i>iii. Establish a policy that all town new construction repairs, retrofits, and new construction will aim to incorporate sustainable building criteria into all phases of siting, design and construction. The SEC is prepared to lead the development of Town sustainable building criteria, building on the committee’s work for the HHU RFP. Many communities use the equivalent of LEED Silver standards (without requiring certification), or successor standards, as the minimum goal.</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; SEC; FMD
<i>iv. Use a sustainability rating system, such as the Envision system for sustainable infrastructure, to evaluate proposed town projects. See Chapter 11 for more information on the Envision system and its benefits.</i>	2018-2022	SEC; FMD; DPW; possibly through bylaw
<i>v. Prepare a report on the path to achieving 100% renewable energy, including costs and benefits of all kinds (not only rates).</i>	2018-2022	MLP
<i>vi. Make a commitment to sustainability, energy efficiency and renewable energy part of the MLP mission statement.</i>	2018-2022	MLP

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>vii. Explore developing a program that provides increasing amounts of renewable energy by default to customers of the MLP. Provide an opt-out option for those who do not want to participate. For example, the City of Cambridge in 2017 launched a community electricity aggregation program under MGL c.164, sec.134, the Massachusetts Load Aggregation Statute. The program increases the amount of renewable energy (currently 25%, not including nuclear energy) to customers by default and at competitive rates through bulk purchasing and offers 100% renewable energy sources as an option.<sup>1</sup></i>	2018-2020	MLP
<i>viii. Develop an information program and vote for Annual Town Meeting to extend GHG emissions reduction goals to 2030 and 2050 consistent with state goals.</i>	2021-2022	SEC

<sup>1</sup> [www.masspowerchoice.com/cambridge](http://www.masspowerchoice.com/cambridge) and [www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/CDD/Climate/municipalaggregation/cambridgecommunitychoiceelectricityaggregationprogram.pdf?la=en](http://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/CDD/Climate/municipalaggregation/cambridgecommunitychoiceelectricityaggregationprogram.pdf?la=en)

**B. Expand the number of electric-vehicle (EV) charging stations in Wellesley.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Continue to require EV charging stations in large commercial projects and multifamily developments.</i>	Ongoing	Planning Board
<i>ii. Establish EV charging stations in Town-owned parking areas.</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen

**C. Promote and create incentives for using “green” and sustainable building practices in the private sector.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Incorporate sustainable practices in a systematic way into the Town’s development standards and requirements for private development. [See Chapter 13]</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board; SEC
<i>ii. Develop an annual award for most sustainable building project, including retrofits. Develop criteria through a collaboration of the Planning Board, Design Advisory Board, Natural Resources Commission, Sustainable Energy Committee</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board; DAB; NRC; SEC
<i>iii. Develop a program to facilitate recycling of construction and demolition waste. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection has implemented disposal bans on many of the waste materials generated during construction and demolition. RecyclingWorks (<a href="http://recyclingworksma.com">recyclingworksma.com</a>) provides guidance on this topic that goes beyond state requirements and includes information on reuse and donation of usable materials to nonprofits such as the Greater Boston Habitat for Humanity ReStore. Architectural elements can also be salvaged for sale to specialist businesses.</i>	2018-2022	DPW-RDF

**GOAL 3: THE TOWN OF WELLESLEY PROMOTES AND IMPLEMENTS RESOURCE CONSERVATION, WASTE REDUCTION, AND ELIMINATION OF TOXIC PRODUCTS.**

**Policies**

- Support and maintain “green” operations and procurement practices.
- Continue waste reduction and sustainable materials management practices.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Adopt policies to minimize adverse impacts of toxic products on the environment in Town operations and purchases.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Develop a set of environmental factors to be considered in procurement such as durable, reusable, or recyclable; non-toxic or least toxic; energy-efficient; minimum packaging; and so on. The National Association of State Procurement Officials has developed a green purchasing guide, (<a href="http://www.naspo.org/green/index.html#top">www.naspo.org/green/index.html#top</a>) and the State of Massachusetts has an environmentally preferable procurement program (<a href="http://www.mass.gov/anf/budget-taxes-and-procurement/procurement-info-and-res/procurement-prog-and-serv/epp-procurement-prog/">www.mass.gov/anf/budget-taxes-and-procurement/procurement-info-and-res/procurement-prog-and-serv/epp-procurement-prog/</a>)</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; SEC
<i>ii. Continue organic integrated pest management practices on all town properties.</i>	Ongoing	Board of Selectmen; NRC; School Committee
<i>iii. Continue recycling programs through the RDF and the Waste-Wise Wellesley program.</i>	Ongoing	DPW-RDF; SEC
<i>iv. Provide recycling bins in public places, such as the commercial villages.</i>	2018-2022	DPW

**B. Raise public awareness and promote private landscape practices that are pesticide-free, avoid excess fertilizer runoff, avoid the use of invasive ornamental plants, and promote infiltration of stormwater. Stormwater**

**that infiltrates or drains into the ground reduces pollution of streams and flooding, and restores water (aquifer) supplies as well.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Expand the NRC’s eco-landscaping program.</i>	2018-2022	NRC
<i>ii. Develop resources on environmentally friendly landscaping practices that can be used by residents, developers, maintenance contractors.</i>	2018-2022	NRC
<i>iii. Raise public awareness about the benefits of permeable pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, lawn buffers at stream and pond shores, and other beneficial stormwater practices. There are many existing resources that could be modified to fit Wellesley.</i>	2018–2028	NRC; DPW
<i>iv. Work with contractors and landscape companies to promote environmentally-sensitive landscape practices for “high performance” landscapes.</i>	2022-2028	NRC

**PUBLICIZE LANDSCAPE PRACTICES FOR “HIGH PERFORMANCE” LANDSCAPES**

The Town can prepare a simple card with basic landscape practices to be distributed to developers, contractors, and residents. Residents who use landscape maintenance companies can ask them to follow these simple principles for more sustainable landscapes:

- Apply a 3-inch layer of mulch to all soil and amend the soil with 1 inch of compost.
- Divert 50% of landscape construction and demolition debris from the waste stream.
- Choose and locate plants to grow to their natural size.
- Don't plant invasive species.
- Grow climate-adapted plants that require little water for 75% of all non-turf plants.
- Keep the turf area to no more than 25% of total irrigated area.
- Use weather-based irrigation controllers that include a moisture or rain sensor shutoff.
- Don't use sprinkler and spray heads for areas less than 8 feet wide.

- Use permeable pavement, rain gardens, and other ways to keep stormwater on site.
- Use integrated pest management and organic fertilizers.

From the “Bay-Friendly Basics Checklist” at [www.stopwaste.org/preventing-waste/bay-friendly-basics](http://www.stopwaste.org/preventing-waste/bay-friendly-basics)

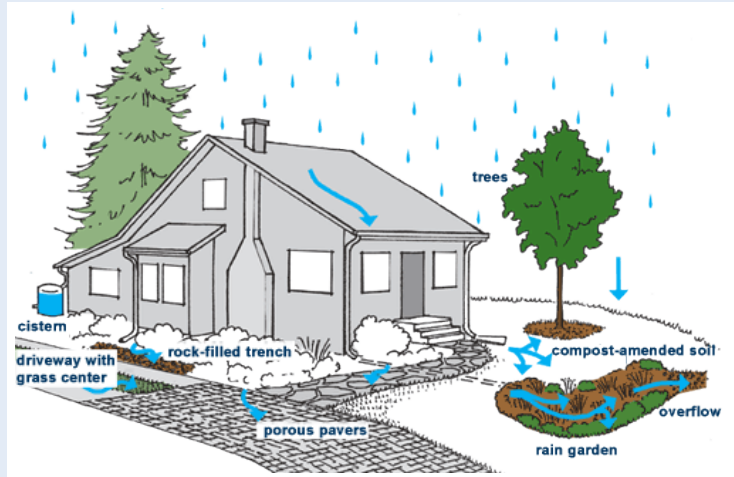


Image Source: [www.seattle.gov](http://www.seattle.gov)

**GOAL 4: WELLESLEY IS PREPARING FOR THE IMPACTS OF EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE.**

**Policy**

- Support development of a vulnerability assessment and resilience plan.

- Participate in regional hazard-mitigation and climate change planning efforts.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Take advantage of state and regional programs to prepare for climate change.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Become a state-certified “Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Community.” Apply for training to become an MVP community.</i> The state will provide funding to train a group of staff and residents in identifying climate change vulnerability and priority actions, and to complete vulnerability assessments and resiliency implementation plans.	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen
<i>ii. Continue participation in the MetroWest Hazard Mitigation Plan.</i>	Ongoing	Board of Selectmen; Fire Department
<i>iii. Raise public awareness about climate change issues and vulnerable populations.</i> The Board of Health, the Council on Aging, the Emergency Preparedness office (Fire Department), should include information on potential climate change impacts, such as extreme heat and intense storms, in addition to flooding, with special attention to senior citizens, disabled persons, and other vulnerable groups.	Ongoing	NRC; Board of Health; Council on Aging; Fire Department; SEC

**GOAL 5: WELLESLEY IS A MASSACHUSETTS “GREEN COMMUNITY” AND PURSUES GRANTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS.**

**Policy**

- Actively pursue opportunities through the Green Communities program to obtain grants

to support energy efficiency initiatives. Support fulfillment of requirements to be a state-designated Green Community

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Identify priority projects for sustainability.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Apply for grants to finance energy-efficient improvements such as electric vehicles and charging stations, and additional building energy programs.</i>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; SEC

## PART V

# From Plan to Action

## CHAPTER 13 LAND USE, REGULATIONS, AND URBAN DESIGN

- Rewrite the Zoning Bylaw, design standards and guidelines to align with the Unified Plan in a precise and user-friendly way, while providing flexibility.
- Update the Design Review bylaw and 1989 Design Review Handbook and incorporate the expertise of the Design Review Board in the development of municipal projects and earlier into proposed private projects.
- Review the permitting process to identify opportunities for additional clarity and streamlining and make improvements where warranted.
- Create an online brochure, checklists, and similar materials to inform residents, property owners, developers, and others about the land use principles, regulatory system, and permitting process in Wellesley.
- Clarify regulatory requirements and design standards so that permitting for desired projects can be streamlined.

## CHAPTER 14 TOWN GOVERNMENT CONCEPTS

- Use the Unified Plan annually in preparing and approving departmental work plans, operational budgets, and capital improvement plans and support a culture of strategic planning in town government.
- Require town government bodies to align their activities and budget requests to achieve the town vision and goals in the Unified Plan.
- Establish a bylaw requiring strategic plans aligned with the Unified Plan in a standardized format for boards, commissions, and departments that meet budget criteria—similar to the bylaw requiring a Town-Wide Financial Plan.
- Use data to drive decision-making in town government and to measure progress in meeting goals—both the town government strategic concepts goals and any applicable department, board or commission long-term goals.
- Expand the Town's online publication of data, by working toward creating an open data portal to provide user-friendly financial and project information.
- Design town processes around customer needs, for example, through an eGovernment strategy to streamline and simplify government transactions.
- Foster a culture of customer-service among town employees.
- Optimize the use of technology across town government for consistency, excellence, and productivity.
- Evaluate shared services for administrative functions.
- Study the feasibility and benefits of adoption priority-based budgeting processes, such as "Budgeting for Outcomes."
- Assure a continued presence of high quality volunteers by developing a recruitment program.

## CHAPTER 15 IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

This chapter identifies the priority issues that emerged from the planning process and contains an implementation matrix. Priority issues include:

- Housing choice
- Transportation choice
- Proactive economic development
- Modernization of the zoning bylaw and design guidelines
- Continued preservation and enhancement of environmental resources and sustainability performance, while balancing natural and recreational open space
- Establishment of a more coordinated and strategic approach to Town Government

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# *Land Use, Zoning, and Urban Design*

**A**s demonstrated in previous chapters of the Unified Plan, Wellesley residents have overlapping priorities for land use and community character. These priorities included natural open space, athletic fields and facilities, housing choice and affordability, and school locations.

- Residents place a high value on natural open space and would like to see expansion of Town-owned natural open space.
- Many residents would also like to see more athletic fields and recreational facilities, especially for youth sports.
- Many participants in the Unified Plan process are uneasy about the increasing cost of real estate as a barrier to a more diverse town and see an increase in housing affordability, including through more variety in housing types, as a primary vehicle for more diversity.
- With several unsupported Chapter 40B proposals in 2017, there are simultaneous worries about potential impacts and calls for more affordable housing development so that the town will no longer have to consider Chapter 40B developments. Some residents who have lived in Wellesley for many years would like to see more diverse housing options that would allow them to downsize into smaller residences as they get older.
- School construction options are currently limited to properties already under the control of the Town and not committed as park or open space

For the foreseeable future, Wellesley will be close to full buildout (assuming major institutional properties do not change). With the exception of the North 40, there is little available unbuilt land outside of subdividable parcels in residential neighborhoods. Like all mature communities, Wellesley needs to use strategic redevelopment to achieve multiple goals and identify development opportunities that solve more than one challenge at a time. This is particularly important in the context of a highly decentralized form of government. The challenges facing Wellesley increasingly require interrelated management, preservation, and development strategies where all interests have to work together proactively for collective decision-making.

With the exception of the North 40, most land use issues in Wellesley focus on a relatively small part of the town's land area—the commercial, office, and industrially-zoned districts. Reflecting the settled character of much of Wellesley from a land use point of view, changes in land use will take the form of adjustments in prevailing zoning or prevailing uses rather than full-scale change. The major issue affecting single-use residential areas is a continuing concern about the impact on community character of tear-downs and large replacement houses. While Large House Review and the newly-adopted demolition-review bylaw will have some impact on this issue, they will not eliminate this concern completely. It is at the edges between different land uses that concerns and conflicts emerge and where attention to design is especially important. These adjacencies provide benefits as well as adverse impacts, as anyone who lives within walking distance of a lively shopping district can testify. Mitigating the problems and maximizing benefits through good design is the key to creating successful mixed-use and mixed-use-adjacent neighborhoods.

Wellesley's Zoning Bylaw needs to be modernized. In many respects, the bylaw and many of its provisions have not changed much since adoption in the early 20th century. Modern zoning codes are more user-friendly and visual, including graphics and design standards that communicate what the community wants to see in development, and promote more mixed-use options and pedestrian-friendly environments than in the twentieth-century heyday of rigid separation of land uses. The Design Review Board, which today has limited ability to affect development, can play an important role in developing design standards (for the bylaw) and design guidelines (as additional information for property owners) that will provide an effective balance between Wellesley's traditional character and the needs of the 21st-century town.

**Supporting town government concepts:**  
*The Unified Plan's emphasis on making town government more customer-centric, data-driven and strategic, and transparent is reflected in several of this chapter's strategies and actions: user-friendly zoning bylaw; educational materials for the public and stakeholders on the land use regulatory system; data on and improvements to zoning enforcement; more digital services.*

## A. Land Use, Regulations, and Community Design in the Vision and Values



### VISION

In 2040, Wellesley is a town recognized for a quality of life that enhances the health and social well-being of its residents; respect for the environment and support for sustainability, conservation, and protection of physical and historical assets; and for its dynamic and thriving business community.



### VALUES

- **Connectivity of People and Places:** Provide safe, accessible, and efficient transportation choices including public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle pathways, to connect people to town destinations and the region.
- **Conservation and Sustainability:** Make resource-efficient choices to conserve energy, water, and materials; improve water and air quality and reduce carbon emissions; develop and implement sustainable practices to adjust to changing environmental conditions.
- **Town Asset Management:** Maintain, protect, preserve, and enhance the Town's physical assets including facilities, infrastructure, parks, open space, and natural resources.
- **Business-Friendly:** Support existing and new businesses in commercial areas that complement and enhance our community, while protecting quality of life and environmental resources.

## B. Goals and Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<b><i>Wellesley reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions consistent with state goals.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to key principles when making land use decisions.</li> </ul>
<b><i>The Town of Wellesley implements practices to conserve energy and use renewable energy.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a zoning bylaw, regulatory system, and permitting process designed to achieve Town land use and quality of life goals.</li> </ul>

## C. Findings and Challenges

### Findings

- The 2007 Comprehensive Plan recommended recodification of the Zoning Bylaw to eliminate redundancies, inconsistencies and conflicts. The Planning Board has made some progress and continues to include recodification on its annual work plans, but a full rewrite of the bylaw has not been completed.
- The 2016 Town Government Study Committee Report reiterated this recommendation: “The current set of bylaws was written almost 40 years ago...we discovered many bylaws which are outdated and should be revised. We recommend that at some point in the near future that a complete overhaul of the bylaws be undertaken.” (p. R-23)
- The Zoning Bylaw does not reflect contemporary standards of usability and access, organization, and clarity. Modern zoning is characterized by:
  - › A single, uniform set of definitions and terminology
  - › Integrated procedures with step-by-step details on the sequence of development approvals
  - › Illustrated design guidelines and standards
  - › A detailed table of contents and index
  - › Hyperlinks to code sections (for an electronic version) and site design standards
  - › A well-designed and user-friendly layout.
- Wellesley has “cumulative” zoning, with single residence zones as the most restrictive in terms of land uses. As the allowed residential density increases in other residential zones, and then as commercial and industrial uses are allowed in their respective zoning districts, the uses permitted in more restrictive districts continue to be allowed. Although this can function well in many locations, it may not be suitable in other situations. For example, if the Town were to allow redevelopment with residential uses in existing office districts, only multifamily residential uses should be allowed; single family or two family development would not be suitable and would create incompatible land use conditions.
- Like many older communities in which most of the land has been developed, over time Wellesley has established several small and specialized zoning districts, as well as overlay districts. New zoning districts proliferated over time to solve specific perceived problems. This is a symptom of a zoning code that has not been overhauled in many decades and that does not reflect an overall vision for development. There are 24 zoning districts and six overlay districts: the local Historic District; Residential Incentive Overlay District; Flood Plain or Watershed Protection District; Water Supply Protection District; Commercial Recreation Overlay District; and the Linden Street Corridor Overlay District. As a rule of thumb, the fewer the zoning districts in a zoning bylaw, the easier the regulations will be to understand and administer.
- All the commercial zoning districts allow multifamily residential uses, and there are four residential zones that also allow residential uses other than single-family dwellings; three of those zones cover relatively small areas and were tailored for specific projects that are not expected to change. The General Residence zone, however, covers 73 acres and allows two-family dwellings and town houses, in addition to single-family houses.
- Most zoning issues affect a rather small part of Wellesley’s land—the commercial and industrial zoning districts or a few potential sites with specific characteristics. In the Unified Plan workshops, these were always the locations that people mentioned when asked where to locate housing of different types and higher densities.
- Participants in the Unified Plan public meetings saw the commercial, office and industrial districts as the most acceptable locations to construct new attached housing units. A mixed-use approach, combining housing with retail stores, was often mentioned. There are a small number of large sites for redevelopment that could accommodate mixed-use projects or housing, and there are also sites with older buildings that could be ripe for redevelopment, particularly in the smaller commercial areas.
- The 2007 Comprehensive Plan identified and prepared mixed-use or multifamily scenarios for three sites: 27 Washington Street in Lower Falls (former Grossman’s site); 900 Worcester Street (St. James Church site); and Wellesley Motor Inn site on Route 9. The Waterstone at Wellesley senior living complex was developed at 27 Washington Street;

the Town purchased 900 Worcester Street, which will become the indoor recreation facility; and 36 apartments (some eligible for inclusion on the State's Subsidized Housing Inventory list) have been built in the rear of the Motor Inn site.

- Design standards and guidelines should focus on aspects of development that affect the function and suitable character of the project as viewed from the public realm, public streets, and other areas where members of the public can see the development or are affected by it (for example, in relation to driveways). Particularly in the case of expansions of existing houses or construction of replacement houses, the scale and location of design choices can make a big difference to whether a new project seems out of place on the street. The 2007 Comprehensive Plan suggested creating a booklet of voluntary residential guidelines to encourage design that meets the needs of contemporary homeowners while providing more consistency with character along the street.
- The Design Review Board is advisory to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals and participates in the development review process at late stages when it is difficult for it to have much impact. Moreover, the Design Guidelines Handbook dates from 1989 and could benefit from an update. The DRB could assist the town in development of design guidelines for new zoning and special development projects.

## Challenges

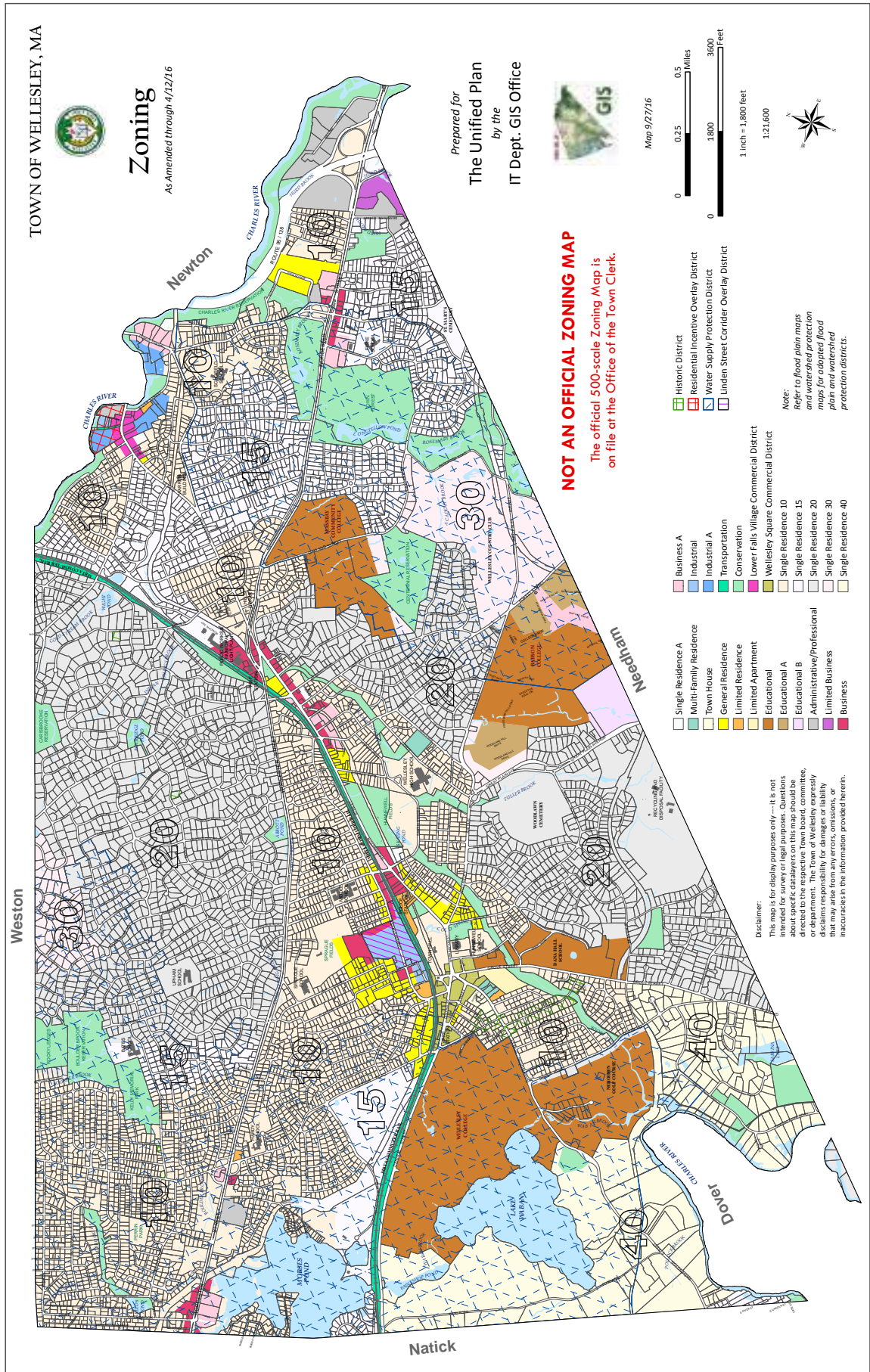
- Mostly built-out character of the town
- Relatively few sites suitable for redevelopment or development
- Continuing character concerns around tear downs and replacement houses
- Concerns about adverse impacts at the edges of different zoning districts
- Concerns about traffic and other potential impacts of additional housing development
- Lack of clear design standards and guidelines for impacts on the public realm of private development
- Lack of a consistent venue for board/commission and department collaboration about development and preservation issues
- Complexity of a full zoning bylaw rewrite

## D. What The Community Said

- As noted in earlier chapters, many participants in the Unified Plan process expressed a desire to expand natural open space and athletic fields, provide more variety in housing types and in affordability, reduce the impact of teardowns and large replacement houses (including impacts on trees and lot coverage), and encourage more mixed-use development in non-residential zoning districts, particularly the office parks.
- There were fewer direct comments on land use regulations. Some participants assume that the results that they dislike are the result of poor enforcement of zoning laws: “We need more enforcement of the zoning bylaw;” “Inability to enforce bylaws ruins the character of neighborhoods.” Others commented that Town systems are old-fashioned and cumbersome: “The only town that makes you draw a site plan on their little piece of paper...they are not even to a PDF yet;” “There is no road map for all the permits that I would need...It should be easy. As citizens of a town we shouldn't be so put off by the process we have to turn it over to lawyers.”

## E. Approaches to Zoning

Land use zoning first appeared in the United States in 1916. The zoning system that emerged in the early twentieth century is now called conventional or “Euclidean” zoning (after *Euclid v. Ambler*, the 1926 Supreme Court case that validated zoning as a proper exercise of municipal police power). As some of the disadvantages of conventional zoning became evident by the second half of the twentieth century, new zoning approaches emerged, including performance zoning and form-based zoning. Conventional zoning remains the basis of most zoning systems today, including Wellesley's, but many jurisdictions have added aspects of performance zoning and form-based zoning, particularly as communities have begun to see zoning as one of the tools of placemaking. “Placemaking” refers to the design, management, and programming of the public realm—including the private places that border the public realm—to create quality environments and experiences for people. People



experience quality places as welcoming, safe, connected, accessible, comfortable, sociable, and engaging.

### ***Conventional Zoning***

Conventional zoning was originally created to separate industrial and other noxious land uses from residential areas, and particularly to preserve quality of life and property values in single-family neighborhoods. Conventional zoning regulates the uses and dimensions of development, for example:

- Type and mix of land uses
- Size and dimension of lots
- Type, size and height of buildings
- Distance of front, side and rear setbacks
- Width and length of streets and sidewalks
- Amount and size of off-street parking

Conventional zoning separates land uses deemed incompatible and is prescriptive, in that it specifies land uses and required maximum or minimum dimensions, parking, and so forth. It tends to focus on what is not allowed rather than on what is desired. This prescriptive character makes it easy to implement, both by governments and by property owners, because there are no judgment calls when the zoning requires, for example, that a building must be ten feet from the front lot line. The homogenizing and inflexible outcomes of conventional zoning have resulted in an array of strategies to get around that inflexibility. Variances, conditional uses, special exceptions, bonuses and incentives, planned unit developments, and similar devices are intended to allow development to be more closely tailored to specific conditions and desired results.

### ***Performance Zoning***

Performance zoning has its origins in industrial performance standards that identify limits on measurable industrial impacts such as noise, vibration, light, dust, smells, and so on, and that are often incorporated into zoning codes for industrial land uses. This idea was expanded in performance zoning to regulation of the impacts of the built environment. Unlike conventional zoning, which assumes certain uses are incompatible and separates them, pure performance zoning assumes virtually any use can be made compatible if impacts are properly managed. Generally speaking, performance

zoning requires highly-trained administrators who have the confidence of both residents and developers. Performance zoning emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. Few locales have a pure performance zoning system, but some aspects of performance zoning are incorporated into many communities' zoning codes.

### ***Form-Based Zoning***

Form-based zoning focuses more on building form than on land uses. These codes are a reaction to conventional zoning's separation of land uses, which made it impossible to build new mixed-use neighborhoods and districts, and to its neglect of the public realm, which can result in visually- and functionally-impoverished environments that are often ugly, and often functional only for one type of user. Pure form-based codes are very detailed and prescriptive about certain aspects of design and use many graphics to give a positive vision of what is desired, rather than focusing on what should be excluded. Form-based zoning requires a design-focused community process in advance of writing the zoning to develop an agreed upon vision for desirable building forms.

### ***Hybrid Zoning***

Conventional, performance, and form-based zoning codes all have advantages and disadvantages. Because of its familiarity and long institutional history, conventional zoning is likely to remain the foundation of most zoning codes. However, performance standards and form-based elements represent effective tools for increasing the flexibility of conventional zoning. For example, conventional zoning is organized in separate-use districts on a community-wide basis but is not effective in mediating impacts at the edges of zoning districts—which is precisely the strong point of performance zoning. Form-based codes are organized around the street and the neighborhood and are particularly good at conveying what is desired in terms of the relationship between private buildings and the public street. In existing communities, form-based zoning is increasingly used for mixed-use districts and corridors, while conventional zoning remains in force for residential areas. Wellesley's Bylaw, with its largely conventional structure, incorporates several aspects of performance and form-based zoning today.

## G. Strategies and Actions To Achieve The Goals

### GOAL 1: GENERAL PRINCIPLES GUIDE LAND USE DECISION MAKING.

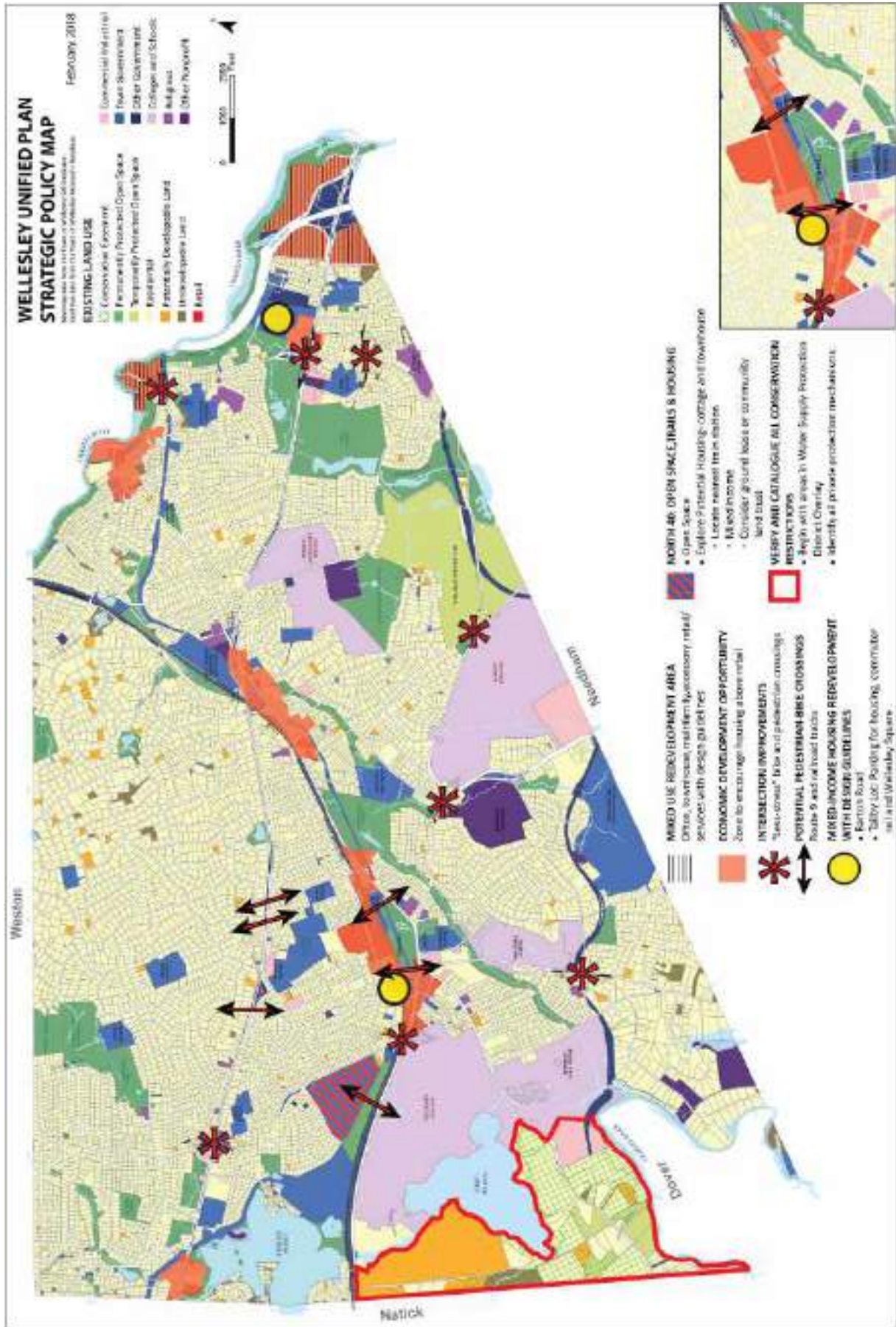
#### *Policy*

Refer to key principles when making land use decisions.

## STRATEGY

**A. Create an ongoing design, regulatory, marketing, and information strategy to educate stakeholders on land use.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Adopt general land use principles as standards and required findings as part of the Zoning Bylaw to guide decision making that will help achieve the vision and goals of the Unified Plan. Proposed principles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve existing predominantly single-family residential neighborhoods.</li> <li>• Preserve existing environmentally-sensitive lands and park lands and connect them in a network when possible.</li> <li>• Promote land use configurations that increase connectivity and walkability.</li> <li>• Promote mixed-use, transit-oriented development near the MBTA commuter rail stations.</li> <li>• Promote mixed-use, walkable development in Wellesley's commercial villages and office areas.</li> <li>• In general, locate multi-family development in mixed-use centers, on collector or arterial streets, or where there is nearby access to retail, services, and public transportation.</li> </ul>	2018-2020	Planning Board; Town Meeting
<p><i>ii. Create a brochure, checklists, and similar materials to inform residents, property owners, developers, and others about the land use principles, regulatory system, and permitting process in Wellesley. Develop these materials to accompany an updated zoning bylaw and make them available in digital and printed form. The Zoning 101 public workshop that the Planning Board is developing is a step in the right direction.</i></p>	2022-26	Planning Board; Planning Department; potential public information officer



**GOAL 2: TOWN ZONING REGULATIONS, DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS, AND DESIGN GUIDELINES ADVANCE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF COMMUNITY GOALS AND QUALITY OF LIFE.**

**Policy**

- Maintain a zoning bylaw, regulatory system, and permitting process designed to achieve Town land use and quality of life goals.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Make a commitment to rewrite the Zoning Bylaw as a hybrid zoning instrument that is user-friendly, clear, and precise.**

The new, updated zoning bylaw should be easy to use, provide a precise and complete understanding of uses, standards and procedures, and incorporate extensive use of tables, graphics and images. The zoning bylaw should be consistent with the goals and policies of the Unified Plan and clearly communicate the Town’s land use goals. Zoning districts that continue to meet town needs should be retained. The zoning rewrite process should include public engagement.

Ideally, town resources should be allocated for consultant assistance during the full period of rewriting the zoning, a process that will likely take two to three years, including public engagement and review. An incremental recodification project divided into separate projects, possibly with multiple consultants, is more likely to result in inconsistencies or lack of full consideration of the entire bylaw.

**PUBLICIZE LANDSCAPE PRACTICES FOR “HIGH PERFORMANCE” LANDSCAPES**

Sustainability principles relevant to Wellesley include:<sup>1</sup>

- Encourage high-density development
- Encourage mixed use
- Protect ecosystems and natural functions
- Encourage transportation alternatives
- Preserve/create a sense of place
- Increase housing diversity and affordability
- Reduce the use of fossil fuels/encourage the use of fossil fuel alternatives

<sup>1</sup> Edward J. Jepson Jr. & Anna L. Haines (2014), “Zoning for Sustainability: A Review and Analysis of the Zoning Ordinances of 32 Cities in the United States,” *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 80:3, 239-252; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2014.981200>

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><b>i. Prepare an assessment and analysis of the current zoning bylaw. Including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical analysis and evaluation of the current regulations</li> <li>• Sustainability audit of current development regulations</li> <li>• Analysis of how well the zoning districts match existing land uses and future land use policies</li> <li>• Analysis of how well the regulations implement established Town policy, and how well the regulations integrate with other bylaws and initiatives, including a summary of consistencies or inconsistencies where the regulations meet or fail to meet public expectations</li> <li>• A summary of “best practices” for key land use and zoning issues</li> <li>• The general strengths and weaknesses of the existing regulations—especially in terms of structure, organization, clarity, ease of use, existing zoning districts and district standards, regulations of general applicability, definitions and procedures.</li> </ul>	2018-19	Planning Board
<p><b>ii. Develop a hybrid zoning bylaw that includes conventional zoning where continuity is desired and appropriate, and incorporate form-based zoning for mixed-use and non-residential areas.</b></p>	2019-2020	Planning Board

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p>iii. <i>Draft the text to reflect policies and procedures (existing or new) and revise through work with the Planning Board and the public.</i> The recommended approach for a zoning update to make revisions to the text before undertaking any remapping. This approach allows for necessary changes to the procedures and content of regulations so that it reflects current policy, especially as articulated in recently adopted plans. Key changes include adjustments to existing or drafting of new zoning regulations. Once zone regulations are drafted, tested, and approved - and principles for mapping are in place—remapping can begin.</p>	2020-2021	Planning Board
<p>iv. Approve regulations and make needed changes to the zoning map.</p>	2021-2022	Planning Board; Town Meeting

**B. *Make adjustments to zoning to communicate goals, policy and design standards, clarify language, and provide flexibility.***

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p>i. <i>Eliminate the cumulative zoning system from the bylaw.</i> Districts appropriate for cottage developments, townhouses, and multifamily buildings should not allow conventional lot-based single family housing</p>	2018-2022	Planning Board; Planning Department
<p>ii. <i>Study the economic feasibility of cottage developments and then create suitable zoning to allow such development.</i></p>	2018-2020	Planning Board; Planning Department
<p>iii. <i>In the General Residence district, allow a special permit option for cottage and multifamily developments that meet Town design standards and goals for housing.</i> This district covers the largest area (73 acres), including locations in the Linden Street area, a segment of Washington Street and Brook Street, and the Barton Road area. Two-story apartments and condos already occupy some of these lots, as well as churches and the Senior Center.</p>	2018-2020	Planning Board; Planning Department
<p>iv. <i>Study and rezone the Cedar Street/Route 9 development area to allow for office, commercial, mixed-use, multi-family and/or mixed-income development at higher density.</i></p>	2018-2019	Planning Board; Planning Department
<p>v. <i>Clarify the zoning language for mixed-use development in commercial districts to provide standards for mixed-use development.</i> Currently there are different standards for commercial and residential development.</p>	2018-2020	Planning Board; Planning Department
<p>vi. <i>Amend zoning in commercial districts to ensure redevelopment would preserve and enhance the desired walkable character of village commercial development.</i> For example, parking lots in front of the building and suburban-strip style development should not be permitted.</p>	2018-2019	Planning Board; Planning Department

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>vii. Rezone office, business and industrial districts in the eastern part of Wellesley near I-95 (for example, Walnut Street and the office parks) to provide more development capacity and mixed-use potential.</i> In many cases, the office districts were developed in the 1980s or earlier. Because of their location, they have little impact on the residential community. Their proximity to major regional transportation routes and to the urban core helps keep them competitive. Allowing more height and density, along with a mixture of uses, would encourage redevelopment that meets 21st-century needs, provide the Town with more tax revenue, and support efforts to meet other goals, such as the creation of mixed-income housing.	2018-2022	Planning Board; Planning Department
<i>viii. Clarify regulatory requirements and design standards so that permitting for desired projects can be streamlined.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board; Planning Department



Aerial view of Wellesley office parks at the I-95 interchange

**C. Incorporate the expertise of the Design Review Board in the development of municipal projects and earlier into proposed private projects.**

The Wellesley Design Review Board is advisory to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals for design review of signs and development projects. Ideally, design review focuses especially on the impact of development (including signs) on the appearance and function of the “public realm:” the shared, publicly-owned spaces and places and privately-owned spaces that are commonly

open to the public or can be viewed by the public. Design review is not, as sometimes thought, simply about visual appearance or style. It concerns the physical character and function of spaces in three dimensions as they affect how we experience places:

- How the different elements of spaces, such as buildings, sidewalks, roads, parking lots, and parks, relate to one another
- How spaces function in facilitating, directing or obstructing people’s activities
- How spaces create a pleasing environment and express aesthetic values.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Include the Design Review Board in development of design standards for the new zoning bylaw. Design standards are zoning requirements.</i>	2018-2022	Planning Board; DRB
<i>ii. Use the expertise of the Design Review Board when developing proposals for public buildings.</i> Consistent with the requirements of the Town Bylaw, establish a procedure that engages the Design Review Board in the early stages of project feasibility planning and design.	Ongoing	Permanent Building Committee; DRB

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>iii. Develop a report on design guidelines for desired mixed-use areas.</i> Design guidelines are not zoning requirements but the zoning bylaw can cite them as preferred approaches to design. Project proponents can be required to explain why they are not taking the preferred approach.</p>	2021	Planning Department; DRB
<p><i>iv. Update the Design Review bylaw and 1989 Design Review Handbook.</i> While design review should not be overly-prescriptive, the bylaw and the handbook need revision that identifies the preferred design outcomes and typical indicators of the outcomes. It is important to allow for innovative solutions that can meet the spirit of design standards and guidelines, avoiding rigid adherence to specific design solutions.</p>	2018	Planning Board; DRB

**D. Improve the permitting and enforcement process.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Review the permitting process to identify opportunities for additional clarity and streamlining and make improvements where warranted.</i> There is a perception that the permitting process could be more user- and customer-friendly. Checklists, flowcharts, digital forms, user-friendly explanations of regulations, improved permit software, and similar approaches can improve the experience for all concerned.</p>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; Building Department
<p><i>ii. Research complaints about lack of zoning enforcement, identify any issues that need resolution, and implement solutions.</i> Identify options to increase zoning enforcement, including an online complaint form and regular review of completed projects along with the additional staffing that may be needed to perform enforcement reviews. Establish reporting and review procedures to ensure resolution of complaints.</p>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; Building Department

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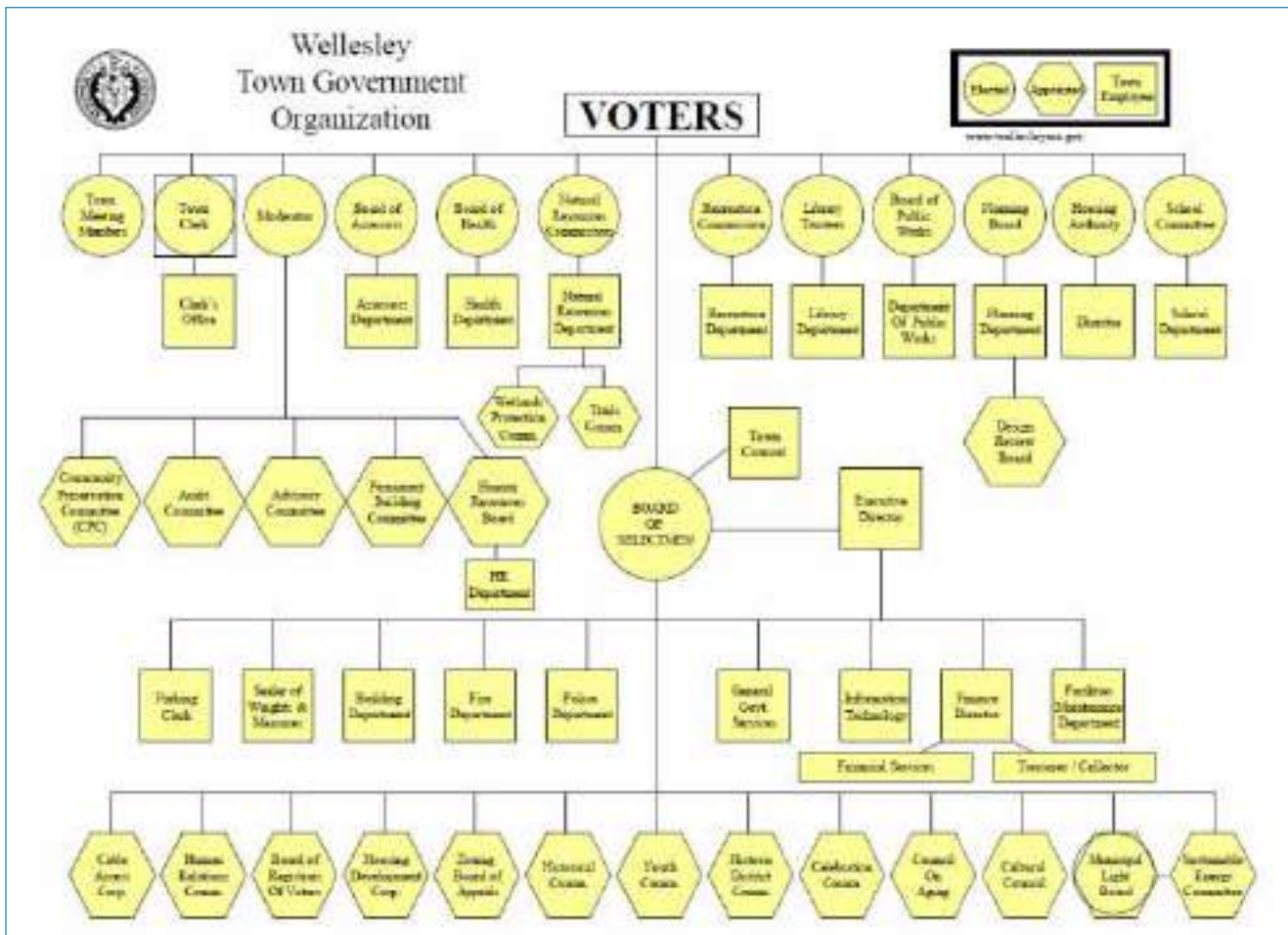


# *Town Government Strategic Concepts*

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**T**his chapter of the Unified Plan contains recommendations for town government operations to continue to excel within the existing context of Wellesley’s form of government. The Town does not have an executive body or executive official with full authority or accountability for the actions of the Town’s various policy-making bodies, because each of these is directly accountable only to the voters. The Town’s legislature, Town Meeting, ultimately represents the only body with full accountability, but it generally meets no more than twice a year and only then considers matters that are brought before it upon initiation by other bodies or citizens.

In form and operations, Wellesley town government is citizen-led, with a representative town meeting of 240 elected members, 10 elected bodies and two elected officials: Town Clerk, and Town Moderator. In addition, there are nineteen appointed committees. The nine elected boards and commissions make policy on designated topics and are responsible for nine town departments with their own hired staff and independent budgets and work plans. Through the annual budget process, these boards and commissions are assigned operational funds, and, if appropriate, capital budgets. The Board of Selectmen (BOS) has broader responsibilities than other elected bodies and is assisted by an Executive Director, who oversees multiple administrative and operational areas of government, but



From Wellesley's 2016 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

other elected bodies are not accountable to the BOS, and many department directors are not accountable to the Executive Director. The Town Moderator appoints members of several committees, including the Advisory Committee, Permanent Building Committee, Human Resources Board, and Audit Committee.

Each year, the BOS publishes a budget increase guideline—a percentage of the previous budget—for development of departmental budgets. Departments then request and are allocated operational funds, as well as capital funds consistent with the budget process and Town financial plans. Because the budget guideline percentage is based on the previous budget, certain departments are always allocated more funding in absolute terms.

In the 21st century, Wellesley's volunteer-led town government faces increasingly complex challenges and demands from residents and other stakeholders. That reality resulted in the establishment of the Town Government Study Committee (TGSC), appointed by the Moderator, which released a report in 2015 advocating a change to a Town Manager form of government. The 2015 TGSC Report identified the strengths and weaknesses of Wellesley Town

## WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR GOVERNMENT?

“Strategic planning for public organizations is based on the premise that leaders must be effective strategists if their organizations are to fulfill their missions, meet their mandates, and satisfy their constituents in the years ahead. Effective strategies are needed to cope with changed and changing circumstances, and leaders need to develop a coherent and defensible context for their decisions. Strategic planning is a comprehensive and systematic management tool designed to help organizations assess the current environment, anticipate, and respond appropriately to changes in the environment, envision the future, increase effectiveness, develop commitment to the organization’s mission and achieve consensus on strategies and objectives for achieving that mission.

Strategic planning is about influencing the future rather than simply preparing or adapting to it. The focus is on aligning organizational resources to bridge the gap between present conditions and the envisioned future. While it is important to balance the vision of community with available resources, the resources available should not inhibit the vision.

The organization’s objectives for a strategic plan will help determine how the resources available can be tied to the future goals. An important complement to the strategic planning process is the preparation of a long-term financial plan, prepared concurrently with the strategic plan. A government should have a financial planning process that assesses the long-term financial implications of current and proposed policies, programs, and assumptions. A financial plan illustrates the likely financial outcomes of particular courses of actions. National Advisory Committee on State and Local Budgeting (NACSLB) Recommended Practices provide a framework for financial management, which includes strategic planning.”

– **Government Finance Officers Association**, <http://www.gfoa.org/establishment-strategic-plans>

Government:

- Strengths: “dedicated volunteers; committed employees; a tradition of strong and visionary leadership; a collaborative culture; expectations of high quality services; financial stability; and satisfaction with the way we handle our affairs”
- Weaknesses: “lack of accountability because no one is in charge; over-reliance on long-term employees to solve problems despite structural impediments; lack of coordinated Town-wide planning; weak internal and external communications; lack of agreement about views of board and staff responsibilities; and divergence of actual practice from bylaws.”

In 2016, Town Meeting approved the structural governmental change, but, in a special town election with an overall turnout of approximately 5,000 (31% voter turnout versus 18% typical), voters did not approve a recommended consolidation of town government functions and the proposal to move to a town manager form of government. As one Unified Plan participant put it, “Wellesley likes its decentralized government.”

The TGSC also recommended development of a townwide strategic plan to identify and unify the townwide vision and priorities. This idea for a town-wide strategic plan was supported by the Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting and coincided with the Planning Board’s process to update the 2007-2017 Comprehensive Plan. Recognizing that the two types of plans should be interrelated in methodology and results, the Town opted for a Unified Plan that would be a consistent and visionary plan and serve as the Town’s principal planning document.

Currently, the majority of Town boards/commissions and departments do not have individual strategic plans, and those that exist use different formats, time frames, and types of content. In creating a townwide strategic plan, Wellesley will need to rely on strong collaboration among town leaders to achieve mutually beneficial goals. Ultimately, accountability for town government operations as a whole lies with Town Meeting, a 240-member body that meets once or twice a year. It should be noted that the Advisory Committee, that studies in-depth all issues that come before Town Meeting and ultimately advises Town Meeting on these matters, meets once a week for 10 months of the year.

This chapter of the plan provides recommendations on how town government should operate strategically. Many elements of a strategic plan are incorporated in this chapter, such as mission and vision and goals, and in other chapters of the Unified Plan, which is intended to be the governing document to guide Town government actions. (See the sidebar, “Recommended Steps for a Government Strategic Plan.”)

## Four Key Planning Documents and What They Cover

DOCUMENT	PURPOSE
<p><b>Unified Plan</b></p>	<p>Overall vision and priority goals for the next ten years, with recommended strategies and actions to achieve the vision and goals for specific themes and topic areas, developed through public engagement and a large Steering Committee, including representatives of boards, commissions, and committees, as well as at large citizen members.</p>
<p><b>Town Government Strategic Concepts chapter of the Unified Plan</b></p>	<p>Town government mission and how town government [boards, commissions, committees, and departments] will operate to achieve the vision and goals.</p>
<p><b>Individual strategic plans for boards, commissions, and departments</b></p>	<p>Plans for what individual boards, commissions, and departments will do within their areas of responsibility to achieve the overall vision and goals of the Unified Plan, in alignment with the town government mission described in the Town Government Strategic Concepts chapter of the Unified Plan.</p>
<p><b>Town-wide Strategic Financial Plan</b></p>	<p>The Town intends to align its financial planning, both short- and long-term with sound financial principles and policies as well as the vision, mission and other goals in the Unified Plan.</p>



*Residents discuss draft recommendations for the Unified Plan at an open house in November 2017.*

## Recommended Steps for A Government Strategic Plan

**These recommendations on strategic planning best practices come from the Government Finance Officers Association. *[Italicized text in brackets is commentary on the recommendations as they relate to the Wellesley Unified Plan.]* These recommendations appear at <http://www.gfoa.org/establishment-strategic-plans>.**

“The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that all governmental entities use some form of strategic planning to provide a long-term perspective for service delivery and budgeting, thus establishing logical links between authorized spending and broad organizational goals.... [A] sound strategic planning process will include the following key steps:

**(1) Initiate the Strategic Planning Process.** It is essential that the strategic plan be initiated and conducted under the authorization of the organization’s chief executive (CEO), either appointed or elected. Inclusion of other stakeholders is critical, but a strategic plan that is not supported by the CEO has little chance of influencing an organization’s future. *[Wellesley does not have a chief executive.]*

**(2) Prepare a Mission Statement....** One of the critical uses of a mission statement is to help an organization decide what it should do and, importantly, what it should not be doing. *[The Unified Plan contains a mission statement for Wellesley Town Government.]*

**(3) Assess Environmental Factors.** A thorough analysis of the government’s internal and external environment sets the stage for an effective strategic plan *[The Unified Plan includes analysis of existing conditions.]* .... Also, a government should develop mechanisms to identify stakeholder concerns, needs, and priorities. *[The Unified Plan included a public engagement process.]*

**(4) Identify Critical Issues.** Issue recognition should reflect stakeholder concerns, needs, and priorities as well as environmental factors affecting the community. *[The Unified Plan identifies critical issues based on public engagement, the Steering Committee representing boards and commissions as well as at-large members, and analysis of trends.]*

**(5) Agree on a Small Number of Broad Goals.** These written goals should address the most critical issues facing the community. It may be necessary to define priorities among goals to improve their usefulness in allocating resources. *[The Unified Plan contains an overall vision for the Town and broad goals for comprehensive plan topic areas and town strategy concepts.]*

**(6) Develop Strategies to Achieve Broad Goals.** Strategies relate to ways that the environment can be influenced (internal or external) to meet broad goals.... *[The Unified Plan contains strategies to achieve the vision and goals.]*

**(7) Create an Action Plan.** The action plan describes how strategies will be implemented and includes activities and services to be performed, associated costs, designation of responsibilities, priority order, and time frame involved for the organization to reach its strategic goals. *[The Unified Plan includes actions to make strategies operational, priorities, responsible parties, and a general time frame.]*

**(8) Develop Measurable Objectives.** Objectives are specific, measurable results to be achieved. Objectives and their time lines are guidelines, not rules set in stone. Objectives should be expressed as quantities, or at least as verifiable statements, and ideally would include time frames. *[The Unified Plan contains some measurable objectives and many verifiable statements associated with time frames.]*

**(9) Incorporate Performance Measures.** Performance measures provide an important link between the goals, strategies, actions, and objectives stated in the strategic plan and the programs and activities funded in the budget. Performance measures provide information on whether goals and objectives are being met. *[The Unified Plan strategies and actions call for development of performance measures in relation to many goals, but does not include this detail in many cases.]*

**(10) Obtain Approval of the Plan.** Policymakers should formally approve the strategic plan so it can provide the context for policy decisions and budget decisions.

**(11) Implement the Plan.** Organization stakeholders should work together to implement the plan. Moreover, the strategic plan should drive the operating budget, the capital plan, and the government’s other financial planning efforts. *[The Unified Plan calls for relating board, commission, and departmental budgets to achievement of the vision and goals in the Unified Plan.]*

**(12) Monitor Progress.** Progress toward planned goals should be monitored at regular intervals. Organizations should develop a systematic review process to evaluate the extent to which strategic goals have been met.

**(13) Reassess the Strategic Plan.** Governments should conduct interim reviews every one to three years, and more comprehensive strategic planning processes every five to ten years, depending on how quickly conditions change. Performance measure results need to be reviewed more frequently than the strategic plan.”

## A. Town Government Strategy and Stewardship in the Unified Plan Vision and Values



### **VISION**

In 2040, Wellesley is recognized for its fiscally sound, well-managed, innovative, and accessible town government that has strong citizen participation and a highly-motivated, collaborative, and talented professional staff.



### **VALUES**

- **Excellence in Service Delivery:** Provide a broad array of services to residents and other users of town services; maintain a strong customer service orientation that strives for excellence in every aspect of service delivery.
- **Town Asset Management:** Maintain, protect, preserve, and enhance the Town's physical assets including facilities, infrastructure, parks, open space, and natural resources.
- **Collaboration:** Leverage resources and expertise of local private businesses and institutions, as well as neighboring towns and regional agencies, to achieve mutual goals.
- **Best-Practice Implementation:** Establish best practices and priority-based resource allocation systems to support town services, infrastructure, and capital investments in a fiscally-prudent manner; conduct long-range fiscal/financial planning that includes appropriate metrics for evaluating progress and adjustment to changing financial conditions.
- **Democratic Government and Citizen Participation:** Promote participation and engagement in town governance and decision-making.
- **Transparency:** Facilitate public access to information, making it easy to understand how town government works, how decisions are made and how to get involved; encourage input from and effectively communicate with residents and other stakeholders.

## B. Wellesley Town Government Mission

A mission statement for town government is different from the town and community vision that guides the Unified Plan as a whole. The vision is about the future—what do we want the town as a community to be like twenty years from now. The town government mission is about the present and about operations now: how we want town government to act.

### **WELLESLEY TOWN GOVERNMENT MISSION STATEMENT**

The government of the Town of Wellesley provides excellent services aligned with town priorities to residents, business, and visitors, with high-quality customer service, transparency, and accountability, and applying public management best practices.

## C. Goals and Policies

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
<b><i>The Unified Plan is incorporated in decision making at multiple levels.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town government activities are focused on achieving the vision and goals of the Unified Plan.</li> <li>• Enhance inter-board communication and collaboration.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley is a strategy-driven town government</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use resources in the way that best aligns with the results the town aspires to deliver</li> <li>• Use data to drive decision-making and metrics to measure success</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley is a customer-centric town government</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a more uniform high standard of customer service within town government operations</li> <li>• Be known as the town with outstanding customer service standards.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Wellesley is an operationally-efficient town government</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate operational excellence best practices to find those with the best fit for Wellesley.</li> </ul>

## D. Findings and Challenges

### Findings

- Wellesley Town Government operates very effectively, with a strong culture of volunteer public servants, the leadership of outstanding department heads, and low turnover among a devoted workforce in which personal relationships facilitate getting things done.
- The workings of town government, particularly the budget process, operate informally with peer to peer exchange among the boards, leveraging relationships and significant amounts of communication, collaboration, and coordination to achieve successful resolution of challenging issues.
- The town has optimized efficiency within individual departments, boards, and commissions, but as a decentralized operation, has chosen not to optimize efficiency across the town with shared services for administrative functions (such as IT, HR, procurement).
- Budget decisions are not uniformly tied to strategic plans and are created in a process that begins with the guidelines set by the Board of Selectmen that all parts of government receive the same percentage increase, with the exception that the school department may or may not receive the same percentage increase as other municipal departments.

- Newcomers and outsiders find a full understanding of how decisions get made in town government challenging.
- Availability of information for public decisions is inconsistent in availability, quality, and timeliness across the town. While some information is digitized and shared electronically among departments this process is neither universal nor standardized.

### Challenges

- Developing a town-wide, community vision and set of goals to guide all the entities in town government as they fulfill their roles (this is the purpose of the Unified Plan process).
- Balancing Wellesley’s highly democratic and citizen-led government tradition with the time- and cost-efficiency benefits of contemporary best practices in government administration.
- Making information about all the entities and activities of town government and the activities of boards and commissions consistently available and up to date for everyone in the Wellesley community
- Developing strategic plans with standard requirements across town government, tying them to budget development, and incorporating timelines and measurable targets for stated goals.
- Building budget transparency with a system for creating and tracking budgets throughout the life cycle and making budget information available online.

Exhibit 14.1 Existing Town Government Entity Strategic Plans

DEPARTMENT/ BOARD/ COMMISSION	DURATION	SECTIONS	COMMENTS
School	2013-2109 [6 years]	Mission, Vision, Values, Theory of action, Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not include specific actions and timeframes, or assign responsibility but is accompanied by a Five-Year Work Plan to implement the Strategic Plan.</li> </ul>
Library	2019-2023 [5 years]	Background, Climate Assessment, Key Challenges, Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An extensive process using a broadly representative committee, focus groups, interviews, patron survey, computer usage study, and observation study.</li> </ul>
Natural Resources Commission	[48 pages].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NRC Priorities</li> <li>Strategic Goals</li> <li>Implementation Plan [objectives and actions]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed by a consultant.</li> <li>2-phase process included interviews and 4-hour facilitated retreats in 2013 and 2015.</li> </ul>
Public Works	FY 16 Strategic plan	Mission, vision, values, goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes “what by when” such as “reduce lost time injuries and at fault accidents 50% over FY 15.”</li> <li>Also, shows by division what they need to do to achieve goals.</li> </ul>

## E. What The Community Said

### *Unified Plan Open House*

At this public open house held on November 29, 2017, participants were asked to comment on proposed recommendations in several key categories for the Unified Plan, including the Town Concepts. Comments were solicited using a form that allowed for quick response in a table and provided space for individual comments. In some cases, participants made comments but did not check off boxes in the form. A summary of responses appears in Exhibit 14-2.

#### WHAT'S WORKING IN TOWN GOVERNMENT

- “Democracy in action.”
- “I’m very impressed by the engagement of the various volunteers in town government and by the talent level. It is really remarkable.”
- “Town government is “very direct. Everyone can be heard.”
- “We have the best department heads.”
- “Independently, departments are performing their missions pretty well.”

#### ACCOUNTABILITY

- “Optimized by silo....”
- “Town government is somewhat impenetrable. The multiple boards and committees look like a headless institution.”
- “Greater accountability is not always welcomed.”
- “Things come into the capital plan out of nowhere and they come off the plan the same way.”
- “Within town government only a small group understands how it works.”
- “I think that most of the community doesn’t understand the way things get done in Town and as a result the majority only get involved once something gets significant publicity and is already partially baked.”

## DECENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT

- “Who better to run the town than the taxpayers?”
- “I believe in democracy but also efficiency.”
- “How do we attract people to government who are willing to let another person’s priority take a higher position than their own?”
- “Nobody in town understands how the budget is developed”
- “Change management is poorly done, everything is presented as a fait accompli.”
- “‘Unified’ and ‘Wellesley’ seems to be an oxymoron.”
- “One area for improvement is for the town officials to begin to think of the town as a whole rather than just the priorities of their own board.
- Town officials should work together to figure out how they can best help each other.”
- “Everything takes so long.”
- “We will spend forty years in the desert before we do anything” with the North 40.
- “Operating and capital needs are left to departments”

## PRIORITY-SETTING

- “Finding a balance between schools and other needs is important.”
- “Easy in focus groups and public forums to say ‘we want everything’ but it’s not connected to funding.”

- “We so often deviate from any plans. Do we have the commitment to follow through on them?”
- “There are bylaws that are well-intentioned but poorly executed....spot-zoned rather than comprehensive, because somebody complained about it.”
- “Things come on and off the capital plan, it’s the squeaky wheel.”
- “No way to prioritize” in making budget decisions.

## TRANSPARENCY AND CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

- “Zero transparency....not a lot of accountability on elected people.”
- “Most towns have more accessibility of information and services through their websites.
- “I do not believe we are customer oriented.”
- “Everything presented at Town Meeting should be online and it’s not.”
- “Town hall is confusing and not customer-centric.”
- “The only way to know about a project is to be on the committee.”
- “Frustrated we can’t do more online”
- “By the time it gets to the public the die is already cast.”



Exhibit 14.2 **Responses to Proposed Recommendations On Town Government**

<b>TOWN GOVERNMENT COORDINATION/STRATEGY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>MAYBE</b>
Town government mission statement: <b>The government of the Town of Wellesley provides excellent services aligned with town priorities to residents, business, and visitors, with high quality customer service, transparency, and accountability, and applying public management best practices.</b>	23	2	3
Define and implement board and departmental strategic planning through bylaws: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To require town government bodies to align their activities to achieve the town vision and goals in the Unified Plan</li> <li>• To require town government bodies with budgets over \$100,000 to establish strategic plans aligned with the Unified Plan, in a standardized format, over a rolling implementation period of three to five years</li> </ul>	19	8	
Create a culture of data-driven government to drive decision-making and transparency and identify a “data chief” to work across boards and departments to enhance management efficiency, save money, and support better decision making—for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the kind of value Wellesley has already gained [\$132,000] by using data analytics for energy costs and installation of LED exterior lights (10% reduction in electricity costs).</li> <li>• Explore participation in the Massachusetts Municipal Performance Management Program (about 25 towns and cities already participating)—many municipalities identified savings in sick time and overtime costs for police and public works.</li> </ul>	19	4	5
Create a customer-centric town government: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design town processes around customer needs.</li> <li>• Foster a culture of customer service among town employees.</li> <li>• Gather customer feedback and establish customer service metrics.</li> <li>• Create programs to assure a continued flow of high quality volunteers.</li> </ul>	24		4
Optimize the use of technology: evaluate, and implement where useful, shared services for administrative functions (e.g., purchase of technology and software to save money).	23	1	2
Study the feasibility and benefits of adopting Budgeting for Outcomes (priority-based budgeting) in the context of Wellesley’s governmental system.	15	3	8
Design new schools and other facilities to support additional community goals, such as meeting space, and arts and culture.	21	3	4

## F. Strategies and Actions To Achieve The Goals

### GOAL 1: THE UNIFIED PLAN IS INCORPORATED IN DECISION MAKING AT MULTIPLE LEVELS.

#### Policies

- Town government activities are focused on achieving the vision and goals of the Unified Plan.
- Enhance inter-board communication and collaboration.

## STRATEGY

### A. Use the Unified Plan annually in preparing and approving departmental work plans, operational budgets, and capital improvement plans.

Many communities use their comprehensive plans during the annual process to develop work plans, and operational and capital budgets, requiring statements relating the budget or work plan to the advancement of the vision and goals of the Unified Plan. This ensures that decision makers and staff will understand the content of the Unified Plan.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Develop a user-friendly system or checklist for boards, commissions, and departments to use to compare proposals with the goals of the Unified Plan.</i> A user-friendly system that assists in easy review of consistency with the Unified Plan will make the plan an integral part of their day-to-day work.	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; Planning Board
<i>ii. Identify Unified Plan-related actions on agendas of the boards, commissions, and committees.</i> Sometimes citizens are unaware of implementation actions and believe that a plan is “gathering dust on the shelf” when in fact it is being implemented. An icon, color code or identifying note in agendas of decision-making bodies is a systematic way to show how the Town is implementing the Unified Plan.	2018 and ongoing	All public entities
<i>iii. Publicize actions and activities that implement the Unified Plan.</i> Actions by Town boards, commissions, and departments that implement the Unified Plan should be publicized as such, giving credibility to the planning process. Publicizing the implementation of Unified Plan strategies and actions will require information sharing and communication.	2018 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen; all other entities
<i>iv. Establish a system to promote inter-board communication, discussion and collaboration.</i> Inter-board meetings should function as interactive opportunities for board members to share information and issues and discussion on how to achieve the Unified Plan vision and goals.	2018 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen; Executive Director; boards and commissions

#### A POSSIBLE SYSTEM FOR INTER-BOARD MEETINGS

An established system for inter-board meetings designed to encourage collaboration and problem solving will help Wellesley achieve the community’s goals. Possible aspects of the system could include:

- **Purpose:** Discuss departmental plans, initiatives, and budget priorities; share challenges; create working groups on specific issues that cross board responsibilities
- **Meetings:** Quarterly, with dates set in July for the entire fiscal year by the BOS/Executive Director after consultation with boards—September [budget season kickoff]; January [discuss budget gaps and town meeting warrant articles]; mid-March [discuss strategic plan issues]; early June [open topics].
- **Participation:** representatives of each elected board plus any other boards/individuals appropriate given the agenda.
- **Chairing and agenda:** Rotate chairing of meeting among boards, with selection to be determined at prior meeting. Agenda to be managed by the chair, with all boards submitting agenda items.

**GOAL 2: WELLESLEY HAS A STRATEGY-DRIVEN TOWN GOVERNMENT.**

Within the framework of the Unified Plan and the mission, vision and goals of the Town Government Strategic Concepts chapter, departments, boards and commissions should be encouraged and eventually required to create and publicly share strategic plans that describe their long-term goals. These strategic plan goals should be used in budget requests, along with reference to how the requests advance the vision and goals of the Unified Plan. This provides external accountability and also creates internal alignment for the department, board or commission creating a strategic plan.

**Policies**

- Use resources in the way that best aligns with the results the town aspires to deliver.
- Use data to drive decision-making.

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Through a bylaw for Annual Town Meeting 2019, require town government bodies to align their activities to achieve the town vision and goals in the Unified Plan.**

Under Article 19.16.2 of the Town Bylaws, the Board of Selectmen is required to develop a town-wide financial plan every year. Section 19.16.2. f states “All Town boards and officers shall fully cooperate and participate, at the request of the Selectmen, in preparing and maintaining the Town-Wide Financial Plan and in presenting aspects of the Plan that relate to their areas of jurisdiction.”

Similarly, a Town bylaw should require that Town entities that meet certain threshold criteria should prepare strategic plans in that are aligned with the Unified Plan and are designed and formatted to allow for comparison across budgets by the Advisory Committee and Town Meeting.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Require that departments, boards and commissions refer to the Unified Plan in their capital and operating budget requests.</i> Requiring annual reference back to the vision, values, and goals of the Unified Plan reinforces for the leaders of departments, boards and commissions that the Unified Plan is the guiding document for town needs over the coming decade. Require each department, board and commission to describe in their annual budget request how their work aligns with the town government operations mission, vision and goals. Include a section for this in the budget request template.</p>	Starting FY2020	Town Meeting; Boards, Commissions, Departments
<p><i>ii. Establish a process for board and commission members and Town staff to review the mission and goals every five years.</i> This could occur as part of the fall budgetary process, with a public meeting for comment.</p>	Starting 2022	Board of Selectmen; all public entities

**B. Through a bylaw for Annual Town Meeting 2019, require town boards, commissions, and departments with budgets of more than \$100,000 to establish strategic plans aligned with the Unified Plan, in a standardized format, over a rolling implementation period of three to five years.**

Wellesley town government is decentralized and complex—there are 58 entities on the Wellesley Town Government organizational chart and 42 line items in the town budget. Of these, only four strategic plans were publicly available in 2016: the School Department, the Public Works Department, the Library and the Natural Resources Commission. A strategic

plan must be public to be fully accountable to the public for delivering on the plan’s goals. Beginning with the departments, boards, and commissions that do not already have strategic plans, establish a gradual roll out of strategic planning over a period of three to five years. The departments, boards, and commissions with the greatest impact on tax dollars should be given priority, so that the first group would be entities with budgets at \$500,000 or more; the second group with budgets at \$300,000–\$499,999, and the third group with budgets at \$100,000–\$299,999. This would cover approximately 24 departments. The bylaw may encourage but not require entities with budgets under \$100,000 to prepare strategic plans.

Current strategic plans created by departments, boards and commissions vary in their format and duration. Strategic plans should have a consistent format so that it is easier to

compare across plans, both for decision makers on town budgets, and for public review and accountability. For the same reasons, all town strategic plans should cover the same time period, ideally five years. The benefit of a five-year strategic plan is that it is consistent with two cycles of a ten year Unified Plan and with the five-year Capital Improvement Program. A five-year plan also allows for more long-range thinking than a three-year plan, though a shorter planning period provides more reliable assumptions.

Exhibit 14.3 **Establishment of Individual Government Strategic Plans**

TIMING	CRITERIA	SURVEY
Year 1 Spring 2020	Budgets: \$500,000 or more	4 departments
Year2 Spring 2021	Budgets: \$300,000-\$499,999	11 departments
Year 3 Spring 2022	Budgets > \$100,000-\$299,999	9 depts.; optional below \$100,000

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Gradually phase in a strategic planning requirement for selected Wellesley Town Government departments, boards and commissions, over a three- to five-year period.</i>	2020-2023	Bylaw sets requirement
<i>ii. Set a standard format for strategic plans for departments, boards and commissions.</i> Sources for examples can be found in the Appendix to the Unified Plan.	2019	Bylaw sets requirement; Board of Selectmen identifies template
<i>iii. Provide guidance and reference materials to departments to assist in preparing strategic plans.</i> These materials should also be made public on the town website. Examples can be found in the Appendix to the Unified Plan.	2019 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen
<i>iv. Require that strategic plans (for those required to have them) be submitted with budget requests.</i> Budget requests should describe how they support the strategic plan goals and the Unified Plan vision, values, and goals.	2020 and ongoing	Bylaw sets requirement
<i>v. Post strategic plans on town website. Posting strategic plans in a consistent format will allow taxpayers to see how expenditures are being programmed.</i> The plans should be posted together in one place as well as on the individual board, commission or department web page.	2018 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen; IT

**C. Support a culture of strategic planning in town government.**

One staff person in town government should be designated to facilitate and manage the process of phasing in strategic planning. In addition, external pro bono resources can be made

available to assist departments with strategic plans, for example professors and students from Babson College or other educational institutions. Training materials and resources should be made available to all volunteers and employees of the town via an intranet or similar reference site.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <b>Create and deliver training on town government and strategic planning to all leaders of departments, boards, commissions, and invite mid-level and senior executives to attend as well.</b>	2019 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen in collaboration with other entities
ii. <b>Hold a peer-learning session.</b> The leaders of departments, boards and commissions that have already completed strategic plans are a valuable resource to those leaders who have not yet completed the process. Hosting a peer-learning session that allows the leaders with strategic plans to present their plans and describe their process will demystify the process for their peers and will better prepare them to create their own plans.	2019 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen to convene boards and commissions; Departmental ad hoc group to organize their own

**D. Use data to drive decision-making in town government and to measure progress in meeting goals—both the town government strategic concepts goals and any applicable department, board or commission long-term goals.**

Leaders will need to engage in a goal-setting exercise to establish how the success of their department, board or commission should be measured. Each goal should be quantified, with indicators to measure interim progress toward meeting the long-term goal. For each long-term goal, the leader needs to develop interim measures that will demonstrate forward progress. Annual targets would then show gradual progress. For example, the target could be to have 20% of newly hired teachers have a mentor in the first year, 50% in the second year, 75% in the third year and 100% by the fourth year. This is purely an example and not intended to prescribe how the Wellesley Public Schools achieves its results. The path to results

is for the leaders of the departments, boards and commissions to chart.

Leaders should submit their goals, with indicators and targets as they complete their annual budget requests. As to how many goals and indicators each department, board or commission should have, it is important to not have too many. When it comes to goals, fifteen is too many, ten is good, five is even better. The state of Washington has five goals and 200 indicators that encompass all its work. Baltimore has seven priorities under which all activity falls. Too many of anything dilutes focus.

Wellesley should establish a standard format for results reports and require that departments use that format to report results on their website for the public. Although the Town Annual Report has traditionally served this role to some degree, it requires navigation

of hundreds of pages of reports (over 400 pages for FY 2016-17). In their daily lives, citizens are increasingly used to seeing concise infographics and dashboards to show data analysis and progress towards goals, Wellesley

should also create a single summary of results across town departments and publish annually in digital and hard copy format. This will make it easier for the public to see how well the town is doing with their tax dollars.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Require leaders of departments, boards and commissions to develop quantifiable long-term goals and to establish indicators that can track progress toward those goals, as well as annual targets for their progress.</i></p>	2020 and ongoing	Bylaw requirement
<p><i>ii. Designate one staff person to manage data collection and publication.</i> Collecting data, compiling it, assessing the quality and consistency of data, and then creating a report, either in an electronic dashboard or as a written narrative, takes time. A full-time staff person should be devoted to this effort. Needed skills include data collection and management as well as the people skills needed to encourage and remind those who need to submit their data. Many cities and towns fill this role with an existing financial, data, or policy analyst.</p>	2023-2028	Board of Selectmen
<p><i>iii. Publish results on meeting goals at a minimum annually on the town website, in a coordinated format and fashion across all departments.</i> Setting goals, and publicly tracking progress toward meeting goals is a powerful way to allow the taxpayer to see the return on their investment. The goals and indicators can be shown on a dashboard so that the taxpayer can easily see how the department, board or commission is doing in achieving results.</p>	2025 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen
<p><i>iv. Create an online “open data” section of the town website that publishes town data that underlies the goals and measurable indicators.</i></p>	2025-2028	Board of Selectmen; IT; data staff
<p><i>v. Use the data results in budget discussions to identify where additional resources are needed to achieve desired outcomes.</i></p>	2020 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen; Advisory Committee; all entities

### SUCCESS IN PUBLICLY SHARING PROGRESS ON GOALS

In the State of Washington, every activity of state government aligns with one of five priority goals: World-Class Education, Prosperous Economy, Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment, Healthy and Safe Communities, and Effective, Efficient, and Accountable Government. There are 200 indicators of progress toward these goals are tracked on a dashboard ([www.results.wa.gov](http://www.results.wa.gov)). Not only are results posted, but the underlying data is publicly available too. Success to date includes:

- 50 percent of the nearly 200 Results Washington goals are on track to meet or beat targets
- Many of the indicators tracked are complex challenges that require collaboration across departmental lines, such as homelessness, pollution, offender recidivism, and teen pregnancy. State employees work with private and nonprofit partners as well as customers to devise strategies to deliver results.
- Monthly progress meetings are public and are also live-streamed. All data, agendas and meeting results are published to the results website.

## TOWNS AND CITIES CAN SAVE MONEY BY BECOMING MORE DATA-DRIVEN

Increasingly, communities are designating or hiring employees with data skills. Whether with the title Chief Data Officer, Chief Innovation Officer, stat program director, or data scientist these individuals are looking at government in a new way and using data to increase efficiency. Are these hires worth the investment? Resoundingly yes. Government employees with data skills can work across departmental silos on a variety of projects resulting in a financial return for taxpayers. Examples include:

- **Data analytics in Wellesley.** Wellesley has already begun to save money through data analytics. By managing and reporting regularly on energy use for each town building and benchmarking the results, the Facilities Management Department reduced energy use by nine percent over a three-year period, even with 37 percent more extreme weather days, for a total avoided cost of \$132,000. Installing exterior LED lights in town buildings is achieving 15 percent more light and a ten percent overall reduction in electricity costs.
- **SomerStat in Somerville.** In 2004, the city launched SomerStat, a performance-management program. Early successes came from looking at budget and performance data at a granular level, such as noticing that a sworn police officer paid \$100,000 a year was doing scheduling. Putting a lower salaried civilian in charge of that administrative duty saved the police department money while adding to the number of officers on patrol. Data analysis led to new revenue for the use of city property by contractors, savings for streetlights and health insurance, reducing rodent complaints.
- **Citywide Analytics in Boston.** The Citywide Analytics Team has taken on important topics such as drug overdoses, ambulance deployment, traffic congestion, human trafficking, homelessness, restaurant inspections, the safety of rental housing, and parking enforcement. The City has used data to save nearly \$1 million annually in energy costs; \$1 million in Fire Department overtime costs; and \$5 million and 20,000 pounds of carbon emissions saved with data-driven bus routing.
- **City of Louisville Office of Performance Improvement and Innovation.** OPI quantifies everything in city government, including their own impact, which they calculate at a 5-to-1 return for every dollar of cost to the city. Collection of fees and fines grew seven-fold, paying for new staff 22 times over. Data analysis led to reduction in the cost of workers' compensation claims, and better oversight of overtime costs.
- **South Bend Office of Innovation.** A city of 100,000 in Indiana, South Bend used data and geospatial analytics to track the return on investment for all of its projects and estimates a total return of \$20 million in the three years since the program began, with much of that value coming from data analysis on large city contracts to extract additional value. By applying "smart" technology to their existing sewer system and making better use of existing infrastructure, the city saved a potential \$100 million sewer upgrade. The team saved the city \$5 million via a series of route optimization and fleet-management projects.
- **The San Francisco Data Academy.** San Francisco is a leader in open data and in promoting data use in city government by developing a culture of data usage across city government. The city's Data Academy has taught over 700 city employees how to gather and understand data, how to analyze and present data, and how to explain data insights to policy makers. At the cost of about one FTE, the city saves \$1.7 million a year by empowering employees to use their technology and data skills to save time and money on the job.
- **Cincinnati created its Office of Performance and Data Analytics (OPDA)** in 2015, an operation that includes performance management, open data, and advanced geospatial analytics. Between new revenue and costs avoided, the team has achieved \$6.1 million in value for the city in its two year tenure.
- **The Syracuse Chief Data Officer** managed a project to prioritize preventive repairs to water mains in coordination with other public works projects and save money by avoiding emergency repairs.
- **In Baltimore, the implementation of Budgeting for Outcomes** used data in focusing on results for the city's top priorities, carefully examining data and evidence on what was working and what wasn't. Data analysts worked in cross-departmental results teams to identify efficiency and cross-agency collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for the public. Efficiencies included both cost savings and increased revenue.

**E. Foster an increased culture of data-driven government.**

Most cities and towns lack a deep bench of employees with data analysis—sometimes called data analytics--skills. These skills include collecting data, ensuring accuracy, identifying patterns over time, modeling future patterns, and visualizing data to show trends and analysis. Typically, in cities and towns, the tools used to collect, store, and analyze data are chosen by individual analysts based on their (or their organization’s) preferences. Wellesley’s relatively decentralized information technology and data infrastructure means that the Town does not have standardized tools for data management. Cities and towns that standardize their tools allow deeper skill development and

save cost on software licenses. Standardization also promotes greater transfer of skill across departments, boards and commissions, as well as accelerating a deeper level of skill within a community of practice of peers who share the same tool. For budget, finance and policy analysts, deeper training is necessary to enhance their skills and confidence in data collection, data analysis, and data visualization. Through repeated trainings, the analysts can create a community of practice among staff with data responsibilities.

By being proactive in developing data literacy and skills, Wellesley can become a leading town in the region for its use of data to drive decision-making.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<i>i. Provide training to volunteers and employees to improve their data literacy.</i> All volunteers and employees should have access to basic data skills training so that they understand how to assess the quality of data and how to use it to make decisions at a macro level. Managers and senior leaders in town government should all receive basic training on how to interpret data and how to manage with data to drive results.	2023-2028	Board of Selectmen; IT
<i>ii. Standardize data analysis and data visualization tools across town government to reduce costs, and increase skill building and community of practice.</i>	2025 -2028	Board of Selectmen; IT
<i>iii. Expand the Town’s online publication of data, by working towards creating an open data portal.</i> The State of Massachusetts has created a data portal that also has some town data, <a href="http://www.mass.gov/opendata/#/">http://www.mass.gov/opendata/#/</a> , and smaller communities, like Somerville [MA] have also created open data portals, <a href="https://data.somervillema.gov/">https://data.somervillema.gov/</a> .	2023-2028	Board of Selectmen; IT

**GOAL 3: WELLESLEY IS A CUSTOMER-CENTRIC TOWN GOVERNMENT.**

**Policies**

- Promote a more uniform high standard of customer service within town government operations
- Be known as the town with outstanding customer service standards

One of the central roles of local government is to deliver services to citizens and others, such as visitors and businesses. Being customer-centric is not just about

customer service at the point of transaction. Being customer-centric also means designing processes to suit customer needs rather than to perpetuate government silos. Being customer centric also means listening to customer feedback and incorporating that feedback into improved processes.

The full cycle of before, during and after a transaction is referred to as the customer experience, sometimes abbreviated as CX. For example, when residents need to pay a parking ticket, the customer experience is not just their experience in the moment of paying. Their customer experience (as a customer of the Parking Clerk) begins when they are issued the ticket and

continues through their decision-making process about how to pay, whether online, by mail, or in person at Town Hall. This section addresses each of these steps: (1) designing customer-centric processes, (2) providing clear information and navigation for customer decision-making, (3) serving customers with accuracy and courtesy, and (4) gathering customer feedback to improve processes.

Navigation aids should take subject matters and map them to the appropriate department, board or commission. For example, a resident new to town or new to interacting with town government might not know the difference between the Historical Commission and the Historic District Commission. How would a new resident interested in environmental stewardship and outdoor spaces generally know if there are any overlaps among the Community Preservation Committee, Fuller Brook Park Improvement Project, the Natural Resources Commission, the Sustainable Energy Committee, the

Playing Fields Task Force, the Trails Committee, and the Wetlands Protection Committee? Insiders of course know the personalities and the responsibilities of each of these entities, but an outsider might be confused, so a subject matter overview would be helpful.

Due to the decentralized nature of town government in Wellesley, each department, board and commission is responsible for the content of its own portion of the town website. In fall 2017 a new town website debuted which is intended to improve the user experience by allowing for easier navigation, more consistency of presentation and personalization of content. In addition, the website includes Browsealoud, an application that provides audio for website pages.

## STRATEGIES

### A. *Design town processes around customer needs.*

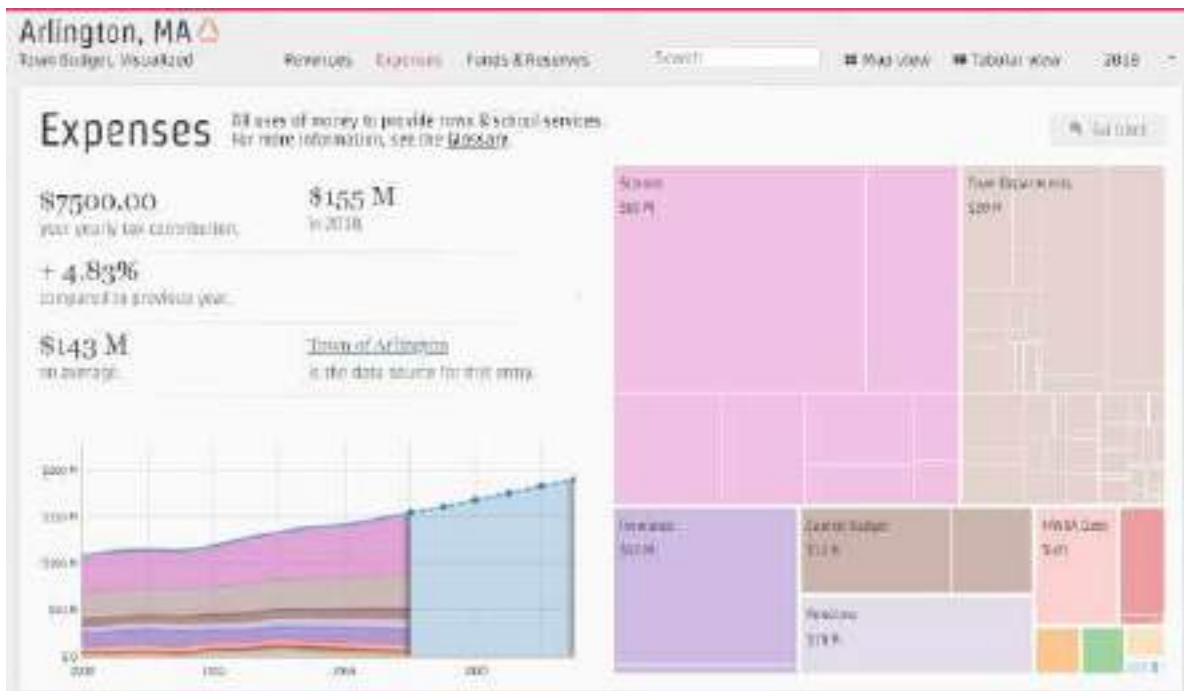
ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Develop an eGovernment strategy to streamline and simplify government transactions.</i> Wellesley already offers its residents and businesses a number of ways to transact online. However, there are many processes that still must be completed either by printing out a paper form and mailing it in, or by coming into town hall. Identify the services that would be most beneficial to move to an online format 1) because they would provide the customer with the greatest increased satisfaction by reducing cost and time by being online, and 2) because they save the greatest amount of staff processing time by being completed electronically. The strategy should identify a road map for the coming decade and should address both web and mobile development. A national study of state and local government showed that the #1 change from implementing e-government solutions was improved customer service, with 87% of respondents indicating this [Norris 2016].</p>	2023-2028	Board of Selectmen in collaboration with other entities
<p><i>ii. Make it a high priority to put user-friendly information on town finances and projects online.</i> Many Massachusetts towns, including some that are smaller than Wellesley, have adopted web-based systems that show budgets in various visual formats, map-based project information, and other information—providing simple and easy access to information for taxpayers.</p>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; IT
<p><i>iii. Make the back-end processes of town government invisible to the customer.</i> Choose one or more services to reorganize around the customer, challenging existing processes that while each excellent in their own way, have grown organically to suit town requirements rather than a holistic customer experience.</p>	2019-2022	Board of Selectmen

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><b>iv. Enable personalization across all electronic transactions on the town website.</b> Creating a single sign-on that would allow access to all transactions on the site is truly customer-centric. Wellesley can create a personalized user experience on the town website, so that users' profile and historical information carries across all town departments, with appropriate security safeguards in place.</p>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; IT
<p><b>v. Provide clear information in a way that addresses customer needs, not government organizational silos and with a common look and feel across departments, boards and commissions.</b></p>	2018-2028	All entities
<p><b>vi. Identify a staff person to serve as a public information officer for the town responsible for consistency, accuracy, and timeliness of information on the town website.</b> The public information officer should create a standard format and standard protocol for presenting meeting agendas and minutes for public meetings. The public information officer could also be responsible for assessing the value of using technology to create searchable text documents from video of public meetings.</p>	2020	Board of Selectmen
<p><b>vii. Collect public feedback to continue to make the town website more customer-centric as the new site is refined.</b> As residents begin using the new site, the town should collect feedback on the benefits and challenges that users experience with navigation so that any necessary additional updates can be made. A focus group of inexperienced users could provide valuable feedback on where additional navigation cues are needed. An annual review would be sufficient.</p>	2018-2023	Board of Selectmen; IT
<p><b>viii. Create a road map for additional information not currently shared on the town website that will be shared with the public.</b> As the new website is populated with existing content, there is an opportunity to create a multi-year strategy for sharing additional information with the public. One high priority area is the budget and expenditure data. Wellesley should establish a strategy for how to make available budget, results and operational metrics for town government in a way that a resident can easily understand, leveraging graphics and user-centric design. When this information is formatted for public consumption, the town should consider an email newsletter as well as an annual report on town progress.</p>	2018-2020	Board of Selectmen; IT
<p><b>ix. Create the capacity to develop infographics for presenting data or complex concepts to the public and train town staff to develop infographics for public consumption.</b> The town has a wealth of information already public on the website, including GIS information. Much of the information that is available could be made easier to access and understand by the public with infographics and the use of tools such as story maps. Leveraging the content of the very useful Advisory Committee Report, the town could create customer-oriented, and also topic-specific, explanatory materials for taxpayers. Once easy-to-understand materials are created, Wellesley should develop an informational outreach strategy to educate town residents about the operations of town government and the results they receive for their tax dollars. Elevate and simplify navigation to the existing rich set of GIS and mapping resources on the town website, and consider additional maps for sharing information.</p>	2020-2025	Board of Selectmen; IT; relevant departments

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p>x. <b>Make town hall easier to navigate for first-time visitors.</b> Renovation of town hall will undoubtedly address the current complexity for a new visitor in finding their way to their desired destination. However, in the interim, there are several things that can be done to make the building less intimidating to new visitors. Consider a variety of ways to put the customer at the center of town government, including but not limited to creating a concierge in town hall, changing the hours of operation of town hall, creating a virtual suggestion box, creating “how to do it” maps for residents who need to get something done in town hall, and employing greeters and or wayfinders in town hall.</p>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; Town Clerk
<p>xi. <b>Provide information for those new to town in a way that is easy to understand and welcoming, such as in a new resident toolkit, both digital and as a brochure.</b> A number of nearby towns offer good examples of how to provide information to new residents [or refresher information to current residents].</p>	2018-2022	Board of Selectmen; IT; Town Clerk

### HOW OTHER TOWNS MAKE TOWN BUDGETS TRANSPARENT

The town of Arlington publishes its town budget, as well as a brief overview of revenue and expenses, and where tax dollars go for both capital and operating expenditures, called the Public Annual Financial Plan (PAFR). It is intended to be readable in 20 minutes and give the reader an overview so that they do not have to read an entire 200+ page town budget document. On the website, the town shares the Arlington Visual Budget (<http://arlingtonvisualbudget.org/>), which shows exactly where the funding goes. A user can plug in the amount of their tax bill and see how much of it goes to each department. Arlington, along with other cities and towns in Massachusetts is also participating in Open Checkbook, an extension of the platform created for the Commonwealth to allow the public to see individual payments made with tax dollars by category, department, and even by vendor. Users can see both this year’s payments and a historical trend in payments. (<http://openbooks.tylertech.com/arlington/TransWebPages/Home.aspx> )



Many Massachusetts towns, such as Arlington, provide visual budgets on their websites. (<http://arlingtonvisualbudget.org/expenses>). This one was created with Visual Budget, a free, open source tools available from <http://visgov.com/get-started/>.

**HOW OTHER TOWNS WELCOME NEW RESIDENTS**

- **Lexington** has an “are you a new resident” section on the front page of the town website. Six links in one place help a new resident register to vote, register a child for school, get a library card, register their dog, sign up for emergency alerts, and get information about registering a car and getting license plates in Massachusetts. One section brings together information for new residents about their house and yard, including solid waste, utility, taxes, assessments, and permit information. There are links for town services for a variety of types of residents (children, elders, etc.) as well as recreation and sports information. There are four links about commuting via rail, bike, and car; seven links about the town with history, statistics, and a description of town government structure as well as where to find what in town government offices.
- **Weston** has a “new to Weston” link on its web page that has a “new resident set up” section that has links to helpful street maps of the town, directions and office hours for town buildings, information about the transfer station, and how to sign up for utilities. New residents also have links for the annual town census, a link to register to vote and a link to license their dog. A section on town government, includes links for “How it Works” and provides financial information for the town. this section includes a list of ongoing town projects and a link to sign up to become a town volunteer.
- The town of **Cary, NC**, like Wellesley an affluent community, has a “new to town” section on its website that includes a video welcome message from the mayor. The town also has a section that provides information for people with disabilities.

**INNOVATIONS IN REACHING RESIDENTS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY**

One area of emerging interest among government is using digital assistants, also known as artificial intelligence-driven personal assistants (IPAs), to provide information to the public. This capability is still in its early stages but may be worth considering as Wellesley creates a long-term strategy for greater ease of use by customers. Today, users in Utah can ask their Alexa device where to find the best fishing. In Mississippi, the digital assistant can tell a resident if it is time to renew their license. Utah has also launched Utah Public Meetings, a way for residents to navigate to the details of any public meeting for any of 3,000 governmental organizations around the state. While this technology is not yet widely used in government, it offers Wellesley an opportunity to develop state-of-the-art capabilities either now or in the coming years.

***B. Improve the customer experience of a government transactions by fostering a culture of customer service among town employees.***

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Identify a town employee to be responsible for customer service culture among town employees.</i> Every volunteer and employee is responsible for delivering on the customer service principles of the town. While that responsibility is distributed across the all employees and volunteers, the task of orchestrating and amplifying the work of the town’s volunteers and employees should belong to one person. While it may not be a full-time job, it could at the start be a full-time commitment to codify a customer service motto, to document and share it, and to train each and every department, board and commission on the customer service principles of Wellesley town government. If external pro bono resources can be brought to bear, this will become a significantly lighter responsibility, but for the first quarter of the effort it should be considered a full-time commitment.</p>	<p>2023-2028</p>	<p>Board of Selectmen</p>

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><b>ii. Develop customer service training for town employees and roll it out gradually to all existing employees, and incorporate it into standard training for new hires.</b> All volunteers and employees in town should receive training on customer service. Training created previously by Babson for the town could be leveraged for this. The initial training should be an in-person training. Follow up “booster” training can be provided faster and at lower cost online. Once created, Wellesley’s customer service training should be given to all new hires.</p>	2018 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen; HR
<p><b>iii. Empower town employees to use their own problem-solving skills to meet customer service requests.</b> Increasingly, employee-driven process improvement efforts are empowering front line workers to create solutions that directly address customer needs.</p>	2018 and ongoing	Board of Selectmen
<p><b>iv. Reward town employees and organizations delivering outstanding customer service.</b> Fostering a culture of customer orientation is enhanced when employees are recognized for their customer service. Recognition can come in many forms—praise is the least expensive and the most underused. Other forms include cash awards, gift cards, time off and in-kind awards (logo items, parking pass, beach pass, etc.). Recognizing outstanding customer service should be done both on an organizational level and an individual level. Organizational-level awards can be based on overall score on a customer satisfaction survey, or improvement in score. Town residents as well as town employees should be able to nominate an employee for a customer service distinction award. This can be done simply with an online recommendation form. Recognition should be routine, perhaps occurring on a quarterly basis. An annual recognition event for employees who excel in customer service is a good morale booster, but should not be the only time for recognition lest it send the signal that there is only one day a year that the customer matters. Rather recognition of the importance of customer service should be an everyday commitment.</p>	2018 and ongoing	HR; all boards - departments

### CUSTOMER SERVICE LEADERSHIP

The role of Chief Customer Officer, common in the private sector, has gained momentum in government since the first of these positions were created in 2015 by the General Services Administration (GSA) and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Boston, New York, and San Francisco are among the cities to designate a Chief Digital Officer whose charge is to improve the public’s experience of government online. Wellesley need not create a full-time position, but designating one individual to focus on the customer experience, both online and in other channels, could produce significant value. The more time a customer service leader in Wellesley has to devote to the task, the more effort and attention the task will receive. For example, a full-time effort could support developing a Yelp-like method for the public to share comments about town government services, creating a contest for customer service excellence, an annual recognition program, developing a “secret shopper” program, and the like. The existing customer service and customer satisfaction efforts of the various departments, boards and commissions could be compiled into a central source and be shared among all employees and volunteers, along with best practices from the public and private sector.

**C. Establish town-wide customer service metrics**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><b>i. Create a vision for customer service excellence across all of town government.</b> A concise statement of the customer service vision would help all volunteers and employees have greater clarity on their role in creating a great customer experience. The lead staff person for improving customer service can create this with the input of a team. The team should include all levels of seniority, from the front line to the executive level. In fact, the front-line employees are those who most directly interact with the customer and those voices should be the most significant ones in designing a vision for how to serve the customer. For some departments, boards and commissions, it may be helpful to establish customer service standards for each major category of service delivery in town government (e.g. number of days to process a request, etc.). Then the leaders of those departments, boards and commissions can develop metrics for measuring progress toward achieving standards. Where appropriate, those customer service metrics can be incorporated in annual performance evaluation for directors of departments, boards and commissions.</p>	2018-2020	Board of Selectmen and all entities
<p><b>ii. Conduct an annual employee satisfaction survey.</b> Happy workers are likely to create transactions that result in high customer satisfaction. Satisfaction with the quality of town services is already high and there is likely little value in conducting a survey of residents about their perceptions of town government. However, a survey of volunteers and employees might identify areas where communications can be improved or where training is of value.</p>	2022-2028 and ongoing	HR; Board of Selectmen and all entities with staff
<p><b>iii. Consider gathering customer input via social media and other electronic civic engagement platforms.</b> Wellesley should determine if it is valuable to gather feedback from social media sources. Establishing a town Yelp page is one path. The public is eager to provide feedback on all manner of topics from restaurants to auto mechanics. Over 127 million Yelp reviews have been published to date. Government has yet to fully capitalize on the power of this platform for better understanding customer needs. Establishing a Yelp page for the town, or using other social media platforms to gather feedback is an inexpensive tool that can provide feedback quickly. The challenge is to actively manage a social media account so that customers feel heard. Responding to concerns made in online fora can improve public confidence in town government, as residents see that the concerns of others are addressed and perhaps feel more invested in contributing their own feedback. A more complicated path is to analyze public sentiment from publicly available social media posts that are location-tagged. This approach is not without cost and holds the potential for arousing opposition on privacy grounds.</p>	2023-2028	Board of Selectmen
<p><b>iv. Develop a standard format for gathering customer feedback.</b> In many jurisdictions, each department conducts surveys of its customers in a variety of formats and on a variety of schedules. The result is confusion for the resident. Wellesley should establish a consistent format and method for gathering feedback. Given the ubiquity of customer satisfaction surveys in the private sector, residents are accustomed to providing feedback after a customer service interaction. Even if response rates are low, over time there should be sufficient data to gather insights. Often those with the strongest feelings, both positive and negative, are the ones who respond to surveys. And yet, even if the responses represent poles of opinion, they are feedback nonetheless.</p>	2023-2028	Board of Selectmen with all entities

**SATISFACTION SURVEYS RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT “BELOW THE RADAR” GOVERNMENT SERVICES**

In Kansas City, using a survey to gather data helped improve overall customer satisfactions, from 77% to 83% over a four-year period. One particularly dramatic improvement based on customer feedback comes from the Kansas City Water Services Department’s Pipeline Maintenance group. At the start of survey collection, their customer satisfaction ratings were among the lowest in the city. Working below ground and out of sight, they didn’t think of themselves as a customer-facing agency. When asked how long it would take to repair a water main, their honest “as long as it takes” wasn’t satisfying to their customers. After looking at customer feedback data, the director of the Water Services Department decided to improve external communications—establishing expected time frames for completing repair work and sharing those expectations with customers. Without changing underlying processes, but by improving their communication efforts, the department increased its customer satisfaction rating for 311 service requests from 77% to 98%. Wellesley likely has departments, boards or commissions like the Water Services Department – doing great work but not clearly explaining to the public what the work is and what the results are.

**GOAL 4: WELLESLEY HAS AN OPERATIONALLY-EFFICIENT TOWN GOVERNMENT**

Wellesley town government is well run and achieves high-quality results because of the contributions of skilled volunteers and talented employees. In the spirit of continuous improvement, this section describes management approaches that could drive even greater results for taxpayers. The approaches to operational excellence described here have demonstrated value elsewhere in government.

**Policies**

- Evaluate operational-excellence best practices to find those with the best fit for Wellesley.

**STRATEGIES**

- A. Optimize the use of technology for town employees’ daily work.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Develop an IT strategic plan to bring all departments to a common standard of excellence in the use of technology.</i> The decentralized nature of town government results in each department, board and commission having different technology practices, standards and equipment. Of course, town agencies that participate in regional networks, such as the Library, will need to have technology consistent with those relationships. Setting a consistent standard across the town would allow each department, board and commission achieve lower costs for technology purchases and would allow development of a peer network of IT professionals across town government who use the same tools. Wellesley should consider whether to consolidate all IT operations into a single entity, and this should be considered in the coming decade. However, there may be sensitivity to this approach. The cost savings and improved quality that would result from a central IT department with control over all IT spending across the town is significant and should be studied in the next five years.</p>	2020-2026	Board of Selectmen; IT
<p><i>ii. Create electronic workflows for key Town processes, with each step in the process visible to staff involved.</i> Many leaders of departments, boards and commissions described frustration at not knowing where something is in the process. An integrated electronic workflow would allow staff and volunteers to see at every step of a project where it is in the approval cycle. It could also provide transparency to the public about the process of bringing a project to fruition.</p>	2020-2026	Board of Selectmen; IT

**B. Evaluate shared services for administrative functions.**

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. Study the feasibility and possible cost savings for consolidation of administrative functions, such as IT, HR, Procurement, and Finance, across departments.	2023-2028	Board of Selectmen

**SHARED SERVICES: DEFINITION AND BENEFITS**

Shared services is a proven approach for efficient, high-performing, technology-enabled, and customer-focused support for public-sector agencies and employees. Shared services is a means of providing high-quality, low-cost administrative processing for multiple agencies of government through a single operational entity. Shared services reduces duplicate administrative functions and systems across the departments and agencies that share backend processing functions. This model is well suited to HR, finance, IT, procurement, and the grants management function. Following models that have been in place in the private sector for two decades, a public-sector shared services team is a dedicated, skilled workforce that uses technology and efficient processes to deliver consistent, high quality services. The result is better service to government employees and a higher return on taxpayer dollars. Shared services can be delivered across a cluster of agencies by a central administrative team, or support services can be shared across an entire jurisdiction, or across jurisdictional boundaries.

A study by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Revenue’s Division of Local Services noted that a consortium of six small towns could save \$250,000 per year by moving to a shared-services solution for financial processing. The Division of Local Services studied a possible consolidation for the finance function in Arlington. ([www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dls/mdmstuf/technical-assistance/finmgtrv/arlington-town-school-finance.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dls/mdmstuf/technical-assistance/finmgtrv/arlington-town-school-finance.pdf) ) In its assessment, the agency noted that the decentralized financial structure resulted in diminished quality, “Although the town’s finance offices perform their individual functions well in most respects, they operate without direct oversight to ensure coordinated and efficient operations across departments. Staffing levels appeared uneven across departments and we found some procedures were manual or labor intensive.” They note that this structure “with independent finance officers is outdated and no longer sufficient to meet the town’s needs.” It resulted in unnecessary complexity and decreased the town’s transparency in financial reporting. The Town of Andover consolidated town and school facilities management in the 1980s, and then subsequently consolidated to a shared services model for HR. ([www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dls/mdmstuf/technical-assistance/finmgtrv/andovermay2010.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dls/mdmstuf/technical-assistance/finmgtrv/andovermay2010.pdf) )

While Wellesley does not have any financial need to share services with other towns, there may be other reasons to consider such arrangements, including the ability to focus on core mission rather than on administrative functions, or to find specialized expertise such as cybersecurity. Cybersecurity needs are currently driving a trend toward shared services for IT in a variety of government agencies.

**C. Study the feasibility and benefits of adopting priority-based budgeting processes, such as Budgeting for Outcomes.**

Priority-based budgeting—often called budgeting for outcomes (BFO)—is a strategy for achieving greater accountability and transparency and for creating alignment between what the public wants and what their government provides. This approach has been in use for a decade and a half and is becoming an important part of culture change in government toward greater focus on results and performance, rather than on inputs and processes. The State of Washington closed a \$2 billion budget gap using budgeting for outcomes. Examples of other governments that have implemented budgeting for outcomes include the states of Washington, Iowa, Michigan, and South Carolina, the cities of Baltimore, MD; Los Angeles, CA, Spokane, WA; Denver, CO; Dallas, TX; Fort Collins, CO; Azusa, CA; Eugene, OR; Redmond, WA; and counties such as Mesa County, CO; Multnomah County, WA; and Snohomish County, WA.

In Baltimore, implementation of BFO has helped the city become more results-driven and has created the conditions for success for its OutcomeStat effort, which measures and publicly reports on progress toward all citywide goals. Specific efficiencies achieved include:

- Assigning nurses to frequent 911 callers to prevent repeat calls reduced 911 call volume for these so-called “frequent flyers” by 50 percent, which improves response time and saves money.
- One team identified duplication of effort and recommended that the city’s Transportation Department piggyback on an existing Recreation and Parks Department mowing contract to reduce the cost of median strip mowing by \$1.5 million.
- By inviting proposals for code enforcement, the city increased revenue \$500,000 because the Housing Department was able to more efficiently perform the burglar

**WHAT IS PRIORITY-BASED BUDGETING?**

According to the Government Finance Officers Association, “Priority-driven budgeting allocates resources according to how well a program or service achieves the goals and objective that the community values most.... the eight major steps of priority-driven budgeting [are]: identify the resources available for budgeting; identify priorities in terms of measurable results that have been agreed upon by stakeholders; define priority results precisely; prepare programs for evaluation; score those programs against priority results; compare the scores; allocate resources; and hold employees accountable for producing the results they promised. [source: Shayne Kavanagh, et al. “Anatomy of a Priority-Driven Budget Process,” Government Finance Officers Association, 2011 [www.gfoa.org/anatomy-priority-driven-budget-process](http://www.gfoa.org/anatomy-priority-driven-budget-process)]

alarm registration program than the Police Department, which had been running the program.

Wellesley should examine the benefits and challenges of implementing priority based budgeting and BFO across the entire town government. Some boards and departments use this general approach as they consider their priorities in preparing their annual budgets within the context of the existing budget system. Unlike the current Wellesley system that sets an annual percentage increase for town departments (with the school department often an exception), BFO begins each year at a zero baseline. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has endorsed this approach as a best practice and has made available to cities and towns a variety of resources and support, including technical assistance for implementation.

GFOA researchers have found that budgeting for outcomes requires strong commitment and leadership and can take several years to implement: “BFO is generally considered a best practice, but it isn’t for every government — or, put differently, not every government is ready for BFO.” Keys to success are strong leadership and internal champions, and messages stressing innovation, collaboration, and

efficiency. A BFO initiative should be linked to broader performance management, monitoring, and evaluation. Public participation helps governments create the expectations for change, making the focus on community expectations and the citizen perspective.

And finally, the process must fit the culture of the government. (See Michael J. Mucha, “Budgeting for Outcomes: Key Findings from GFOA Research,” October 2012 (<http://www.gfoa.org/budgeting-outcomes-key-findings-gfoa-research>)

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Review success cases for Budgeting for Outcomes and determine if all, or some aspects, of the approach is appropriate for Wellesley.</i>	2020-2024	Board of Selectmen and other entities
ii. <i>Create a budgeting system that is consistent across boards/commissions and departments.</i> The creation of a budget manual, underway while this plan is being prepared, is a step in the right direction. [See “Fundamentals of Budgeting” at the end of this chapter.]	2018-2020	Board of Selectmen

**D. Benchmark town results against similar communities.**

Done correctly, benchmarking studies require deep understanding of the assumptions in the underlying data. Quick comparisons may

provide some insight but not actionable results. For example, when comparing the cost of DPW services from one town to another, is the pension cost of each employee calculated and allocated the same way? Are supervisory hours recorded and compared in the same way?

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
i. <i>Designate one town employee with financial skills to be responsible for benchmarking studies.</i> The Board of Selectmen should select one or more activities of town government for annual benchmarking studies to be published for the public in an annual benchmarking report.	2022-2028	Board of Selectmen

**E. Ensure a continued presence of high-quality volunteers.**

Wellesley’s decentralized system of government depends on volunteers. However, the time demands of contemporary work and family life leave less time for civic activities. The large number of elected and appointed positions in Wellesley that require a significant volunteer commitment can be challenging. It is not uncommon to have uncontested elections for some positions. As Wellesley proceeds into the 21st century, it will become necessary to make a more deliberate effort to attract volunteers to Town government.

Organizations such as Urban Habitat and others have developed leadership development curricula and programs to advance the skills of low-income individuals to serve on boards and commissions and in public office. Resources from organizations such as these can be adapted by Wellesley to broadly recruit talent for civic engagement positions.

## HOW OTHER TOWNS RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS

- **Andover** invites visitors to the website to sign up for their “talent bank” which can be done online as a way to indicate interest in volunteering for a town board or commission. This is easily found from the website front page under “I want to…” and clicking the link for “volunteer.” The link describes some of the volunteer opportunities and provides contact info to call and get more information.
- **Weston** has an excellent document on their website called “how to get involved in town governance” that explains elected roles. This page is reachable both from the “volunteer opportunities” link on the town government page, and from the FAQ list on the town’s website front page. It describes not only the positions that are elected but also the schedule for elections, as well as information on appointed board positions.
- **Belmont** announces the need for new volunteers on the news section of its website front page. A link provides a form that must be printed and filled out and sent in to the town to express interest.
- **Acton** lists over a dozen volunteer opportunities on its website covering a variety of topics from aging to water. The volunteer application can be printed from the website, filled out and returned to town hall.

ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO
<p><i>i. Create a small volunteer committee to work with the support of one staff person to focus on growing the field of volunteers and future leaders.</i></p>	2020-2028	Town Clerk; Board of Selectmen
<p><i>ii. Pursue a variety of methods to attract volunteers.</i> Holding open houses, creating a citizen’s academy, collaborating with groups such as the League of Women Voters, and reaching out to millennials are some ideas that a volunteer recruitment staff person could take on. Creating compelling stories about the contributions made by volunteers and sharing those stories in a variety of formats could help.</p>	2022 and ongoing	Town Clerk; League of Women Voters; All boards and commissions should participate in this campaign.
<p><i>iii. Use the town’s website to advertise the satisfactions and benefits volunteers receive from civic engagement.</i> The town has a vast array of talents among its volunteers. Showcasing the talented volunteer members of boards and commissions could help create a sense of eagerness among others to volunteer their time. Volunteer profiles, either as text bios, as personal statements in a blog format, or on brief videos or podcasts could make the outreach efforts more personal.</p>	2020 and ongoing	Town Clerk; Board of Selectmen; IT
<p><i>iv. Leverage online tools to create a community of interest among the public, as a pipeline to future volunteers.</i> There are so many online tools for civic participation that one scholar published a review of 40 different tools being used by the various neighborhoods in Amsterdam. Wellesley would have an abundance of choices of tools to further engage the public. Every online interaction helps build connection, which could eventually grow for an individual, from Facebook posts about the town, to serving on a committee or running for office.</p>	2020 and ongoing	Town Clerk; Identify a small group of volunteers willing to be moderators of an online community.

## DIGITAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

There is a growing need for transparency and engagement in government. Today, when something bad happens in a public space, the immediate request from the public is for the video evidence, whether it be of a confrontation between a law enforcement officer and a member of the public or an interaction among members of the public. Wellesley can harness this hunger for transparency with a greater level of engagement with the public via digital tools.

Digital civic engagement tools matter because both the modern workplace and modern personal life take place largely online and via mobile devices. The ubiquity of the cloud and mobile technologies means that customers expect technology to be easy to use, fast and inexpensive. Today, 77% of Americans own a smart phone, more than double the number of just five years ago [Pew 2017]. The devices are nearly universal among the young, with 92% of 18- to 29-year-olds reporting ownership of a smart phone. Among the fastest-growing groups to own smart phones are those over 50, with 74% of those aged 50-64 and 42% of those aged 65 and older. Fully 87% of seniors living in households earning \$75,000 or more a year say they have home broadband, compared with just 27% of seniors whose annual household income is below \$30,000. Internet use and home broadband adoption among this group have also risen substantially. Today, 67% of seniors use the Internet—a 55-percentage-point increase in just under two decades. Half of older Americans now have broadband at home.

The Town of Wellesley already has a presence on social media, which is good, because 69% of adults are social media users according to the latest research from Pew Research Center [2017]. Social media tools are increasingly important for government, but not yet fully leveraged by most governments, with the dominant use being to send information rather than to engage in two-way exchanges with the public. Facebook and Twitter users tend to skew older, so some cities are reaching out to millennials on their platforms of choice. Austin uses Reddit while Provo and Las Vegas use Snapchat to connect with millennials.

Roanoke, a city of 99,000 residents, has a Facebook page that got 16,000 “likes” last year, along with 1.5 million video views and 2.9 million “likes, comments and shares.” This small city in Appalachian Virginia has been intentional about its social media presence and created an office to manage its digital discourse. Its purpose is stated on the city’s website: “The Office of Citizen Engagement brings government and citizens together to foster collaborative conversations, build positive relationships and create new, innovative ways to get citizens involved. Through the use of social media, other digital platforms, neighborhood collaboration, customer service, public outreach, and other special projects, this office provides a one-stop-shop for engaging with the public.”

Other cities are making ambitious use of social media as well. For example, Mobile, AL used resident input with Instagram to help it identify blighted properties faster. Using the GPS information embedded in photos that residents shared, the city’s code-enforcement officers created a map of blighted properties and for the first time had a near-complete inventory of the problem. Using this data along with other city data such as property data, including tax, building permit and ownership status, allowed them to find clusters of blighted properties. They could then pre-emptively address problems before they escalated. Government may not be able to keep up with Silicon Valley in creating new tools, but once the tools are created, whether Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, government can save time and money by taking advantage of them—and the public’s interest in using them.

Cities like San Francisco, Washington, Durham, NC, and Nashville are using online community created by open source software called Madison from the Open Government Foundation to engage the public in discussion of draft legislation before it becomes final. The government of Canada provides a one-stop shop for providing input on any issue through the website Consulting Canadians. This engages those who do not have time to come to meetings in person but who want to offer an opinion.

## CHAPTER APPENDIX: FUNDAMENTALS OF BUDGETING

### *Establish Broad Goals to Guide Government Decision Making*

- **ASSESS COMMUNITY NEEDS, PRIORITIES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES**
  - » Identify stakeholder concerns, needs, and priorities
  - » Evaluate community condition, external factors, opportunities and
  - » Challenges
- **IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES, CAPITAL ASSETS, AND MANAGEMENT**
  - » Assess services and programs, and identify issues, opportunities, and challenges
  - » Assess capital assets, and identify issues, opportunities, and challenges
  - » Assess governmental management systems, and identify issues, opportunities, and challenges
- **DEVELOP AND DISSEMINATE BROAD GOALS**
  - » Identify broad goals
  - » Disseminate goals and review with stakeholders

### *Develop Approaches to Achieve Goals*

- **ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE SET OF FINANCIAL POLICIES**
  - » Develop policy on stabilization funds
  - » Develop policy on fees and charges
  - » Develop policy on debt issuance and management
  - » Develop policy on debt level and capacity
  - » Develop policy on use of one-time revenues
  - » Evaluate the use of unpredictable revenues
  - » Develop policy on balancing the operating budget
  - » Develop policy on revenue diversification
  - » Develop policy on contingency planning
- **DEVELOP PROGRAMMATIC, OPERATING AND CAPITAL POLICIES AND PLANS**
  - » Prepare policies and plans to guide the design of programs and services
  - » Prepare policies and plans for capital asset acquisition, maintenance, replacement, and retirement
- **DEVELOP PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH POLICIES AND PLANS**
  - » Develop programs and evaluate delivery mechanisms
  - » Develop options for meeting capital needs and evaluate acquisition alternatives
  - » Identify functions, programs, and/or activities of organizational units
  - » Develop performance measures
  - » Develop performance benchmarks
- **DEVELOP MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**
  - » Develop strategies to facilitate attainment of program and financial goals
  - » Develop mechanisms for budgetary compliance
  - » Develop the type, presentation, and time period of the budget

### *Develop a Budget Consistent with Approaches to Achieve Goals*

- **DEVELOP A PROCESS FOR PREPARING AND ADOPTING A BUDGET**
  - » Develop a budget calendar
  - » Develop budget guidelines and instructions

- » Develop mechanisms for coordinating budget preparation and review
- » Develop procedures to facilitate budget review, discussion, modification, and adoption
- » Identify opportunities for stakeholder input

- **DEVELOP AND EVALUATE FINANCIAL OPTIONS**

- » Conduct long-range financial planning
- » Prepare revenue projections
- » Analyze major revenues
- » Evaluate the effect of changes to revenue source rates and bases
- » Analyze tax and fee exemptions
- » Achieve consensus on a revenue forecast
- » Document revenue sources in a revenue manual
- » Prepare expenditure projections
- » Evaluate revenue and expenditure options
- » Develop a capital improvement plan

- **MAKE CHOICES NECESSARY TO ADOPT A BUDGET**

- » Prepare and present a recommended budget
- » Describe key policies, plans and goals
- » Identify key issues
- » Provide a financial overview
- » Provide a guide to operations
- » Explain the budgetary basis of accounting
- » Prepare a budget summary
- » Present the budget in a clear, easy-to-use format
- » Adopt the budget

***Evaluate Performance and Make Adjustments***

- **MONITOR, MEASURE, AND EVALUATE PERFORMANCE**

- » Monitor, measure, and evaluate program performance
- » Monitor, measure, and evaluate stakeholder satisfaction
- » Monitor, measure, and evaluate budgetary performance
- » Monitor, measure, and evaluate financial condition
- » Monitor, measure, and evaluate external factors
- » Monitor, measure, and evaluate capital program implementation

- **MAKE ADJUSTMENTS AS NEEDED**

- » Adjust the budget
- » Adjust policies, plans, programs, and management strategies
- » Adjust broad goals, if appropriate

*Source: National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting, Recommended Budget Practices: A Framework for Improved State and Local Government Budgeting. (1998) <http://www.gfoa.org/sites/default/files/RecommendedBudgetPractices.pdf>*

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Nothing is  
IMPOSSIBLE

## *Implementation Priorities*

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In the Unified Plan, many priorities and recommendations represent continuity with past Town commitments and align well with the traditional areas of responsibility of Town boards and commissions. For example, Wellesley has a continuing commitment to improving and maintaining water quality in the town's ponds and streams. Similarly, the Town is the steward of the historic Town Hall building and is investing in both preservation and upgrading the functionality of the building. But there are also major recommendations focused on solutions to the hard questions that Wellesley has often found it difficult to resolve in the past: increasing housing choice and affordability, expanding transportation choice, establishing a proactive economic development policy, modernizing the zoning bylaw, enhancing environmental performance while balancing recreational and natural open space, and creating a more coordinated and strategic approach to overall town government.

Many of these hard questions are twenty-first century issues that require significantly higher levels of cross-board collaboration than Wellesley's government system is used to delivering, based as it is on highly-distributed power organized in traditional elected boards and commissions. To keep this well-loved model while meeting the challenges facing the town today and tomorrow, the Wellesley model needs to be more flexible, open, interdependent, coordinated, and much more proactive. Instead of persistent collaborative systems, the Town often relies on reactive, ad hoc responses when facing the hard questions. For example, when economic recession increased

the number of empty storefronts, an ad hoc economic development committee was formed, fading away with the return of better economic times. When Chapter 40B proposals appear, people ask why the Town does not have a state-approved affordable housing production plan. By taking a proactive approach to development, transportation, and economic development issues, the Town can pursue the goals it sets for itself, rather than waiting for proposals from others. Among other things, more cross-board collaboration may require a greater time commitment from members of boards and commissions, a willingness to explicitly task members to become a board's "expert" on a particular issue as it affects the board's area of responsibility, or additional staff to make greater proactive collaboration effective.

Wellesley residents and other stakeholders who participated in the Unified Plan, in interviews, workshops, surveys, and through the Steering Committee, identified a set of priority topics that represent the "hard questions" that the town must face: housing choice; mobility and connection; economic development; land use regulations and design standards; balancing environmental goals and recreational needs; and a strategic approach to Town government. Wellesley needs to consider that neighboring towns and peer communities are increasingly addressing similar issues and presenting more quality of life competition for the millennials who will be considering moving to Wellesley or other communities in the coming decades.

## A. Priority Topics For This Unified Plan

### ***Topic: Housing choice***

Housing diversity and affordability, including empty-nester housing, was a repeated theme throughout the planning process. Many residents identified more housing choice—in type and price—as the foundation of a somewhat more diverse Wellesley. The Town has been able to improve the affordable housing percentage since 2007, but has not pursued more significant options that have been on the agenda for years. Key Unified Plan recommendations for increasing housing choice include:

- Concept plans and design guidelines for housing development on town-owned and Housing Authority property—previously studied by the Town and deemed suitable for redevelopment—to be accompanied by rezoning and followed by issuance of developer RFPs:
  - › Tailby Lot—mixed-income multifamily and underground parking
  - › Barton Road—mixed-income multifamily
- Adopt a Housing Production Plan for achieving the Chapter 40B goal of 10% subsidized housing.
- Create that area plans for redevelopment of office districts that include mixed-use and mixed-income multifamily and townhouse housing.
- Evaluate options for some portion of the North 40 located within walking distance of commuter rail for housing. Commission a study that includes concept plans and design guidelines for mixed-income and empty-nester housing in formats other than traditional single-family housing, such as cottage communities and townhouses, and includes a study of retaining town ownership of the land or a community land trust.
- Amend zoning in the General Residence district to permit multifamily housing.
- Amend zoning in single-family districts to permit accessory units under certain conditions and to permit condo development under certain conditions of historic houses found to be preferably preserved under the demolition delay bylaw.
- Commit more CPA funding to affordable housing over the next ten years and increase the level of subsidy to affordable units.

- **Early action items:**

- › **As this Unified Plan was being developed, the Board of Selectmen engaged a consultant team to prepare a Housing Production Plan and considered issuing an RFP for mixed-income and parking redevelopment at the Tailby Lot.**

### ***Topic: Transportation choice***

Participants in the Unified Plan process expressed frustration with traffic congestion, strong interest in the creation of safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian networks connecting town destinations, and general support for strengthening multi-modal transportation options. The Town approached these issues in the past by forming ad hoc committees on in-town transportation and bicycle routes, and by inadequate attempts to control school traffic. However, transportation is a multi-faceted issue that requires ongoing management and attention from a broad range of town entities. Key recommendations on transportation and mobility include:

- Establish a Mobility Policy Committee with representation from multiple boards, committees, and other stakeholders.
- Use a Multimodal Level of Service standard to develop and evaluate transportation improvement projects.
- Develop coordinated traffic demand management measures to reduce single-occupant vehicle traffic, focusing first on development of a school traffic management association. (School traffic has been identified as responsible for one-third of traffic congestion in Wellesley.)
- Develop a bicycle and pedestrian network using the “less-stress” routes approach targeting improvements to bridge gaps between network segments.
- Study options to create safe and convenient bike and pedestrian crossings of Route 9 and the railroad tracks in order to be ready to move forward to construction under the next 10-year plan.
- Identify a transportation coordinator and planner to coordinate implementation of mobility policies and traffic demand management.

### ***Topic: Proactive economic development***

Historically, the town has been reactive to perceived economic development issues—typically focused around vacancies and other issues associated with retail and service business in the commercial villages—without much focus on opportunities for nonresidential tax growth and encouraging mixed use development in commercial and office districts. The Town lacks clear economic development goals and policies. Key recommendations for proactive economic development include:

- Create an Economic Development Policy Committee with representation from relevant boards, staff, and stakeholders.
- Identify economic development staff to work with the commercial villages, the office districts, and other business areas.
- Actively recruit desired business types to village commercial areas.
- Study and implement changes for redevelopment of the office districts, including market studies. Rezone for more height and density to increase non-residential tax revenue and allow multifamily and townhouse development to help attain housing goals. Commission Area Plans to include walkable and sustainable design and sustainable building guidelines.

### ***Topic: Modernizing the zoning bylaw and design guidelines***

A modern zoning bylaw that clearly communicates what the Town wants in terms of development and redevelopment is needed. A previous effort over the last ten years was not completed. It is necessary to put sufficient resources to the task. Key recommendations on zoning and design include:

- Modernize the zoning bylaw to be a hybrid zoning instrument that is user-friendly, clear, and precise, so that project proponents know what the Town is looking for and what it will not accept in development projects. Include illustrations of what is desired and not desired.
- Use the zoning bylaw to communicate goals, policy and design standards supported by the Unified Plan.
- Update the Design Review bylaw and handbook and incorporate the advisory expertise of Design Review Board members into the zoning rewrite and

development of design guidelines for Area Plans (such as for the redevelopment of office areas).

- Include sustainability practices and form-based elements in zoning for commercial villages and office/mixed-use districts. Form-based zoning requires site and building design that supports compact and walkable districts.

### ***Topic: Preserving and enhancing environmental resources and performance while balancing natural and recreational open space***

Use a holistic and systematic rating system to evaluate town projects, beginning with the basic question—Is this the right project? Choose a system such as Envision, that evaluate projects from multiple perspectives (including economic) and involves multiple board and commission responsibilities.

- Improve the collection and analysis of data, such as
  - › Tree canopy
  - › Conservation easements and restrictions
  - › Demand for and use of athletic fields and sports facilities owned by the town and others
  - › Demand for and use of the 900 Worcester Street facility
  - › Transportation greenhouse gas emissions
- Use better data to build consensus around competing uses for open space.
- Discourage private encroachment on public resources.
- Expand programs to encourage environmentally-sensitive practices on private property.
- Increase public awareness of climate change and increase the pace of greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

### ***Topic: More coordinated and strategic approach to town government***

To serve 21st-century residents and businesses and meet contemporary challenges, Wellesley town government can benefit from greater efficiency and coordination. Many participants in the planning process, especially those who are not directly involved in Town government,

find Town government opaque and hard to navigate. Key recommendations on town government include:

- Align town government activities with the Unified Plan:
  - › An ATM 2019 bylaw to require town government bodies to align their activities to achieve the town vision and goals in the Unified Plan.
  - › An ATM 2019 bylaw to require town government bodies with budgets over \$100,000 to establish strategic plans aligned with the Unified Plan, in a standardized format, over a rolling implementation period of three to five years.
- Data-driven government:
  - › Create an increased culture of data-driven government to support decision-making and transparency, including a staff person in charge of working with all boards and commissions and departments to collect and analyze data and
- Customer-centric government:
  - › Design town processes around customer needs.
  - › Foster a culture of customer service among town employees.
  - › Gather customer feedback and establish customer service metrics.
  - › Create programs to ensure a continued flow of high-quality volunteers.
  - › Create user-friendly e-government processes so residents and businesses can conduct routine business with the town online.
- Optimize the use of technology through a bylaw.
  - › Establish a purchasing program for compatible hardware and software across town government to save money and time in purchasing, maintenance, and training.
  - › Evaluate and implement shared services for administrative functions.
- Increase transparency about town government activities.
  - › Establish and keep up to date public-friendly informational resources on the town website about town data, town budgets, expenditures and projects, agendas and minutes, Annual Town Meeting warrant, and so on.
- Study the feasibility and benefits of adopting Budgeting for Outcomes (priority-based budgeting) in the context of Wellesley’s governmental system.

- Identify staff to support data literacy and publishing, and customer service systems.

## B. Tools for implementation

The most important implementation tool that town government has is the ability to decide where and how to make public investments—in facilities, infrastructure, open space, education, in programs, and in development assistance.

### Regulatory tools and development standards and guidelines

- **Zoning and development regulations.** Most people think of zoning as the preeminent implementation tool for the land use and development aspects of a municipal plan, and it is certainly one of the foundations for effective implementation of a plan. While Wellesley has an established overall character that will persist into the future, some of the goals of the 2018 Wellesley Unified Plan can only be attained with a change in zoning.
- **Hybrid zoning.** Many communities today have hybrid zoning—a combination of conventional zoning and form-based zoning. Because of its familiarity and long institutional history, conventional zoning is likely to remain the foundation of Wellesley zoning. Form-based zoning focuses more on building form than on land uses. It is a reaction to conventional zoning’s separation of land uses, which made it impossible to build new mixed-use neighborhoods and districts. Form-based codes are organized around the street and the neighborhood and are particularly good at conveying what is desired in terms of the relationship between private buildings and the public street. They are typically applied in specific districts, such as commercial corridors where a mixture of uses is desired.
- **Smart Growth Zoning and Housing Production Districts—Chapter 40R and Chapter 40S.** Chapter 40R allows communities to establish special zoning overlay districts that allow densities of 12 units/acre for townhouses and 20 units/acre for condominiums and apartments; require 20% affordable units; and allow mixed-use development. State technical assistance is available for writing

the bylaw and for planning and design. The state pays the municipality for creating the district and an additional amount for every unit built. Chapter 40S provides that communities with a Chapter 40R district receive state funding for educating school-age children who move into the district. Wellesley might consider establishing these districts when rezoning the office districts to allow multifamily development. Communities with similarities to Wellesley that have approved Chapter 40R districts include Belmont, North Andover, and Marblehead.

- **Urban design and design review.** Wellesley’s design review bylaw and guidebook are outdated and should be reviewed to conform with the vision and goals of the Unified Plan. In late 2017 the Planning Board issued an RFP for updated design guidelines. The Design Review Board’s advisory role should also be reviewed to increase its effectiveness.
- **Area and system plans.** Plans for specific areas, such as the office or commercial districts, provide more detailed analysis and concepts to meet Town goals, market analysis, and development standards that can be integrated into zoning and developer RFPs. System Plans are typically town-wide plans for systems that support and facilitate overall quality of life. They include plans for infrastructure, such as stormwater management, open space and recreation, and transportation. An affordable housing production plan is a system plan. The system plans should be aligned with Unified Plan goals and the Town vision.

### C. Funding opportunities

The Commonwealth has created a central resource—the Muni Grant Finder—to assist municipalities looking for state funding opportunities (<http://www.mass.gov/anf/budget-taxes-and-procurement/grants/>). Examples of grants that may be useful to Wellesley in implementing the Unified Plan include:

- **MassWorks Infrastructure Program.** This program consolidates several grant programs to fund public infrastructure that supports economic development, job creation, and job retention, and housing development, both market and affordable, at densities at or above 4 units per acre.

- **Green Communities Program.** Competitive grants to reduce energy use and carbon footprint for communities designated as Green Communities which includes Wellesley.
- Recent grants have been used to fund energy conservation in town-owned facilities including retrofits, and other programs such as installation of electric vehicle charging stations and hybrid and electric vehicle purchases.
- **Urban Forestry Grants.** Grants of \$1,000-\$30,000 for strengthening local management of the urban forest.
- **Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program.** A reimbursable matching grant program to support historic preservation planning.
- **Preservation Projects Fund.** A reimbursable matching grant program to support preservation of properties, landscapes, and sites listed on the State Register of Historic Places.
- **Local Initiative Program.** This program provides technical assistance to communities and developers working together to provide affordable rental housing.

Also available are technical assistance opportunities from the Metropolitan Area Planning Committee (MAPC)

### D. Implementation Matrix

The following pages provide a matrix of goals, strategies, and actions keyed to responsible parties and a time frame. In most cases, the time frame is either the first five years of this ten-year plan, or the second five years. The matrix also indicates if the item has already been programmed by the Town and if it is considered a high priority.

## Wellesley Unified Plan—Implementation Matrix

Organized by goals, strategies, and actions, this Implementation Matrix consolidates the recommendations contained in chapters 4 to 14 of the Unified Plan.

- The **When** column indicates the time period for commencing action. In most cases, the period is either the first five years of this ten-year plan [2018-2022] or the second five years [2023-2028]. In some cases, more specific dates are provided.
- The **Who** column identifies responsible parties.
- The **High Priority?** column indicates items identified as high priority by 1) participants in public meetings and on-line surveys; 2) Steering Committee members in discussions; or 3) previous programming or funding commitments (e.g., Town hall renovation).
- The **Programmed?** column indicates items already programmed (e.g., through issues of an RFP, budgeting, etc.).

Abbreviations of responsible parties

BOH—Board of Health

BOS—Board of Selectmen

BPW—Board of Public Works

CPC—Community Preservation committee

FMD—Facilities Management Department

HR—Human Resources

IT—Information Technology

NRC—Natural Resources Commission

WFL—Wellesley Free Library

WHA—Wellesley Housing Authority

WHDC—Wellesley Housing Development Corporation

**CHAPTER 4: NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION**

GOALS		STRAATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?																																																								
1. Sensitive natural resources are restored, well-managed, and preserved to protect and enhance water resources, wildlife habitat, biodiversity, public health, and enrichment of community character.	A. Continue a management program for Wellesley ponds, streams, and wetlands to improve and maintain water quality and habitat and avoid erosion	i. Manage Morse's Pond to avoid eutrophication and to maintain its use as an environmental and recreational resource and implement the Morse's Pond Erosion Report recommendations. ii. Implement the Comprehensive Pond Management Report recommendations and continue small pond management based on the Pond Restoration Master Plan. iii. Provide nonpoint source pollution education to residential and nonresidential private property owners. iv. Promote the use of green infrastructure best management practices (BMPs) on public and private properties to manage stormwater. v. Continue to implement the organic Integrated Pest Management program.	Ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES																																																								
								B. Continue to maintain and increase the urban forest and shade tree canopy on public and private property in Wellesley.	i. Continue and expand Wellesley's Public Shade Tree Program ii. Review the effectiveness of the current tree protection bylaw and adjust as needed. iii. Continue public outreach on the benefits of trees and the tree planting program iv. Investigate and implement forestry stewardship plans to care for trees on conservation lands. v. Create a baseline estimate of total tree cover (public and private) in Wellesley, and the clean air, stormwater, and habitat benefits to the town, and set a tree cover/canopy goal for the town.	Ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES																																																	
															C. Update the town's wellhead protection planning and collaborate with communities that share its aquifers.	i. Cooperate with communities and private entities that share Wellesley's aquifers to establish common policies. ii. Establish a wellhead and aquifer protection plan.	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW; Planning; Building; NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES																																										
																						A. Create a thorough database of open space under all protection and ownership types.	i. Improve, update, and maintain a database of open space organized by protection level that is easily understandable for the public. ii. Verify and improve data by identifying and cataloguing easements, deed restrictions, and other similar	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES																																			
																													B. Create a thorough database of open space under all protection and ownership types.	i. Improve, update, and maintain a database of open space organized by protection level that is easily understandable for the public. ii. Verify and improve data by identifying and cataloguing easements, deed restrictions, and other similar	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES																												
																																				C. Update the town's wellhead protection planning and collaborate with communities that share its aquifers.	i. Cooperate with communities and private entities that share Wellesley's aquifers to establish common policies. ii. Establish a wellhead and aquifer protection plan.	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW; Planning; Volunteers	YES	YES	YES																					
																																											A. Create a thorough database of open space under all protection and ownership types.	i. Improve, update, and maintain a database of open space organized by protection level that is easily understandable for the public. ii. Verify and improve data by identifying and cataloguing easements, deed restrictions, and other similar	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES														
																																																		B. Create a thorough database of open space under all protection and ownership types.	i. Improve, update, and maintain a database of open space organized by protection level that is easily understandable for the public. ii. Verify and improve data by identifying and cataloguing easements, deed restrictions, and other similar	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES							
																																																									C. Update the town's wellhead protection planning and collaborate with communities that share its aquifers.	i. Cooperate with communities and private entities that share Wellesley's aquifers to establish common policies. ii. Establish a wellhead and aquifer protection plan.	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES
B. Create a thorough database of open space under all protection and ownership types.	i. Improve, update, and maintain a database of open space organized by protection level that is easily understandable for the public. ii. Verify and improve data by identifying and cataloguing easements, deed restrictions, and other similar	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES																																																									
							C. Update the town's wellhead protection planning and collaborate with communities that share its aquifers.	i. Cooperate with communities and private entities that share Wellesley's aquifers to establish common policies. ii. Establish a wellhead and aquifer protection plan.	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES																																																		
														A. Create a thorough database of open space under all protection and ownership types.	i. Improve, update, and maintain a database of open space organized by protection level that is easily understandable for the public. ii. Verify and improve data by identifying and cataloguing easements, deed restrictions, and other similar	2018-2022 and ongoing	NRC; BPW	YES	YES	YES																																											

CHAPTER 4: NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
3. Public open space is protected and well-managed.	A. Permanently protect existing town-owned open space with appropriate zoning and conservation restrictions. B. Manage and maintain public open space to protect resources and provide public access, as appropriate.	iii. Identify open space protection options that strengthen the connectivity of green space.	2018-2022	NRC		
		i. Continue rezoning of NRC properties used as parks or conservation land from Single Residence to Conservation and Parks.	2018-2022	Planning	YES	YES
4. The town pursues the public interest in open space preservation through multiple strategies.		i. Develop management plans for all conservation areas.	2018 – 2028	NRC		
		ii. Identify areas of private encroachment on public open spaces and work with property owners on compliance.	2023-2028	NRC; DPW; BOS -create a work program and recruit volunteers to assist		
		iii. Develop signage and, when appropriate, public access, after correction of encroachment.	2023-2028	NRC; DPW; BOS		
		iv. Develop a common policy framework for open space resources used for common purposes but managed by different town entities.	2023-2028	Trails Committee working with NRC and other entities.		
		v. In addition to water quality measures, continue to apply appropriate Best Management Practices, such as invasive species removal, to ensure preservation of natural resources and habitat.	2018-2022	NRC; DPW		
		vi. Ask users to identify management or maintenance issues that need attention.	2023-2028	NRC; Trails Committee; Recreation Commission		
		vii. Include natural open space and trails in the plans for the North 40 to be developed.	2018-2022	NRC and other policymakers		
		i. Identify and evaluate tax title properties for incorporation into the open space system.	2023-2028	NRC		
		ii. Identify priority areas for protection that strengthen the green space network by adding adjacent lands or bridging network gaps.	2018-2022	NRC		
		iii. Review the Natural Resources Zoning Development bylaw and revise it if needed	2023-2028	NRC, Planning		
iv. Develop agreements with institutions such as easements or other protections where they affect town-wide networks, adjacent protected open space, and open space character seen from public streets.	2023-2028	NRC; BOS				



CHAPTER 5: HISTORIC AND CULTURAL HERITAGE							
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?	
2. Town government continues to maintain the character of its historic buildings, such as Town Hall.	D. Expand public awareness of historic preservation through awards programs, illustrative materials to promote compatible renovation of historic properties, and developer and contractor education.	ii. Integrate the plan's recommendations into maintenance programs for the town's historic landscapes when complete and adopted by both Commissions.	2023-2028	NRC; DPW			
		i. Send notices once a year to property-owners in the local historic districts explaining when they need a Certificate of Appropriateness and how to get one and make this information available to realtors.	2018-2022 and ongoing	Historic District Commission; Planning Department			
		ii. Send notices once a year to owners of State and National Register listed properties, if not in local historic districts, to raise awareness about the historic value of their properties and encouraging voluntary Consultation with the Historical Commission when making renovations.	2018-2022 and ongoing	Historical Commission and Planning Department			
		iii. Provide information sheets on historic styles common in Wellesley that show how to make historically-sensitive renovations.	2018-2022	Historical Commission; Planning Department			
	E. Improve the Neighborhood Conservation District Process.	iv. Create an award program for historic preservation.	2023-2028	Historical Commission			
		i. Review and amend the NCD bylaw to simplify the process while still requiring significant consensus.	2023-2028	Historical Commission; Planning Board; Planning Department			
	F. Combine the Historical Commission and Historic District Commission.	ii. Prepare an information sheet that succinctly explains the purpose and process for setting up an NCD.	2023-2028	Planning Department			
		i. Combine the two commissions into one entity.	2023-2028	Town Meeting			
	3. Wellesley is developing a permanent arts and culture center.	A. Preserve Wellesley's iconic town owned buildings and structures, while providing functional interior workspaces and up-to-date energy efficiency.	i. Identify key historic exterior and interior design features of Wellesley's iconic Town buildings and incorporate them into renovations and retrofits.	2018-2022	Permanent Building Committee; Facilities Management Department	Yes	Yes – Town Hall renovations
			i. Strengthen the Wellesley Arts Alliance.	2018-2022	Town Meeting; Alliance Volunteers		
		ii. Investigate options such as use of the community center or integrating into other building projects or facilities not in current use.	2023-2028	Alliance volunteers			

CHAPTER 5: HISTORIC AND CULTURAL HERITAGE						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. Collaborate with the Recreation Department, WFL, Health Department, council on Aging, and the Public Schools.</li> <li>iv. Develop a fund-raising and location campaign for an arts and culture center.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2023-2028</li> <li>2023-2022</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alliance volunteers; Planning Department</li> <li>Alliance volunteers; Planning</li> </ul>		

CHAPTER 6: PARKS, TRAILS, AND RECREATION						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
1. The town provides recreational open space, facilities, and programs for family, youth, and adult activities, both team and individual.	A. Maintain and improve active recreation areas, including athletic fields and programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Continue to improve Morses Pond swimming and boating areas, activities, and operations while continuing to manage it in an environmentally sound way.</li> <li>ii. Upgrade the Morses Pond bathroom and improve amenities such as a snack bar or food truck.</li> <li>iii. Consider allowing the Recreation Commission to use a portion of fees collected for capital improvements and amenities.</li> <li>iv. Create a report with data and analysis on the demand for and use of athletic fields and sports facilities such as tennis courts, both Town-owned and owned by other organizations.</li> <li>v. Consider options for an indoor gymnasium suitable for community use as well as school use in upcoming school construction planning and design, without negatively affecting school operations and safety.</li> <li>vi. Commission a scientific survey of a representative sample of Wellesley adults to aid in decision making about the balance of active and passive open space and the potential uses of the North 40.</li> <li>vii. Include innovative designs and activities when making playground improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2023-2028</li> <li>2023-2028</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NRC; DPW; Recreation Commission</li> <li>Recreation Commission</li> <li>Town Meeting</li> <li>Playing Fields Task Force; Recreation Commission</li> <li>BOS; School Committee; Permanent Building Committee</li> <li>NRC; Recreation Commission</li> <li>NRC; Recreation Commission; DPW</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YES</li> <li>YES</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YES</li> <li>YES</li> </ul>
2. The open space trail system is integrated with an overall pedestrian and bicycle network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Give priority to trail expansion that connects with town-wide networks.</li> <li>B. Coordinate trail development and maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Focus on enhancing and expanding trail segments that link across the town.</li> <li>ii. Within the Trails Committee, identify management inconsistencies and potential remedies that could support trail creation and maintenance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2023-2028</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trails Committee</li> <li>Trails Committee</li> </ul>		

<b>CHAPTER 6: PARKS, TRAILS, AND RECREATION</b>						
<b>GOALS</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>HIGH PRIORITY?</b>	<b>PROGRAM-MED?</b>
	requirements for consistency across management entities.	iii. Work with Town management entities to reduce inconsistencies.	2023-2028	Trails Committee and management entities.		
	C. Expand and enhance the existing trails network within Wellesley and to adjacent towns, and establish management policies for trail monitoring, maintenance, and development.	i. Document management policies for trails--monitoring, maintenance, and development. ii. Consult with the Trails Committee about opportunities to link trails in parks and conservation areas with pedestrian and bike networks in surrounding areas.	2018-2022	Trails Committee		
3. Town recreation facilities and programs meet the changing needs of the community.	A. Improve the data collection system about the use, satisfaction, and demand for recreation facilities and programs, as well as changing needs.	i. Monitor usage and demand at the 900 Worcester Street facility to inform Town recreation planning. ii. Survey Wellesley residents every five years about their recreational needs as part of the OSRP update. iii. Use brief surveys of satisfaction and desired improvements for every Recreation Department program.	2018-2022	Mobility Committee, North 40 Committee, include Trails Committee representative		
4. The town maintains a state-approved open space and recreation plan.	A. Update the Open Space and Recreation Plan in a timely manner to inform NRC, Recreation Commission, and Town strategic planning and to obtain state approval for eligibility for state funding.	i. Review the OSRP plan at least once a year to measure progress and identify any needed changes to the inventory and action plan ii. Program the full update of the document for FY 2021.	2020 and repeatedly 2018-2022 and ongoing 2018-2022	Facility operator; Recreation Commission NRC and Recreation Commission Recreation Commission		

<b>CHAPTER 7: HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS</b>						
<b>GOALS</b>	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>HIGH PRIORITY?</b>	<b>PROGRAM-MED?</b>
1. Maintain the predominantly single family character of established	A. Maintain single family zoning that preserves single family character	i. Amend zoning to allow for one accessory unit above garages or in other limited locations on a single-family lot with appropriate limitations on massing and dimensions.	2018-2022	Planning Board		

**CHAPTER 7: HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
single family neighborhoods.	from the street, while allowing for limited additional units in certain cases.	ii. Explore amending zoning to allow identified historic single-family homes or those in the demolition delay process to be redesigned and used for condominium units while preserving their historic exterior and providing for parking to the side or rear.	2018-2022	Planning Board; Historical Commission		
2. Wellesley has a housing strategy that employs a variety of mechanisms to increase housing choice in type and affordability.	A. Amend the zoning bylaw to allow for more diverse housing options.  B. Develop a housing plan for aging in place in Wellesley.  C. Explore creating a public-private community land trust to create affordable housing.  D. Create a "soft-second loan" program for down payment and closing cost assistance with a revolving fund from the WHDC	<p>i. Amend zoning to allow multifamily development at appropriate locations on major streets</p> <p>ii. Amend zoning to allow multifamily residential development in current office park areas, including mixed use options</p> <p>iii. Explore adopting a bylaw that allows for cottage communities.</p> <p>i. Work through the Council on Aging to develop a plan for aging in place.</p> <p>ii. Review and amend regulations and standards, as needed, to allow for modifications and new construction for aging households.</p> <p>iii. Identify developers with experience building for aging households to discuss market and other requirements for successful empty-nester housing.</p> <p>i. Create a committee, potentially including local faith communities that might be interested in working on a community land trust, to explore the feasibility of such an organization in Wellesley</p> <p>i. Develop a program to assist young families, senior citizens, and Town employees who meet certain eligibility requirements with down payment and closing cost assistance for housing up to a cost and size to be determined</p>	2018-2022  2018-2022  2018-2022  2018-2022  2018-2022  2023-2028	Planning Board  Planning Board  Planning Board  Council on Aging; Planning Board  Planning Board  Planning Board  BOS; WHDC; nonprofit organizations  WHDC		
3. Diverse housing types, such as townhouses, apartments, and condos, exist in commercial villages, office park areas, at locations on arterial roads, and through redevelopment of existing housing.	A. Identify town-owned locations suitable for multifamily or townhouse development  B. Upzone the office parks for redevelopment and allow mixed use and multifamily housing.	<p>i. Issue an RFP for mixed income housing and parking development at the Tailby Lot and Railroad Lot.</p> <p>ii. Develop design guidelines and prepare RFPs for mixed-income, multifamily housing on suitable sites.</p> <p>i. Commission concept plans for redevelopment of office districts such as Walnut Street, Williams Street, and other locations to study potential options for density, design standards (including green standards such as energy-efficiency and green stormwater management), parking and</p>	2018-2022  2018-2022  2018-2022	BOS; Planning Board  Planning Board  Planning Board	Yes	Possible early action: RFP for Tailby Lot redevelopment 2018



CHAPTER 7: HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
	state for approval.	ii. Adopt the plan and submit it to the state.	2018-2019	Planning Board; BOS		
		iii. Establish systems within the Town and/or through joining regional housing groups (see Goal 4, Strategy B) to implement the Housing Production Plan.	2018-2022	Planning Board; BOS		
5. Neighborhood destinations such as parks, schools, and retail areas are accessible by walking and biking.	A. Identify priority neighborhood destinations for the network. B. Maintain neighborhood district character.	i. Work within the context of the “low stress” network development discussed in Chapter 10.	2018-2022	Planning Board; BOS; Trails Committee		
		i. Create or update plans for securing neighborhood character through destinations such as retail, schools, parks, and libraries.	2018-2022	Planning Board; BOS		

CHAPTER 8: PUBLIC HEALTH						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
1. Wellesley fosters formal and informal connections among neighbors and peers to strengthen social capital and intergenerational ties.	A. Promote public spaces in each neighborhood for residents to share experiences and strengthen local social capital.	i. Identify or develop publicly-accessible spaces as physical community hubs in each neighborhood in Wellesley.	2018-2022	Council on Aging; Youth Commission; BOH; Arts groups		
	B. Sustain and enhance community arts programs with a focus on inclusivity.	i. Sustain current arts programming in town. ii. Hold at least two arts programs each year that promote culture equity.	2018-2022 2018-2022 and ongoing	WFL; Arts groups WFL; Arts groups		
	C. Adopt an age-friendly and intergenerational approach to the development of community buildings and spaces.	i. Adopt guidance related to universal design and accessibility for public-accessible buildings and spaces so that these places become more accessible and inviting to people of all ages and abilities. ii. Expand opportunities for children, youth, and older residents to connect and interact.	2018-2022	Town Meeting		
2. Wellesley supports the mental and emotional wellness of children and youth to reduce the potential for self-harm and to increase opportunities among all youth in town.	A. Promote Wellesley as a stigma free municipality.	i. Conduct an annual town-wide communications campaign to reduce the perception of stigma for receiving mental and emotional support. ii. Hold annual community conversations to discuss mental health challenges in the community (e.g., suicide) and reinforce a town-wide stigma-free approach by sharing resources and supportive behaviors (e.g., Wellesley Acts).	2018-2022 2018-2022 and ongoing	Council on Aging; Youth Commission; WFL BOH BOH		

**CHAPTER 8: PUBLIC HEALTH**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
3. Wellesley prioritizes walkability and open space to promote physical activity and exposure to outdoor natural environments.	B. Continue focus on school-based social and emotional instruction and engage in continuous communications about this work with all residents.	i. Enhance school and health department programs in place to provide social and emotional support (e.g., BRIDGE program).	2018-2022 and ongoing	School Committee; BOH	YES	YES
	C. Promote unstructured play and offer time and space for it to occur.	i. Identify spaces and provide resources that support more unstructured play among youth and children in town.	2018-2022	Youth Commission; Recreation Commission; WFL		
	A. Adopt policies that promote and protect active transportation.	i. Adopt a Complete Streets policies to ensure that sidewalks, sidepaths, bicycle facilities, and transit stops are created or preserved in town. ii. Adopt a data-driven traffic safety policy with the goals of eliminating fatalities and injuries from roadway crashes in Wellesley.	See Chapter 10 - Mobility.		YES	
	B. Create a sidewalk improvement fund.	i. Establish a sidewalk improvement fund for the town to provide a mechanism for waiving sidewalk requirements (where allowable) and to collect a payment in lieu of funds to be deposited into an enterprise fund.	See Chapter 10 - Mobility			
4. Wellesley addresses environmental hazards to reduce resident exposure to substances that reduce quality of life in town.	C. Enhance tree protection and planting.	i. Enhance enforcement (in accordance with tree preservation and protection bylaw) to ensure protection of trees and significant vegetation that could be impacted by public or private developments.	2018-2022	Town Meeting; DPW		
	D. Incentivize preservation of natural resources on development sites.	i. Adopt guidance—regulatory or promotional—for maintaining as much natural, healthy vegetation on development sites, especially redevelopment projects.	See Chapter 4.			
	A. Implement Best Practices related to the elimination of gas leaks.	i. Assess and update regulations and practices to reduce harmful pollutant exposures while modernizing infrastructure.	See Chapters 4 and 12.			
	B. Promote Best Practices related to pest management on private properties.	i. Identify policies and materials that can be used to encourage private land owners to adopt practices that eliminate the use of pest control substances with toxics and environmentally hazardous materials.	2018-2022	BOH; DPW		
	C. Protect water resources	i. Prioritize policies and land protection (e.g., easement, purchase) that prevent the development of potentially environmentally harmful uses on lands adjacent to water resources and water recharge areas.	See Chapters 4 and 12.			

CHAPTER 8: PUBLIC HEALTH						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
5. Wellesley optimizes the availability of indoor and outdoor recreational space so that all residents have places to be physically active, to socialize, and to relax.	D. Prepare for climate change impacts on health.	i. Develop an action plan that addresses potential impacts of climate change on health and resiliency of town residents.	See Chapter 12.			
	A. Review existing and consider additional shared use opportunities at recreational facilities.	ii. Consider establishing shared use opportunities that provide for resident and community access to public indoor and outdoor facilities for exercise and other social and recreational activities. iii. Consider establishing arrangements for the shared use of public indoor and outdoor recreational facilities for which no current arrangement exists	See Chapter 6.			
6. Wellesley considers health impacts of proposed projects and policies by integrating a health and equity lens into local decision making.	B. Implement supportive community programs for all ages.	i. Establish municipal- and community-led programs in publicly-accessible spaces and at times convenient for residents.	2023-2028	Recreation Commission; Youth Commission; Council on Aging; WFL		
	A. Use a checklist to assist in decision making.	i. Use a check list to assist in understanding how municipal decisions affect health conditions in Wellesley.	See Chapter 13.			
	B. Conduct equity impact assessments.	i. Develop and apply an equity impact assessment tool for proposed policies and projects in town.	See Chapter 13.			
	C. Increase resources available for community health and to enhance the Health Department's role in community planning.	i. Consider increases in funding and support for the Wellesley Health Department to sustain existing programs and enforcement activities while allowing staff engagement in implementation of the Unified Plan.	2023-2028	BOH; BOS; Town Meeting		

**CHAPTER 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
1. Wellesley commercial villages have a diverse array of independent businesses.	A. Support merchants' associations and the Chamber of Commerce to support retail in the commercial districts.	i. Help organize merchants' associations in retail villages other than Wellesley Square or the development of a town-wide merchants; association encompassing all retail areas.	2023-2028	Selectman's Office; Planning Department; Economic Development staff	YES	
		ii. Assist these groups in programming events for retail areas.	2023-2028	Selectman's Office; Planning Department; Economic Development staff		
		iii. Consider establishing a Business Improvement District to help fund management of retail areas.	2023-2028	Selectman's Office; Planning Department; Economic Development staff		
		iv. Create bike and pedestrian facilities to promote access and work with property owners and businesses to improve parking management.	2018-2022	Mobility Committee; DPW		
		v. Implement the Wellesley Square Wayfinding and Branding project by installing signage.	2018-2022	Planning Department; DPW	Yes	Yes
		vi. Expand wayfinding signage to other commercial areas of Town (Lower Falls, Wellesley Hills, Linden Square, Fells)	2023-2028	BOS; Planning Department; DPW		
2. Wellesley commercial areas have a mixture of uses.	B. Recruit desired business types to empty storefronts.  A. Provide for zoning amendments and	i. Work to recruit restaurants, cafes, and other "gathering places" or "experience" businesses to the commercial villages by creating relationships with restaurant brokers.	2023-2028	Economic Development staff		
		ii. Provide incentives, such as tax abatements or rental assistance for limited periods for desired independent business types to locate in the commercial villages.	2023-2028	BOS; Town Meeting; Economic Development staff		
		iii. Review alcohol service and common victualer regulations and modify them, if needed, to attract desired businesses.	2023-2028	Economic development staff; BOS; Town Meeting		
		i. Explore the potential of "friendly 40B" mixed-income development in commercial areas.	2018 – 2022	Planning Board; BOS	YES	

CHAPTER 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
3. An economic development staff member proactively advances town economic development goals by working with retail, service, office, and institutional groups and businesses.	Identify other changes to encourage mixed-use development, particularly housing, in commercial areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Study the potential of allowing sufficient height and density in commercial villages to attract interest in redevelopment that includes upper story housing, including connectivity and parking solutions.</li> <li>iii. Amend the zoning bylaws and provide design guidelines for mixed use development to avoid adverse impacts on nearby neighborhoods.</li> <li>iv. Consult with commercial property owners in developing regulations and frameworks for mixed use development.</li> </ul>	2018-2022	Planning Board		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Create an Economic Development Policy Committee under the BOS to guide economic development activities.</li> <li>ii. Identify economic development/business liaison tasks for the economic development staff position</li> </ul>	2018-2022	Planning Board BOS		
4. Support and enhance the build-out potential of office zoning districts to increase tax revenue potential and meet other town goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Invest in proactive economic development by creating an economic development policy group and identifying a staff person to focus on economic development</li> <li>A. Study options and take steps to upzone/rezone office zoning districts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Commission a study on the redevelopment of Wellesley's office zoning districts.</li> </ul>	2018-2022	Planning Board; Economic Development Policy Committee	YES	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Prepare a market study and area plan.</li> </ul>	2018-2022	Planning Department; Economic Development staff	YES	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. Consider creating a TIF district to finance any needed infrastructure and/or public realm (streetscape and open space) improvements</li> </ul>	2023-2028	Planning Board; Planning Department; Economic Development staff person		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iv. Amend the zoning bylaw and other regulations to create the regulatory framework to allow higher density and mixed-use redevelopment.</li> </ul>	2018-2022	Planning Board		

**CHAPTER 10: MOBILITY AND CIRCULATION**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?		
<p>1. Wellesley has a multimodal transportation system focused around neighborhood access to the commercial villages and town destinations.</p>	<p>A. Establish a permanent Mobility Policy Committee to provide ongoing policy guidance for town coordination and investment in transportation.</p>	<p>i. Create a Mobility Policy Committee with broad representation.</p>	2018-2022	BOS; Board and committee representatives	YES			
		<p>ii. Identify coordinated multimodal approaches to mobility in Wellesley including projects and demand management.</p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee				
		<p>iii. Review and evaluate transportation projects and studies proposed for funding by Annual Town Meeting within a multimodal context.</p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee				
		<p>iv. Work across departments and with other groups to develop coordinate Traffic Demand Management (TDM) measures to reduce single-occupant vehicle traffic.</p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee				
		<p>v. Work with the MWRTA to promote use of bus routes, especially the #8 bus, which stops at commuter rail stations and the MBTA Green Line Woodland Station.</p>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Mobility Policy Committee				
		<p>vi. Promote more car-sharing opportunities.</p>	2023-2028	Mobility Policy Committee				
		<p>vii. Monitor the progress of Autonomous Vehicle shuttles as a means of transportation in the region to identify opportunities for Wellesley.</p>	2023-2028	Mobility Policy Committee				
		<p>B. Use Multimodal Level of Service (MLOS) measures when making street and road improvements.</p>	<p>C. Develop a bicycle and pedestrian network using “bicycle boulevards” and the “less-stress routes” approach of targeted investments in safe connections.</p>	<p>i. Use MLOS to evaluate development projects and proposed major mobility improvements.</p>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Planning Department; DPW; require for design projects		
				<p>ii. Study the pros and cons of establishing a 25 mph default speed limit for all streets, except where marked, as a strategy to support MLOS</p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee; BOS		
				<p>i. Make a priority list of town destinations for the network.</p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee	<b>YES</b>	
<p>ii. Prepare an RFP for a “less-stress routes” study for Wellesley bike and pedestrian routes.</p>	2018-2022			Mobility Policy Committee				
<p>iii. Make recommended improvements, including signage, to lower the stress factor at the gaps between low-stress segments of the network.</p>	2018-2022			DPW				
		<p>iv. Adopt appropriate speed limits for streets optimized for biking and walking.</p>	2018-2022	Mobility Policy Committee; BOS				
		<p>v. Create a monthly Sunday morning “ciclovia” or “cycleway” day.</p>	2023-2028	Mobility Policy Committee; Police Department				

CHAPTER 10: MOBILITY AND CIRCULATION							
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?	
2. Access and parking to support commercial districts is well-managed.	<p>D. Coordinate a Complete Streets program with planning for a safe and convenient multimodal system</p> <p>E. Develop concepts and design for safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Route 9 and the railroad tracks.</p> <p>F. Develop a Traffic Demand Management (TDM) program focused specifically on school-traffic to reduce school-time traffic by at least 50%.</p> <p>A. Ensure bicycle access and parking in commercial villages.</p> <p>B. Pursue additional parking options for commercial villages, including management and structured parking.</p>	<p>vi. Participate in the Metrowest Landline project to address priority trail gaps across the region to connect bike routes and trails in regional communities.</p> <p>i. Adopt a Complete Streets program and achieve MassDOT Complete Streets certification in order to implement Complete Streets where feasible.</p> <p>ii. Evaluate all street improvement programs for Complete Streets potential.</p> <p>iii. Implement Complete Streets incrementally in conjunction with programmed street improvements and development of a multi-modal system.</p> <p>iv. Consider creating a program for developer contributions in kind or by fee to street trees, sidewalk improvements, and bicycle amenities.</p> <p>i. Identify potential crossing areas for study.</p> <p>ii. Prepare an RFP for a feasibility study for potential pedestrian and bicycle crossings.</p>	<p>2018-2022 and ongoing</p> <p>2018-2022</p> <p>2018-2022 and ongoing</p> <p>2018-2022 and ongoing</p> <p>2018-2022</p> <p>2018-2022</p> <p>2023-2028</p> <p>2018-2022</p> <p>2018-2022</p> <p>2018--2022</p> <p>2018-2022</p>	<p>Mobility Policy Committee</p> <p>Mobility Policy Committee; Town Meeting</p> <p>DPW</p> <p>DPW</p> <p>Planning Department; Town Meeting</p> <p>Mobility Policy Committee</p> <p>Mobility Policy Committee; DPW</p> <p>Mobility Policy Committee; possible contract staff coordinator</p> <p>Mobility Policy Committee; IT</p> <p>STMA</p> <p>Mobility Policy Committee; DPW</p> <p>Mobility Policy Committee; Planning Department; BOS</p> <p>Planning Department; Mobility Policy Committee; BOS</p>	<p>YES</p>		

CHAPTER 10: MOBILITY AND CIRCULATION						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM-MED?
3. Seek improvement of transportation flow on regional routes.	A. Create a campaign to publicize MVRTA bus access to the MBTA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. As part of the Town's transportation demand management program, to be organized by the Mobility Policy Committee, publicize bus access to commuter rail stations and the Woodland Green Line station</li> <li>ii. Work with the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) and neighboring towns to identify truck routes, locate commuter traffic routes away from congested areas, and establish corridor alliances with contiguous communities and subregions.</li> <li>iii. Advocate for improvements in MBTA commuter rail service.</li> </ul>	2018-2022 and ongoing	Mobility Policy Committee		
			2023-2028	Mobility Policy Committee		
			2018-2022 Ongoing	Mobility Policy Committee		

CHAPTER 11: PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMME D?
1. Town-owned facilities are in good condition, functional, and resource-efficient.	A. Make capital improvements to town facilities to keep them in good condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Continue to maintain a facilities master plan and capital improvements program.</li> <li>ii. Create a single, integrated five-year capital improvement program for all town assets identifying how projects are related to achievement of the town vision and goals.</li> <li>iii. Use a systematic sustainability evaluation and rating process, such as Envision, to evaluate major projects (see Goal 4), and LEED or a comparable sustainability rating system for buildings.</li> <li>iv. As needed and feasible, include community meeting space in improvement projects.</li> <li>v. Renovate Town Hall as planned with a focus on customer service and reduction of duplicative resources (such as record keeping).</li> <li>vi. Continue preventive maintenance and repairs to town facilities, and continue to focus on energy- and resource-efficiency.</li> <li>i. Prepare a feasibility study for school sites.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	FMD	YES	YES
			2023-2028	FMD; DPW; Boards and Commissions	YES	
			2018-2022 and ongoing	Boards and Commissions; FMD; SEC		
			2018-2022	Permanent Building Committee; FMD		
			2018-2022	Permanent Building Committee; FMD	YES	YES
			Ongoing	FMC	YES	YES
2. Wellesley maintains school excellence.	A. Proceed with implementation of the HHU Master Planning committee report as adopted by the School Committee.		2018-2022	School Committee; School Building Committee; BOS; FMD; SEC; PBC	YES	YES

CHAPTER 11: PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAM/IME D?
		2. Based on the results of the feasibility study, proceed to design and construction of the schools.	2018-2022	School Committee; Permanent Building Committee; FMD	YES	
3. Wellesley maintains exceptional WFL services.	A. Continue to use technology to free up WFL staff to better serve town residents. B. Update/renovate the main WFL to meet evolving patron needs (increasing meeting space, common area for community gathering, interactive children's space). C. Adapt the interior of Fells Branch WFL to explicitly meet the needs of families with young children.	i. Install an automated materials handler to improve productivity of circulation staff and allow for staff retraining and reassignment to high value tasks. ii. Based on the results of the feasibility study, proceed to design and renovation of the Main Library.	2018-2019  2019- 2021	FMD; WFL  FMD; WFL; PBC		
4. New schools and other facilities are designed to support additional community goals.	A. Explore the "community schools" concept of partnerships to provide community enrichment spaces, as well as activities outside of school hours. B. Adapt the interior of Fells Branch WFL to explicitly meet the needs of families with young children.	i. Prepare design and proceed to interior renovation. ii. When planning for new schools, study the feasibility of providing community resources. iii. Consider inclusion of community meeting space in new projects for Town Hall, the WFL system, and other improvement projects. iv. Consider making unused school buildings available for other community purposes, temporary or permanent. v. Prepare a report on demand for and availability of community meeting space (private and public) in Wellesley.	2018-2019  2018-2022  2011-2028  2023-2028	Private funds; WFL  School Building Committee; FMD  Permanent Building Committee; FMD  School Committee; BOS	YES     YES	YES     WFL study on community space underway
5. The Town has a system and process to evaluate proposed facility and infrastructure projects for the full range of social, economic, and	A. Adopt a holistic and systematic evaluation and rating system for projects to create a common set of	i. Study and adopt or modify for Wellesley a systematic sustainability rating system, such as Envision, and use it from the beginning of project consideration. ii. Train town staff and board members in how to use the chosen system.	2018-2022  2023-2028	BOS; SEC; FMD; DPW; Town Meeting  Planning Department;		

**CHAPTER 11: PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMME D?
environmental impacts in project design, construction, operation, and cost.  6. Wellesley's stormwater management system incorporates best practices that promote infiltration and improve water quality.	evaluation metrics across town government.	iii. Train town financial staff in the economic tools appropriate for life cycle analysis and evaluation of town facilities projects. i. Implement best practices in stormwater management.	2023-2028	FMD		
	A. Continue to develop and establish stormwater management practices and activities to be in compliance and exceed stormwater regulations originally expected to take effect in July 2017.	ii. Review and amend local regulations to update and clarify requirements.  iii. Locate and cap illegal connections to the drainage system. iv. Study the potential benefits of establishing a stormwater utility to fund stormwater management programs. v. Promote and/or require the use of Low Impact Development (LID) and green infrastructure approaches to stormwater management in public and private development. vi. Adopt a policy requiring the use of LID and green infrastructure in municipal projects.	2018-2022 and ongoing 2018-2022	NRC; DPW; FMD NRC; Planning Board		
	B. Explore the benefits of participating in a regional collaborative for stormwater management and aquifer protection.	vi. Identify impervious areas that can be removed for stormwater benefits, especially near natural resources and recreation areas, and include in project planning. i. Use the relationships created through the DPW benchmark study to discuss the potential benefits of regional collaboration on stormwater management and aquifer protection.	2018-2022	DPW		
	A. Create protocols for use of technology and digital platforms to communicate with residents and others.	ii. Identify impervious areas that can be removed for stormwater benefits, especially near natural resources and recreation areas, and include in project planning.	2023-2028	Permanent Building Committee; FMD; DPW NRC; DPW		
7. The Town of Wellesley has up to date, 21 <sup>st</sup> century technology tools and processes.	A. Review Town policies and bylaws on private streets.	i. Develop systems for timely website posting of board and commission materials and ease of use. ii. Support staff time to keep web materials and digital communications up to date. iii. Develop a robust e-Government system that allows residents and others to easily conduct business with the town online.	2018-2022	BOS; IT		
8. Town policies about the maintenance and acceptance of private streets have been clarified.		i. Amend policies and bylaws to clarify and streamline the petition and acceptance process.	2018-2022	All Boards and Commissions BOS; IT		
		ii. Consider implementation of a betterment system for petitions for public maintenance of private streets.	2023-2028	Planning Board; DPW; BOS; Town Meeting Planning Board; DPW; BOS; Town Meeting	YES	

**CHAPTER 11: PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES, AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMME D?
		iii. Revisit the bylaw and regulations associated with the Review of Adequacy process to ensure consistency with expectations.	2023-2028	Planning Board; DPW; BOS; Town Meeting		

**CHAPTER 12: SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCE, AND GREEN PRACTICES**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?
1. Wellesley will reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with state goals.	A. Promote residential energy efficiency and renewable energy programs and alternatives to town residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Obtain better data on Wellesley GHG emissions, as available, especially for transportation.</li> <li>ii. Develop a yearly campaign coordinated with the SEC, town agencies, Green Collaborative organizations, and other groups, such as PTOs, to raise public awareness and look for new ways to create options for residents and businesses to live more sustainably.</li> <li>iii. Coordinate the campaign with initiatives to promote safe and convenient walking and biking to town destinations and the proposed School Transportation Management Association (see Chapter 10).</li> <li>iv. Implement the recommendations for GHG emissions reduction 2018-2030 in the MLP study to be completed in 2018</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2018-2020</li> <li>2018-2022 and ongoing</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018 and ongoing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEC</li> <li>Led by SEC</li> <li>SEC collaboration with proposed Mobility Committee</li> <li>MLP; SEC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YES</li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YES</li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>
2. The Town of Wellesley implements practices to conserve energy and use renewable energy, and is a model of sustainable facilities and practices.	A. Incorporate energy conservation and renewable energy sources into all existing and new Town facilities to reduce GHG emissions and work towards the maximum feasible and effective renewable electric energy use for town facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Incorporate sustainability and resilience, as appropriate, into the mission of every Town department and committee.</li> <li>ii. Continue and maintain energy-efficient systems in existing Town facilities through the Facilities Management Department.</li> <li>iii. Establish a policy that all town new construction, repairs, and retrofits will aim to incorporate sustainable building criteria into all phases of siting, design, and construction.</li> <li>iv. Use a sustainability rating system to evaluate proposed town projects (see Chapter 11).</li> <li>v. Prepare a report on the path to achieving 100% renewable energy for electricity, including costs and benefits of all kinds (not only rates).</li> <li>vi. Make a commitment to sustainability, energy efficiency and renewable energy part of the MLP mission statement.</li> <li>vii. Explore developing a program that provides increasing amounts of renewable energy by default to customers of the MLP.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2020 and ongoing</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2022</li> <li>2018-2030</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEC; boards, commissions, and departments</li> <li>FMD</li> <li>BOS; SEC; FMD</li> <li>SEC; FMD; DPW; possibly through a bylaw</li> <li>SEC; MLP</li> <li>MLP</li> <li>MLP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li>YES</li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li>YES</li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>

**CHAPTER 12: SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCE, AND GREEN PRACTICES**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?
		viii. Develop an information program and vote for Annual Town Meeting to extend GHG reduction goals to 2030 and 2050 consistent with state goals.	2021-2022	SEC		
	B. Expand the number of electric-vehicle (EV) charging stations in Wellesley.	i. Continue to require EV charging stations in large commercial projects and multifamily developments. ii. Establish EV charging stations in Town-owned parking areas.	Ongoing	Planning Board	YES	YES
	C. Promote and incentivize “green” and sustainable building practices in the private sector.	i. Incorporate sustainable practices in a systematic way into the Town’s development standards and requirements for private development (see Chapter 13). ii. Develop an annual award for most sustainable building project, including retrofits. iii. Develop a program to facilitate recycling of construction and demolition waste.	2018-2022	BOS		
3. The Town of Wellesley promotes and implements conservation, waste reduction, and elimination of toxic products.	A. Adopt policies to minimize adverse impacts of toxic products on the environment in Town operations and purchases.	i. Develop a set of environmental factors to be considered in procurement such as: durable, reusable, or recyclable; non-toxic or least toxic; energy-efficient; minimum packaging; and so on.	2018-2022	Planning Board; DRB; NRC; SEC	YES	
		ii. Continue organic Integrated Pest Management practices on all Town properties.	Ongoing	DFW-RDF		YES
		iii. Continue recycling programs through the RDF and the Waste-Wise Wellesley program.	Ongoing	BOS; SEC		
4. Wellesley is preparing for the impacts of extreme weather events and climate change.	B. Raise public awareness and promote private landscape practices that are pesticide-free, avoid excess fertilizer runoff, avoid the use of invasive ornamental plants, and promote infiltration of stormwater.	iv. Provide recycling bins in public places, such as the commercial villages.	2018-2022	BOS; NRC; School Committee	YES	YES
		i. Expand the NRC’s eco-landscaping program.	Ongoing	DPW-RDF; SEC	YES	YES
		ii. Develop resources on environmentally friendly landscaping practices that can be used by residents, developers, maintenance contractors..	2018-2022	DPW		
	A. Take advantage of state and regional programs to prepare for climate change.	iii. Raise public awareness about the benefits of permeable pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, lawn buffers at stream and pond shores, and other beneficial green infrastructure best practices for stormwater management.	2018-2028	NRC		
		iv. Work with contractors and landscape companies to promote environmentally-sensitive landscape practices for “high performance” landscapes.	2023-2028	DPW		
		i. Become a state-certified “Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Community.”	2018-2022	NRC		
		ii. Continue participation in the MetroWest Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Ongoing	BOS; SEC		

**CHAPTER 12: SUSTAINABILITY, RESILIENCE, AND GREEN PRACTICES**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?
		iii. Raise public awareness about climate change issues and vulnerable populations.	2023-2028 and ongoing	NRC; BOH; Council on Aging; Fire Department; SEC		
5. Wellesley is a Massachusetts "Green Community."	A. Identify priority projects for sustainability.	i. Apply for grants to finance energy efficient improvements such as electric vehicles and charging stations, and additional building energy programs.	2018-2022	BOS; SEC		

**CHAPTER 13: LAND USE, ZONING, AND URBAN DESIGN**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?
1. General principles guide land use decision making.	A. Create an ongoing design, regulatory, marketing, and information strategy to educate stakeholders on land use issues.	i. Adopt general land use principles and standards and required findings in the Zoning Bylaw to guide decision making that will help achieve the vision and goals of the Unified Plan. ii. Create a brochure, checklists, and similar materials to inform residents, property owners, developers, and others about the land use principles, regulatory system, and permitting process in Wellesley.	2018-2020 2022-26	Planning Board; Town Meeting Planning Board		
2. Town zoning regulations, development standards, and design guidelines advance the achievement of community goals and quality of life.	A. Make a commitment to rewrite the Zoning Bylaw as a hybrid zoning instrument that is user-friendly, clear, and precise.  B. Make adjustments to zoning to communicate goals, policy and design standards, clarify language, and provide flexibility.	i. Prepare an assessment and analysis of the current bylaw. ii. Develop a hybrid zoning bylaw that includes conventional zoning where continuity is desired and appropriate, and incorporate form-based zoning for mixed-use and non-residential areas. iii. Draft the text to reflect policies and procedures (existing or new) and revise through work with the Planning Board and the public. iv. Approve regulations and make needed changes to the zoning map. i. Eliminate the cumulative zoning system from the bylaw. ii. Study the economic feasibility of cottage developments and then create suitable zoning to allow such development. iii. In the General Residence district, allow a special permit option for cottage and multifamily developments that meet Town design standards and goals for housing. iv. Study and rezone the Cedar Street/Route 9 development area to allow for office, commercial, mixed-use, multi-family and/or mixed-income development at higher density. v. Clarify the zoning language for mixed-use development in commercial districts to provide consistent development standards. vi. Amend zoning in commercial districts to ensure	2018-2019 2019-2020 2020-2021 2021-2011 2018-2022 2018-2022 2018-2022	Planning Board Planning Board Planning Board Planning Board; Town Meeting Planning Board Planning Board Planning Board Planning Board Planning Board	YES YES YES YES	

CHAPTER 13: LAND USE, ZONING, AND URBAN DESIGN						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?
		redevelopment would preserve and enhance the desired walkable character of village commercial development.				
		vii. Rezone office, business, and industrial districts in the eastern part of Wellesley near I-95 (for example, Walnut Street and the office parks) to provide more development capacity and mixed-use potential.	2018-2022	Planning Board		
		viii. Clarify regulatory requirements and design standards so that permitting for desired projects can be streamlined.	2018-2022	Planning Board		
	C. Incorporate the expertise of the Design Review Board in the development of municipal projects and earlier into proposed public projects.	i. Include the Design Review Board in development design standards for the new zoning bylaw. ii. Use the expertise of the DRB when developing proposals for public buildings.	2018-2022	Planning Board; DRB	YES	
		iii. Develop a report on design guidelines for desired mixed-use areas.	Ongoing	Permanent Building Committee; DRB	YES	
		iv. Update the Design Review bylaw and the 1989 Design Review handbook.	2021	Planning Department; DRB		
	D. Improve the permitting and enforcement process.	i. Review the permitting process to identify opportunities for additional clarity and streamlining, and make improvements where warranted. ii. Research complaints about lack of zoning enforcement, identify any issues that need resolution, and implement solutions.	2018	Planning Department; DRB	YES	Underway
			2018-2022	BOS; Planning Department; Building Department		
			2018-2022	BOS; Planning Department; Building Department		

CHAPTER 14: TOWN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC CONCEPTS						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?
1. The Unified Plan is incorporated in decision making at multiple levels.	A. Use the Unified Plan annually in preparing and approving departmental work plans, operational budgets, and capital improvement plans.	i. Develop a user-friendly system or checklist for boards, commission, and departments to use to compare proposals with the goals of the Unified Plan. ii. Identify Unified Plan-related actions on agendas of boards, commissions, and committees. iii. Publicize actions and activities that implement the Unified Plan iv. Establish a system to promote inter-board communication, discussion, and collaboration.	2018-2022	BOS; Planning Board	YES	
			2018 and ongoing	All public entities		
			2018 and ongoing	BOS; all other entities		
			2018 and ongoing	BOS; Executive boards and commissions		

CHAPTER 14: TOWN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC CONCEPTS						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?
2. Wellesley has a strategy-driven town government.	<p>A. Through a bylaw for Annual Town Meeting 2019, require town government bodies to align their activities to achieve the town vision and goals in the Unified Plan.</p> <p>B. Through a bylaw for 2019 Annual Town Meeting, require town boards, commissions, and departments with budgets over \$100,000 to establish strategic plans in a standardized format that are aligned with the Unified Plan, over a rolling implementation period.</p> <p>C. Support a culture of strategic planning in town government.</p> <p>D. Use data to drive decision-making in town government and to measure progress in meeting goals—both overall town government goals as well as any applicable department, board, or commission long-term goals.</p>	<p>i. Require that departments, boards, and commissions refer to the Unified Plan in their capital and operating budget requests.</p> <p>ii. Establish a process for board and commission members and Town staff to review the Town government mission and goals every five years.</p>	<p>FY 2020 and ongoing</p> <p>Starting 2022 and ongoing</p>	<p>Town Meeting; boards, commissions, departments</p> <p>BOS; all public entities</p>	<p>YES</p>	
		<p>i. Gradually phase in a strategic planning requirement for selected Wellesley Town Government departments, boards, and commissions, over a three- to five-year period.</p> <p>ii. Set a standard format for strategic plans for departments, boards, and commissions.</p> <p>iii. Provide guidance and reference materials to departments to assist in preparing strategic plans.</p> <p>iv. Require that strategic plans (for those required to have them) be submitted with budget requests.</p> <p>v. Post strategic plans on the town web site.</p>	<p>2020 – 2025</p> <p>2019</p> <p>2019 and ongoing</p> <p>2020 and ongoing</p> <p>2018 and ongoing</p>	<p>Town Meeting</p> <p>BOS</p> <p>BOS</p> <p>BOS</p> <p>BOS; IT</p>	<p>YES</p>	
		<p>i. Create and deliver training on town government and strategic planning to all leaders of departments, boards, commissions, and invite mid-level and senior executives to attend as well.</p> <p>ii. Hold a peer learning session.</p>	<p>2019 and ongoing</p> <p>2019 and ongoing</p>	<p>BOS in collaboration with other entities</p> <p>BOS to convene boards and commissions; Departmental ad hoc group to organize their own.</p>		
		<p>i. Require leaders of departments, boards, and commissions to develop quantifiable long-term goals and to establish indicators to track progress toward those goals, as well as annual targets for their progress.</p> <p>ii. Designate one staff person to manage data collection and publication.</p> <p>iii. Publish results on meeting goals annually, at a minimum, on the town website, in a coordinated format and fashion across all departments.</p> <p>iv. Create an online “open data” section of the town website that publishes town data that underlies the goals and measurable indicators.</p>	<p>2020 and ongoing</p> <p>2023-2028</p> <p>2025 and ongoing</p> <p>2025-2028</p>	<p>Bylaw requirement</p> <p>BOS</p> <p>BOS</p> <p>BOS; IT; data staff</p>	<p>YES</p>	

CHAPTER 14: TOWN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC CONCEPTS						
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?
3. Wellesley is a customer-centric town government.	E. Foster an increased culture of data-driven government.  A. Design Town processes around customer needs.	v. Use the data results in budget discussions to identify where additional resources are needed to achieve desired outcomes.	2020 and ongoing	BOS; Advisory Committee; all entities		
		i. Provide training to volunteers and employees to improve their data literacy.	2023-2028	BOS; IT		
		ii. Standardize data analysis and data visualization tools across town government to reduce costs and increase skill building and community of practice.	2025-2028	BOS; IT		
		iii. Expand the Town's online publication of data, by working towards creating an open data portal.	2023-2028	BOS; IT		
		i. Develop an e-Government strategy to streamline and simplify government transactions.	2023-2028	BOS in collaboration with other entities	YES	
		ii. Make it a high priority to put user-friendly information on town finances and projects online.	2018-2022	BOS; IT	YES	
		iii. Make the backend processes of town government invisible to the customer.	2019-2022	BOS		
		iv. Enable personalization across all electronic transactions on the town website.	2018-2022	BOS; IT	YES	Underway with new website
		v. Provide clear information in a way that addresses customer needs, not government organizational silos, and with a common look and feel, across departments, boards, and commissions.	2018-2028	All entities		
		vi. Identify a staff person to serve as a public information officer for the town to be responsible for consistency, accuracy, and timeliness of information on the town website.	2020	BOS		
		vii. Collect public feedback to continue to make the town website more customer-centric as the new website is refined.	2018-2020	BOS; IT		
viii. Create a roadmap for additional information not currently on the town website that will be shared with the public.	2018-2022	BOS; IT				
ix. Create the capacity to develop infographics for presenting data or complex concepts to the public and train town staff to develop infographics for public consumption.	2020-2025	BOS; IT; relevant departments				
x. Make town hall easier to navigate for first-time visitors.	2018-2022	BOS; Town Clerk				
xi. Provide information for those new to town in a way that is easy to understand and welcoming, such as in a new resident toolkit, both digital and as a printed brochure.	2018-2022	BOS; IT; Town Clerk				
B. Improve the customer experience of government transactions by fostering a culture of customer	i. Identify a town employee to be responsible for customer service culture among town employees.	2018-2022	BOS			
	ii. Develop customer service training for town employees, roll it out gradually to existing employees, and incorporate it into standard training for new hires.	2018 and ongoing	BOS; Human Resources			

CHAPTER 14: TOWN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC CONCEPTS								
GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?		
4. Wellesley has an operationally efficient town government.	service among town employees.	iii. Empower town employees to use their own problem-solving skills to meet customer service request.	2018 and ongoing	BOS; Executive Director; all town entities				
		iv. Reward town employees and organizations delivering outstanding customer service.	2018 and ongoing	HR; all boards, commissions, departments				
	C. Establish town-wide customer service metrics.	i. Create a vision for customer service excellence across all of town government.	2018-2020	BOS; all entities				
		ii. Conduct an annual employee satisfaction survey	2022 and ongoing	HR; BOS; all entities with staff				
		iii. Consider gathering customer input via social media and other electronic civic engagement platforms.	2023-2028	BOS; HR				
		iv. Develop a standard format for gathering customer feedback.	2023-2028	BOS; HR				
	A. Optimize the use of technology for town employees' daily work.	B. Evaluate shared services for administrative functions.	i. Develop an IT strategic plan to bring all departments to a common standard of excellence in the use of technology.	2020-2026	BOS; IT			
			ii. Create electronic workflows for key town processes, with visibility to each step in the process for involved town staff.	2020-2026	BOS; IT			
			i. Study the feasibility and possible cost savings for consolidation of administrative functions such as IT< HR, procurement, and finance across departments.	2023-2028	BOS with other entities			
			i. Review success cases for Budgeting for Outcomes and determine if all or some aspects of the approach are appropriate for Wellesley.	2020-2024	BOS with other entities			
			ii. Create a budgeting system that is consistent across boards, commissions, and departments.	2018-2020	BOS; Executive Director	YES	UNDERWAY	
			i. Designate a town employee with financial skills to be responsible for benchmarking studies.	2023-2028	BOS; Executive Director			
			E. Ensure a continued presence of high quality volunteers.	i. Create a small volunteer committee to work with the support of one staff person to focus on growing the field of volunteers and future leaders.	2020-2028	Town Clerk; BOS		
				ii. Pursue a variety of methods to attract volunteers.	2022 and ongoing	Town Clerk; League of Women Voters; all boards and commissions		
				iii. Use the town website to advertise the satisfactions and benefits volunteers receive from civic engagement.	2020 and ongoing	Town Clerk; BOS; IT		
				iv. Leverage online tools to create a community of interest among the public, as a pipeline to future volunteers.	2020 and ongoing	Town Clerk; identify a small		

**CHAPTER 14: TOWN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC CONCEPTS**

GOALS	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS	WHEN	WHO	A HIGH PRIORITY?	PROGRAMMED?
				group of volunteers will to be moderators of an online community		



# *Appendix A*

PREPARED FOR THE TOWN OF WELLESLEY  
BY THE METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

# Wellesley Health and Wellness Element

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# Wellesley Health and Wellness Element

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Prepared for the Town of Wellesley

by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council

*February 2018*

# Key Takeaways

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According to data on hospitalizations, health behaviors, and other key indicators of health status in Wellesley, MA the town is generally healthier than other towns in the Commonwealth across nearly all health indicators. Wellesley also tends to be healthier than other towns in Norfolk and Middlesex Counties, and even outperforms comparison communities on certain key indicators including aging and mortality. The town did not perform statistically significantly worse than the State on *any* indicators. An important caveat to this is that these data do not take into account the distribution of various health risks and conditions in Wellesley, and therefore do not identify any populations that are disproportionately burdened by poor health, harmful exposures, or social barriers.

The **major trends** that identified include:

- Increasing rates of stress and mental health issues, particularly amongst youth aged between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- A 10-15% increase in the proportion of 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders reporting > 60 minutes of exercise 5 or more days per week
- A more equal income distribution (i.e. greater income inequality) in Wellesley from 2005-2009 to 2010-2014 according to the Gini Index. This indicator does not describe *why* this might be occurring and must be interpreted with caution.

Although Wellesley tends to be healthier than its state and surrounding counties, there several public health and wellness areas that can be improved. These priorities and associated populations are:

PRIORITY	POPULATION(S)
1. Social Isolation	All; Population $\geq$ 60; low income residents; mothers and caretakers
2. Stress & Mental Health	All; 7 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade youth
3. Traffic Safety & Walkability	All; 6 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade youth
4. Environmental Health <i>Near roadway pollution; gas leaks</i>	All; Residents living within 500 feet of major road (i.e., road with volumes greater than 30,000 vehicles per day)
5. Climate Change Preparedness	All
6. Health Disparities	Low and fixed income residents

# Section I. Introduction

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## Purpose

The purpose of the Unified Plan’s Public Health element is to understand the current and future health needs of the town and match those, where appropriate, with how natural, built, and social environments are contributing to the health of town residents in order to create the necessary change(s) to promote health.

Independently, the Public Health element is concerned with understanding current health conditions and behaviors, risks and opportunities presented by community barriers and assets, and the potential to promote healthier outcomes through healthy community design strategies and services. The element also considers how certain populations in town may experience disproportionate impact due to factors such as geography, ethnicity, income, age, or other characteristics.

The Public Health element also informs and connects with other elements of the Unified Plan (Figure 1). It presents new data or different perspectives on how current conditions in other elements, such as those addressing housing, mobility, and open space and recreation, can contribute to healthier outcomes for residents. Furthermore, the Public Health element provides evidence-based and –informed strategies that should inform policies, projects, and decisions regarding future implementation of the Master Plan. And lastly, the element integrates the perspective of local public health by including the Health Department in the planning process and future decisions around community change.

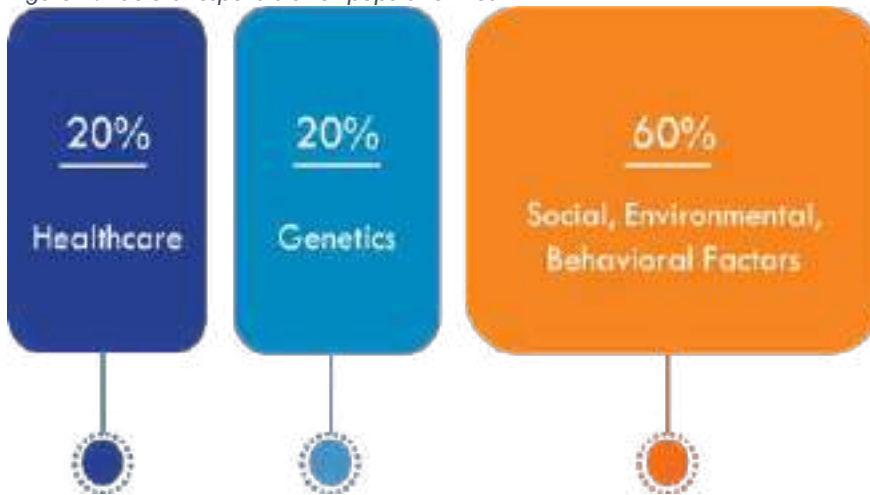
Figure 1. Public Health Element: Independent and Integrated



## Public Health Relationship to Planning and the Built Environment

More and more evidence shows that how we plan and build communities affects the health and wellness of residents. Although these figures are not exact, collective research focused on the history of the causes of disease suggests that roughly 60% of our health is determined by social, environmental, and behavioral factors shaped by the context in which we live (Figure 2).<sup>1</sup>

Figure 2. Factors responsible for population health



Source: Lauren Taylor, American Health Paradox

The relationship is reinforced by data on the health issues and leading causes of death in the United States. The country is experiencing increasing levels of chronic diseases like obesity and diabetes and more and more people are dying from preventable diseases like heart disease, strokes, and lower respiratory diseases<sup>2</sup>. Yet, it is known that these issues are preventable because they are the result of behaviors, choices, and influences dictated predominantly by one's environment.

Understanding the connection is important: it provides impetus for developing communities that provide more opportunities for healthy living. Planning plays a key role in engaging community members in developing a vision for the future, setting the conditions for what and where changes will occur, and ultimately creating places which protect and promote health.

### Policy, Systems, and Environmental Changes

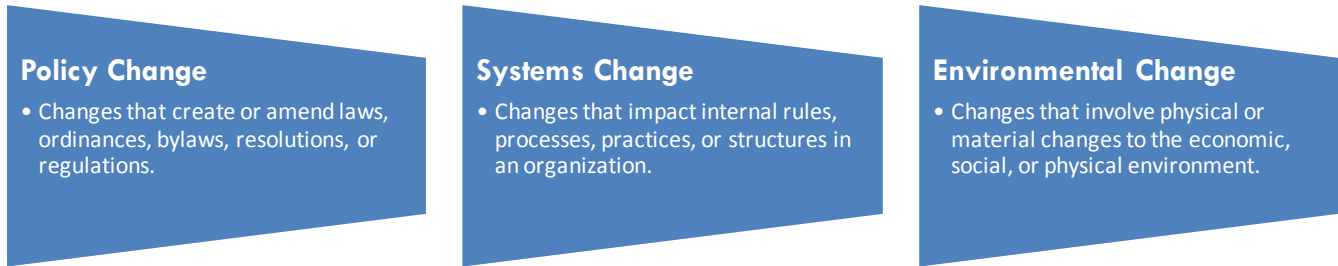
Public health has often defaulted to trying to intervene with or treat the individual. Approaches that addressed the individual, like personalized walking programs or diets, have had, and continue to have, beneficial effects. Individuals are provided with a guide to healthier choices that they may not have thought of or experienced. While this approach has had effects, it has not been enough to reduce the increase in chronic disease at a community or population level; it has also tended to require significant resources, like those needed to keep or expand programs.

More recently, public health has begun to adopt a policies, systems, and environmental (PSE) change framework as a parallel intervention (Figure 3).

<sup>1</sup> McGinnis, J. M., Williams-Russo, P., & Knickman, J. R. (2002). The case for more active policy attention to health promotion. *Health Affairs*, 21(2), 78-93.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Deaths: Final Data for 2013, Table 10*

Figure 3. Policy, Systems, Environmental (PSE) change frame

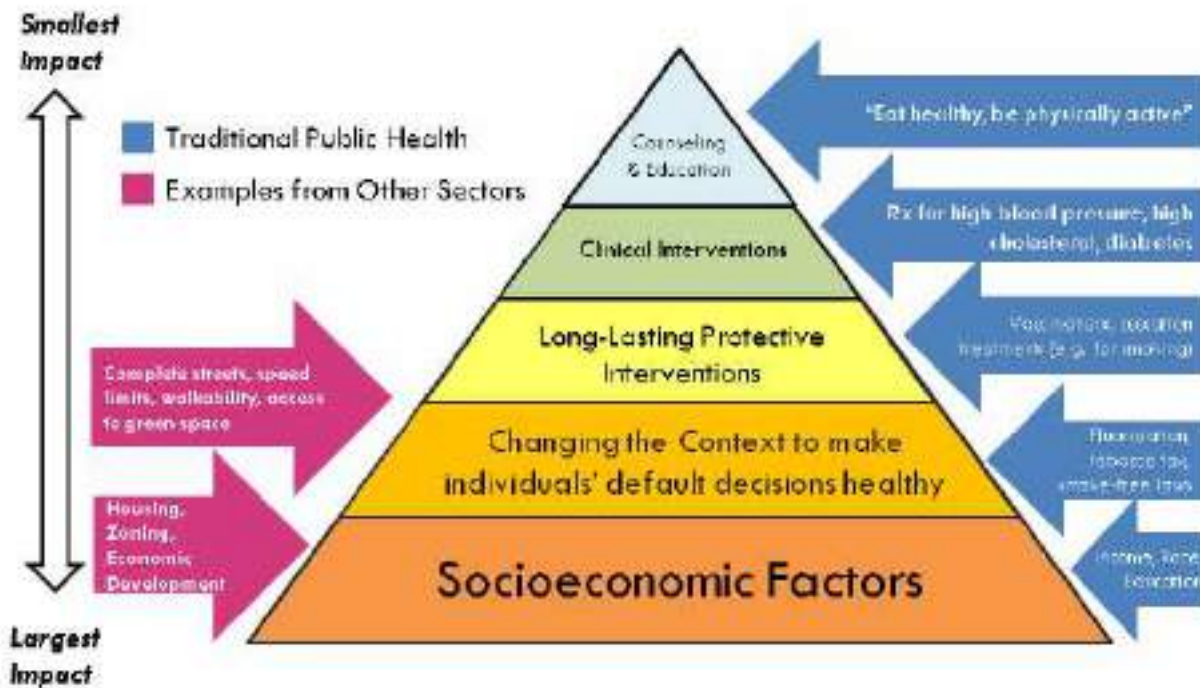


Source: Adapted from The National Association of County and City Health Officials definition of PSE Changes

The PSE framework reflects key public health interventions such as smoke free workplaces that work at a population level (Figure 4). It is based on Public Health Pyramid concept and how like public health interventions, PSE interventions with and in other municipal departments can address issues across larger groups of people.

Figure 4. Health Impact Pyramid – Public Health and non-Public Health Interventions

## CDC Health Impact Pyramid



Source: Adapted from Frieden, Framework for Public Health Action: The Health Impact Pyramid.

The Public Health Master Plan element uses the PSE framework to look at conditions in Wellesley. It also considers how individual and program approaches play a role in the town. Using both approaches, the Public Health element aims to address challenges and opportunities most effectively.

## Community Health System

Public health in Massachusetts has its foundation in local boards of health. The Wellesley Board of Health and Health Department oversee the town's responsibilities related to implementation of disease prevention programs and promulgation and enforcement of Health Department, Town and State regulations. The board and department also perform other activities including health promotion, community health and nursing services, public outreach, and education and empowerment. Examples of this work are:

- The Healthy Wellesley initiative that offers programming to promote physical activity, protection from insects like ticks, and healthy eating
- Keep Well clinics that offer services for checking blood pressure, use of prescriptions, and emergency preparedness
- Mental health resources for parents and children

The health department organizes the Wellesley Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) as part of emergency preparedness services. Comprised of volunteers, the MRC is trained to supplement local safety officials in their response and help the town and its residents respond to emergencies, especially in regard to public health issues like first aid and infectious diseases.

At a regional level, the town is part of the Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition (HMCC) 4AB. The coalition is responsible for integrated planning and capacity-building for emergency preparedness and includes acute care hospitals, community health centers and large ambulatory care organizations, emergency medical services, local public health, and long term care.

In addition to local and regional public health services, the community health system in Wellesley includes the Newton-Wellesley Hospital. The hospital's proximity makes the site an asset for clinical preventative health services and provision of emergency and acute care. The town is also part of the hospital's primary service area, which makes the town part of the regular three-year health needs assessment conducted by the hospital and eligible for community benefits resources that hospitals provide.

Lastly, Wellesley is part of Community Health Network Area (CHNA) 18. The CHNA is a coalition of community based and non-profit and for profit organizations who collaborate around community-based prevention planning and health promotion. CHNA 18 organizes regular meetings among partners, provides trainings and public health information, and offers grants for local health departments and private organizations to initiate new work and replicate successful programs in the area.

## Stakeholder Engagement

The Health and Wellness Element involved meetings of a health-specific working group, facilitation of a stand-alone workshop on public health and planning, and participation in regular meetings of the Steering Committee and general workshops. Through these engagements, working group members and other participants shared insights and information about past and current opportunities and challenges in the town as well as highlighted areas for improvements. The information presented and recommendations included reflect guidance and input provided by residents and stakeholders engaged in the process.

## Decision-Making Role and Framework

The Public Health element presents a holistic framework for considering the conditions that influence the health of Wellesley residents. It is recommended that local leaders, municipal staff, residents, and other stakeholders spend the time to explore this element and consider its relevance to short-and long-term decision making for changes in the town.

The Health and Wellness element recognizes that reviewing the entirety of what is included may take more time or introduce new concepts, each of which may not easily fit into short decision-making cycles that are often part of the municipal processes. To this end, a checklist is attached to the end of the document to assist in municipal decision making for proposed changes to the built environment. Decision-makers and residents can use the checklist to assess proposals quickly and have an informed discussion about how to promote potential positive health outcomes and mitigate potential health risks for implementation of the Unified Plan.

## Wellesley at a Glance

### Demographic Indicators

Income, race, and education are among the most important predictors of lifelong health<sup>3</sup>. From this perspective, Wellesley, which is an affluent, largely white, and highly educated community, is well set up to be a healthy town.

Table 1. Wellesley Demographics

	POPULATION <sup>‡</sup>	WHITE <sup>‡</sup>	ASIAN <sup>‡</sup>	BLACK <sup>‡</sup>	OTHER	% TWO OR MORE <sup>‡</sup>	MEDIAN HH INCOME <sup>‡</sup>	% IN POVERTY <sup>‡</sup>
WELLESLEY	27,982	85.1%	9.8%	2.0%	1.0%	3.1%	\$159,615	3.5%
STATE	6,547,629	80.4%	5.3%	6.6%	5.1%	2.6%	\$67,846	11.6%

Source:‡ Census, 2010.; ‡ ACS 5 year estimates, 2010-2014.

Although the proportion of white residents is similar to the State rate, Wellesley is much wealthier and more educated than the overall State rate as is shown in the table above. Based on this, all statistics for the Town will be compared to the following six municipalities, Norfolk County, Middlesex County, and the State where data are available. Note that for all comparisons that involve statistical significance, Wellesley will be statistically compared to the County or State but will be presented alongside data from the comparison communities.

Lexington  
Natick  
Needham

Wayland  
Weston  
Winchester

These six were chosen based on their similar demographic characteristics, geographic proximity to Wellesley, and designation as “maturing suburbs” according to the MAPC community types.<sup>4</sup> Compared to the median of these seven communities, Wellesley is slightly wealthier and more racially diverse and at the median in terms of total population, total Asian population, and the percent of residents that are in poverty. These data are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Wellesley Comparison to Similar Towns

	LEXINGTON	NATICK	NEEDHAM	WAYLAND	WELLESLEY	WESTON	WINCHESTER	MEDIAN
POPULATION <sup>‡</sup>	31,394	33,006	28,886	12,994	<b>27,982</b>	11,261	21,374	27,982
WHITE <sup>‡</sup>	75.5%	87.3%	90.8%	87.2%	<b>85.1%</b>	85.3%	87.10%	87.1%
ASIAN <sup>‡</sup>	19.9%	7.2%	6.1%	9.9%	<b>9.8%</b>	9.9%	9.3%	9.8%
BLACK <sup>‡</sup>	1.5%	2.1%	1.0%	0.9%	<b>2.0%</b>	2.0%	1.0%	1.5%
OTHER	0.8%	1.4%	0.5%	0.4%	<b>1.0%</b>	0.8%	0.6%	0.8%

<sup>3</sup> Berkman, Lisa F., Ichiro Kawachi, and M. Maria Glymour, eds. Social epidemiology. Oxford University Press, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix X for MAPC Community Type Descriptions

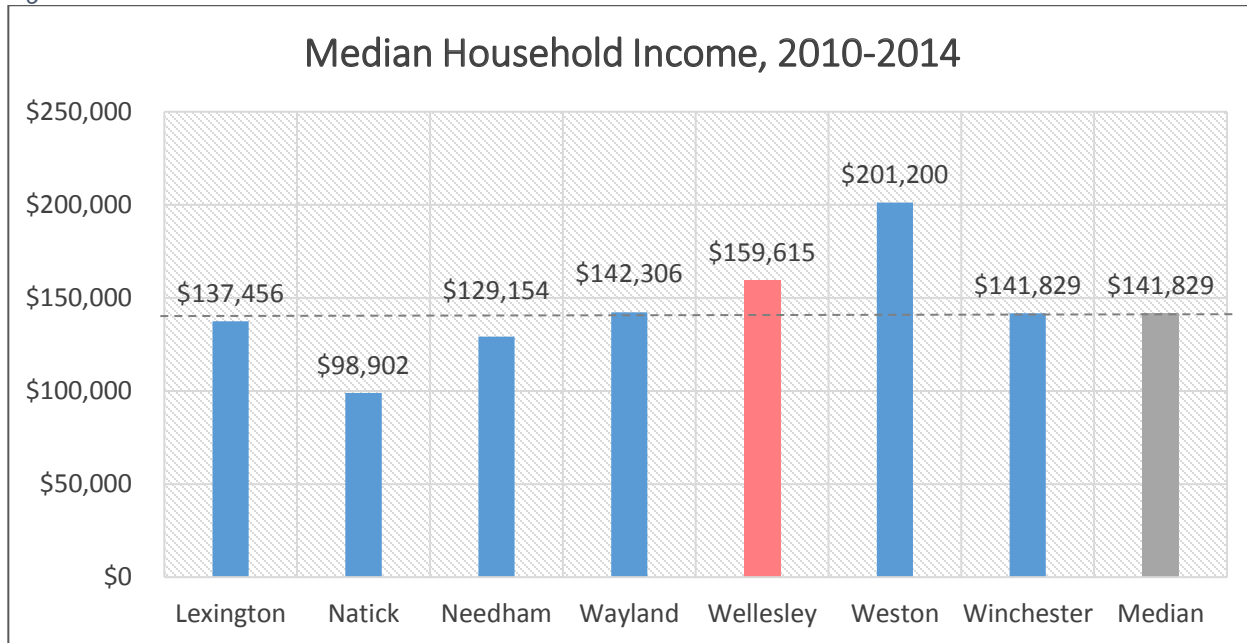
	LEXINGTON	NATICK	NEEDHAM	WAYLAND	WELLESLEY	WESTON	WINCHESTER	MEDIAN
% TWO OR MORE <sup>†</sup>	2.6%	2.0%	1.6%	1.6%	3.1%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
MEDIAN HH INCOME <sup>‡</sup>	\$137,456	\$98,902	\$129,154	\$142,306	\$159,615	\$201,200	\$141,829	\$141,829
% IN POVERTY <sup>‡</sup>	4.4%	4.0%	3.2%	4.3%	3.5%	2.9%	3.0%	3.5%

Source: † Census, 2010.; ‡ ACS 5 year estimates, 2010-2014.

■ = above the median; ■ = below the median; ■ = at the median

Although it is depicted above, median household income is included in a figure below to clearly distinguish between Wellesley and the surrounding communities. As this shows, Wellesley's median household income as approximated by ACS 5 year estimates from 2010-2014 shows it slightly above the median for the comparison towns (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Median Household Income

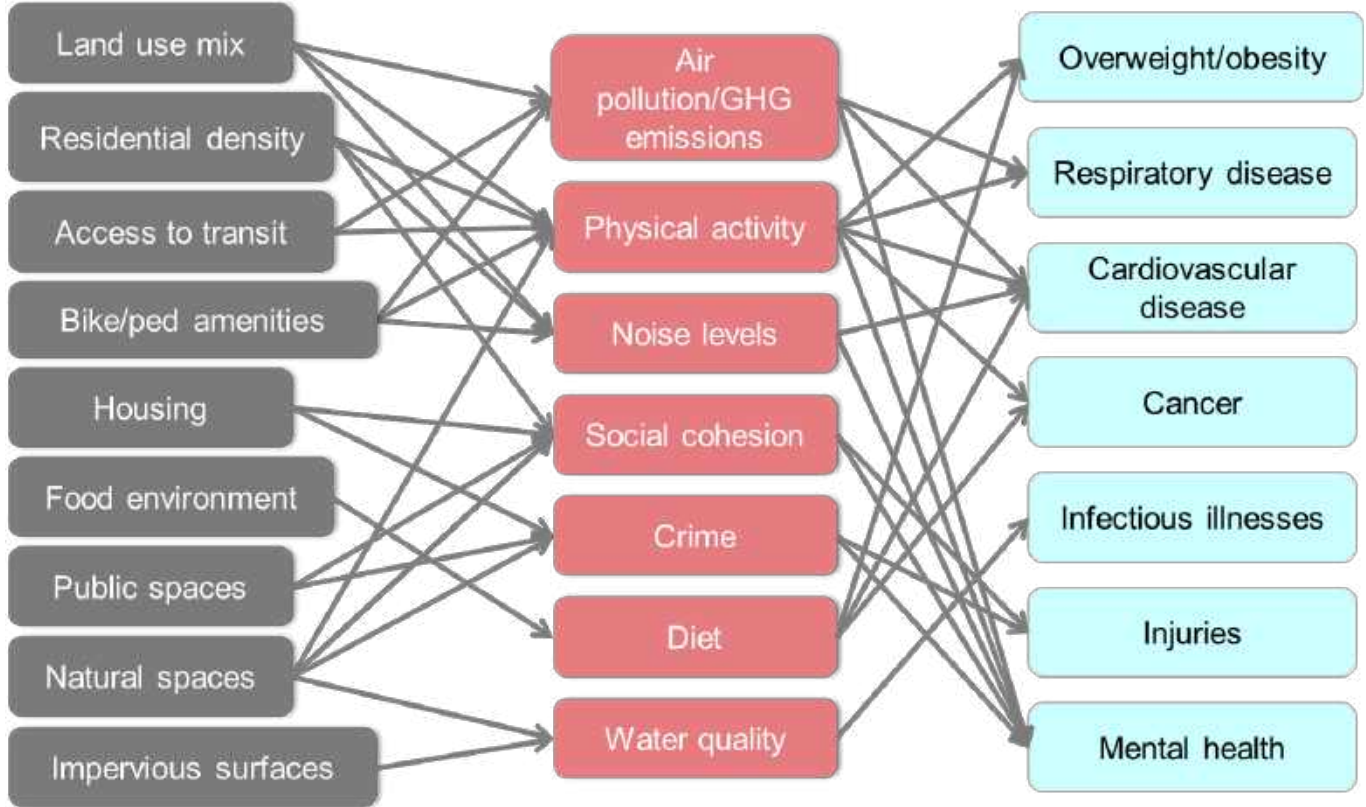


Source: ACS 5 year estimates, 2010-2014.

### Mortality

Premature mortality measures the proportion of residents that die before average life expectancy would predict. Looking at this indicator allows us to estimate in very basic and crude terms whether Wellesley residents are passing away at disproportionately young ages, or vice versa. The data presented below

Figure 7. Pathway Diagram: Planning Decisions Potential Health Impacts



Source: Rachel Banay, PhD candidate in Environmental Health, Harvard School of Public Health. 2014

## Understanding health data

### How the numbers are generated

Due to the way that health data are collected, all data for Wellesley are *estimates* generated based on larger collections of data housed at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Here is how the numbers for each type of data are generated:




- Hospitalizations. These data are based on the place of residence listed on hospital discharge forms. Unless otherwise noted, all hospitalizations are age adjusted rates of hospital discharges per 10,000 people. The reason data are adjusted for age is that older people tend to get sick more than those who are younger, and therefore populations with greater proportions of older residents may look artificially less healthy than others. These data are therefore “adjusted” for age to ensure that populations with differing age distributions can be meaningfully compared to each other.
- Disease prevalence and Health Behavior. These data are statistical estimates calculated by MDPH based on the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey. In order to provide data for more Massachusetts communities, MDPH includes town level estimates that may be based on relatively few respondents or have standard errors that are larger than average. The confidence interval for some of these communities is therefore wider than the normal limits set by MDPH. Therefore, the estimate for this town should be interpreted with caution.

- Youth Data. All data on Wellesley youth are based on the [Metrowest Adolescent Health Survey](#), administered to middle and high school students every other year.
- Aging Population Data. All data for populations over 60 are derived from the [Massachusetts Health Aging Collaborative Community Profiles](#). More information on the methodology can be found [here](#).

### How to interpret the numbers

All quantitative health data presented is based on *estimates* and should therefore be interpreted as such. These data, as is true for any qualitative data included in this report, should be used to guide and prioritize recommendations and Town decisions.

### Statistical significance

-  = statistically significantly better
-  = statistically significantly worse
-  = no statistical difference

Unless otherwise specified, all interpretations about whether or not the Town is performing better, worse, or no differently than the state or county average are based on statistical significance. Statistical significance in this report is based on 95% confidence intervals<sup>7</sup>. This approach is used because the Town numbers represented below are the midpoint of a statistically-derived range estimated derived from larger geographies.

<sup>7</sup><https://www.cdc.gov/ophss/csels/dsepd/ss1978/leson2/section7.html>

# Section II. Health Profile

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## Summary of Health Priorities in Wellesley

Overall health data suggest that Wellesley is a very healthy community with statistically significantly lower rates of hospitalizations, poor health behaviors, and prevalence of health conditions nearly across nearly all conditions when compared to the rates at the county or State level.

### Priorities based on Health Measures for Wellesley Residents

Several health issues emerged as health priorities based primarily on qualitative data from stakeholder feedback from steering committee members and Wellesley-Newton Hospital's 2014 community health needs assessment.

PRIORITY	POPULATION
Social Isolation	All; Population $\geq 60$ ; mothers and caretakers
Stress and Mental Health	All; Youth, 9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade

### Priorities based on Built and Social Environment Risk Factors for Wellesley Residents

The analysis on community risk factors is currently underway as it requires data from the remainder of the Unified Plan that is under development, but one public health risk priority was identified based on local pollution data.

PRIORITY	POPULATION
Ultrafine Particulate (UFP) Matter Pollution	Population living within 500 feet of Route 9 and 95

## Detailed Summary

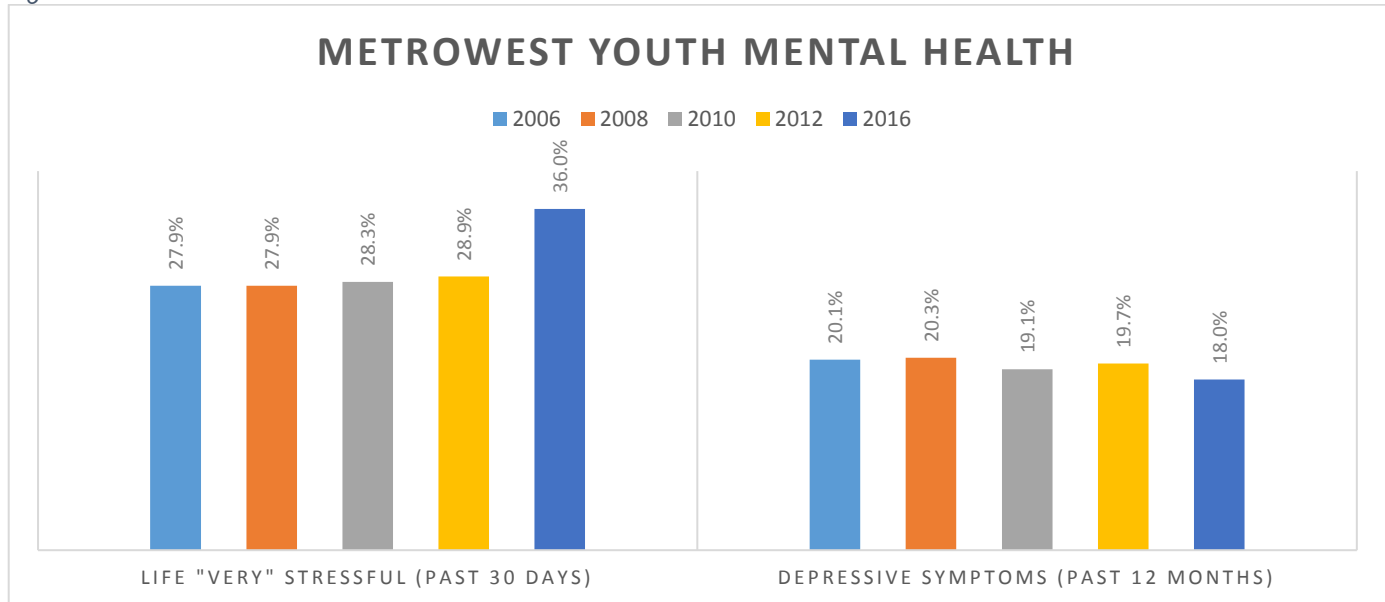
### Social Isolation

This indicator was identified as a preliminary priority based primarily on stakeholder feedback from Steering Committee members.

### Stress and Mental Health

According to data from the Metrowest Adolescent Health Study, youth in the region have been becoming increasingly stressed and depressed from 2006 to 2014 (Figure 8). These data have been reinforced from Steering Committee and other stakeholder feedback thus far in the Unified Planning process.

Figure 8. Youth Mental Health



Source: Metrowest Adolescent Survey, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014

### Ultrafine Particulate Matter (UFP)

Certain pollutants emitted from vehicles impact local air quality, while others from vehicle exhaust or other sources, such as fine particulate matter or ozone, impact air quality across a larger scale.

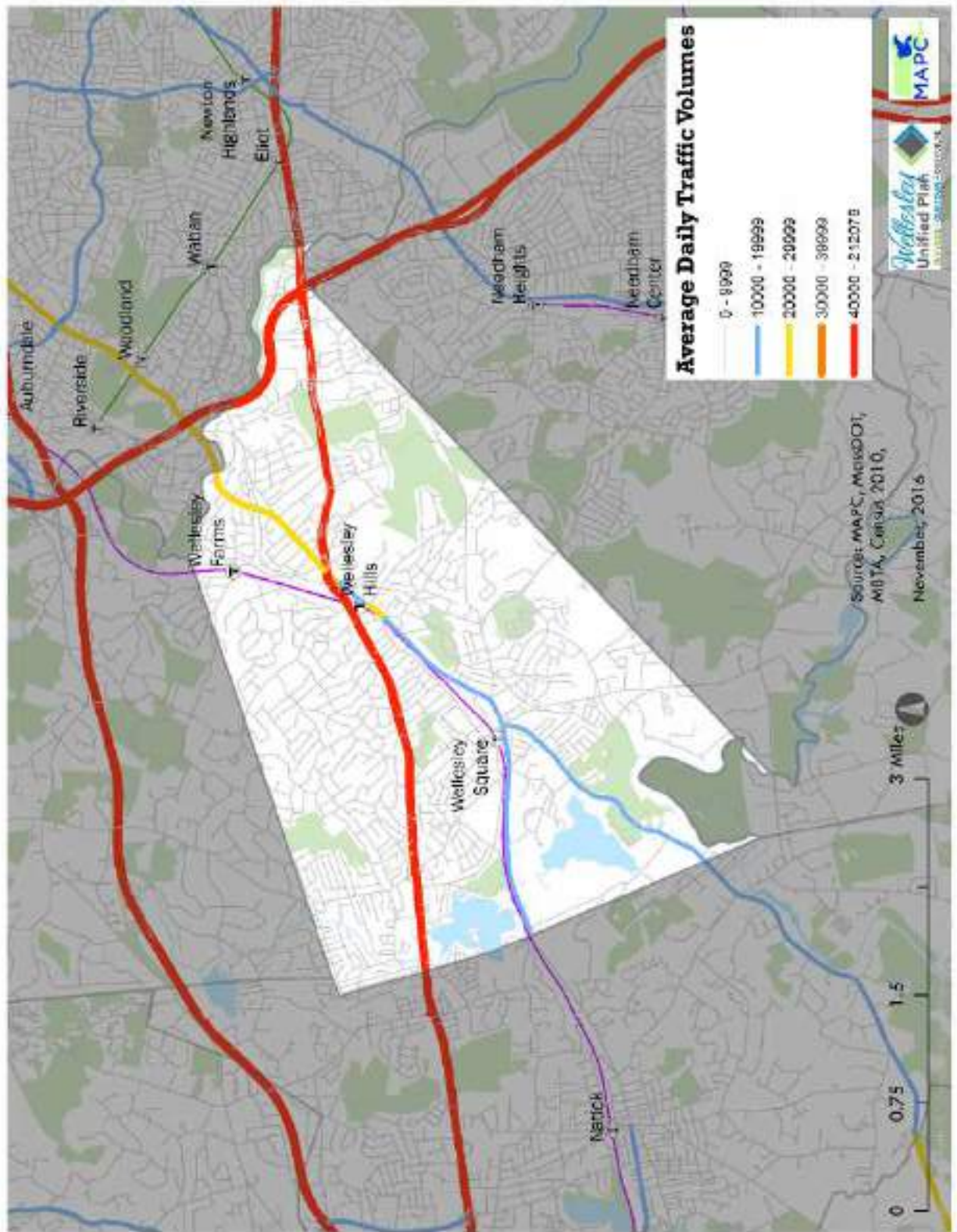
Of these, we were able to obtain PM<sub>2.5</sub> and Ultrafine Particle (UPF; <0.1 micrometers diameter) counts. PM<sub>2.5</sub>, or particulate matter smaller than 2.5 micrometers in diameter, pose particular respiratory health risks because of their small size. PM<sub>2.5</sub> data is only available at the regional level. The average annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels in Norfolk County were 10.5 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, 10.4 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, and 10.7 µg/m<sup>3</sup> from 2009-2011, respectively. These levels are below EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) threshold for unhealthy PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels, suggesting Wellesley's levels are adequate.

UFP are even finer than PM<sub>2.5</sub> and new evidence is emerging that they also pose a great health risk<sup>8</sup>. According to work underway by the Community Assessment of Freeway Exposure and Health (CAFEH) study, housing within an estimated 500 feet of high volume roadways (roughly 30,000 vehicles/day or more) are at an increased risk of UFP exposure-related disease, including cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease. Since UFP are so fine, their concentration depends heavily on local dispersion patterns and therefore all the guidelines suggested above must be interpreted with caution as rough estimates.

In Wellesley, Route 9/Worcester St and I-95/Route 128 have estimated volumes over 40,000 vehicles/day (Figure 9). Although it is slightly below the cutoff, Washington Street also has relatively high volumes. During the evening commute where many cars idle on the roads due to traffic, may increase particulate pollution. MAPC is currently developing the 500 foot buffer around these roads.

<sup>8</sup> Brugge et al. Highway proximity associated with cardiovascular disease risk: the influence of individual-level confounders and exposure misclassification. Environmental Health 2013. 12: 84. <http://www.ehjournal.net/content/12/1/84>

Figure 9. Roadway Vehicle Traffic Volumes



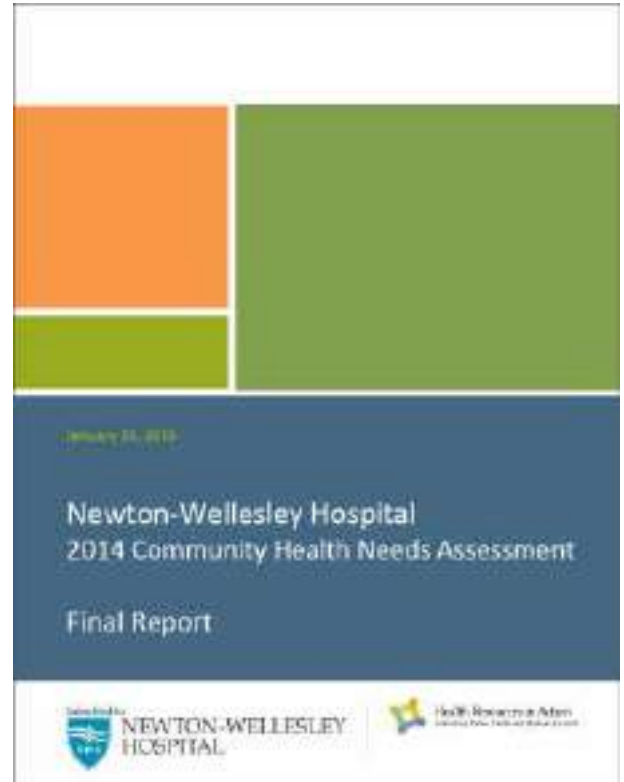
## Community Health Needs Assessments

Hospitals in Massachusetts have been encouraged for many years to conduct needs assessment for their communities. These assessments have now become required through IRS requirements and are scheduled to be updated every 3 years. The need assessment provide another snapshot of health issues and needs for communities.

The Town of Wellesley was included in the Newton-Wellesley Hospital 2014 Community Health Needs Assessment, which covers six towns as part of the hospital's primary service area including Natick, Needham, Newton, Waltham, Wellesley, and Weston. The assessment identified the following key themes:

- **Cost of living.** The analysis of qualitative data in this report found that nearly all interviewees and focus group members discussed the high cost of living including housing costs among the NWH service area communities. This high cost of living has been responsible for families leaving their communities for more affordable alternatives and has also dictated population trends.
- **Cost of transportation.** The report also found that the majority of assessment participants discussed how the lack of reliable local public transportation is a serious barrier to accessing health care services for certain segments of the population including youth, older adults, and those with behavioral health issues.
- **Mental and Behavioral Health.** Assessment participants view mental health as the highest priority issue in the community. Stress, anxiety, and depression were mentioned as particularly prevalent, and these issues were often described as leading to substance use as a means of self-medication. Economic stress on adults and academic and social pressures on youth have taxed individuals and the mental health system. Access to and use of mental health and subspecialty providers and services is limited by multiple factors, including stigma, health insurance, and fragmentation of services.
- **Social Cohesion is prioritized in the vision.** A cohesive community and numerous resources along with recent collaborations regarding suicide have demonstrated the power of community engagement and collaboration. Community members as well as health and human service providers offered many suggestions for how to support the creation and enhancement of community and health care environments for optimal health and well-being.

These data, particularly the qualitative data from focus groups, was incorporated when determining the priorities of this document.



## Health in Wellesley: Detailed Analysis

Measuring and identifying the health of the population in Wellesley allows for meaningful prioritization of planning and policy interventions that can focus on the top issues that affect health and wellbeing across the lifespan in Wellesley. This analysis also guides the analysis of the social and environmental factors, which would be the target of recommendations in a document like this one, that impact health as summarized here.

### Current Health Indicators

Cardiovascular disease, cancer, and hypertension are among some of the most important contributors to premature mortality and disease prevalence in the United States<sup>9</sup>. As the statistical estimates below show, hospitalizations for cardiovascular disease and hypertension are similar in Wellesley to the surrounding towns and statistically significantly lower than both Norfolk and Middlesex Counties. This trend holds for substance abuse and asthma emergency department discharges, and COPD hospitalizations, but not for all cancer related hospitalizations, where the estimated rate for Wellesley residents is not statistically different than either county.

Table 3. Age Adjusted Hospitalizations Rates per 10,000 people

	CVD** †	95% CI*	ALL CANCER †	95% CI	HT*** †	95% CI
LEXINGTON	71.0	(63.5-78.5)	30.9	(25.5-36.4)	1.9	(1.2-2.6)
NATICK	105.5	(95.4-115.6)	34.6	(28.6-40.5)	4.2	(3.0-5.4)
NEEDHAM	77.2	(68.8-85.5)	35.0	(28.7-41.2)	1.5	(0.8-2.3)
WAYLAND	80.5	(67.5-93.5)	35.6	(26.6-44.7)	3.1	(1.5-4.7)
<b>WELLESLEY</b>	<b>82.2</b>	<b>(72.3-92.1)</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>(23.9-36.1)</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>(1.0-3.0)</b>
WESTON	85.8	(72.1-99.5)	25.4	(17.0-33.7)	3.5	(1.7-5.2)
WINCHESTER	89.3	(78.6-100.00)	35.7	(28.6-42.9)	2.3	(1.9-3.5)
NORFOLK CTY	115.7	(113.4-141.9)	35.6	(34.2-36.9)	4.2	(4.0-4.5)
MIDDLESEX CTY	114.0	(112.4-115.6)	33.3	(32.4-34.2)	4.0	(3.8-4.1)

\*CI: Confidence Interval; \*\* HT: Hypertension; CVD = Cardiovascular Disease; †: 3 year aggregate rates,

Source: DPH hospitalization discharge database, 2012-2014; ‡: 3 year aggregate rates, DPH hospitalization discharge database, 2009-2011

Table 4. Age Adjusted Emergency Department Discharge Rates per 10,000 people

	SUBSTANCE ABUSE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT DISCHARGES †	95% CI
LEXINGTON	39.3	30.9-47.7
NATICK	71.6	61.9-81.2
NEEDHAM	50.1	40.7-59.5
WAYLAND	54.8	38.6-71.0
<b>WELLESLEY</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>31.2-45.9</b>
WESTON	30.3	18.4-42.1
WINCHESTER	47.5	36.3-58.7
NORFOLK COUNTY	75.5	73.4-77.5
MIDDLESEX COUNTY	82.6	81.8-84.0

<sup>9</sup> Danaei, Goodarz, et al. "The preventable causes of death in the United States: comparative risk assessment of dietary, lifestyle, and metabolic risk factors." PLoS Med 6.4 (2009): e1000058.

Source: ‡: 3 year aggregate rates, DPH hospitalization discharge database, 2012-2014

Table 5. Hospitalizations Rates per 10,000 people

	ASTHMA EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS ‡	95% CI	COPD HOSPITALIZATIONS‡	95% CI
LEXINGTON	14.2	(9.76-18.7)	10.9	(7.5-14.2)
NATICK	30.1	(24.0-36.2)	14.7	(10.8-16.4)
NEEDHAM	18.2	(13.2-23.1)	9.9	(6.8-13.5)
WAYLAND	29.1	(18.3-39.9)	16.1	(9.6-22.5)
WELLESLEY	22.4	(16.7-28.1)	11.8	(7.9-15.6)
WESTON	20.3	(11.8-28.8)	--	--
WINCHESTER	23.7	(16.8-30.5)	15.3	(10.5-20.1)
NORFOLK COUNTY	33.2	(31.8-34.6)	26.0	(24.9-27.2)
MIDDLESEX COUNTY	37.0	(36.0-38.0)	23.4	(22.7-24.2)

Source: ‡: 3 year aggregate rates, DPH hospitalization discharge database, 2012-2014

Prevalence and health behavior data are based on self-reported estimates derived from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey (BRFSS), and although self-reported statistics have been found to be relatively accurate for adults under 60<sup>1</sup>, these estimates are occasionally based on very small groups of respondents and must therefore be interpreted with caution.

Other health conditions that are major contributors to the domestic burden of disease are obesity, heart disease, and stroke. According to the data below, Wellesley has a statistically significantly lower proportion of obese, overweight or obese residents, and residents that experience stroke when compared to the State. Heart disease and poor mental health are not statistically difference than state rates according to these data.

Table 6. Small Area Estimates of Disease and Risk Factor Prevalence

	OBESE‡	OVERWEIGHT ‡	HEART DISEASE ‡	POOR MENTAL HEALTH‡	STROKE‡
LEXINGTON	12.6%	48.4%	6.5%	7.1%	2.6%
NATICK	18.1%	52.5%	4.6%	9.9%	2.1%
NEEDHAM	17.7%	52.3%	5.4%	8.7%	2.3%
WAYLAND	18.0%	52.8%	6.3%	9.2%	2.3%
WELLESLEY	12.5%	45.4%	4.8%	8.8%	2.0%
WESTON	15.7%	48.5%	6.2%	8.5%	2.5%
WINCHESTER	19.6%	53.8%	5.3%	8.6%	2.2%
STATE‡	22.3% (22.3-24.4)	58.9% (57.6-60.2)	5.8% (5.2-6.3)	11.3% (10.4-12.1)	3.5% (3.0-4.0)

Source: †: BRFSS small area estimates, 2011, 2012, 2014; ‡: BRFSS small area estimates, 2012-2014; §: BRFSS small area estimates, 2014

Binge drinker and exercise data are based on quintile rankings and should be interpreted in the following fashion: a number of "1" means the community has one of the lowest percentages of people reporting a health condition, risk factor, or protective factor while a "5" means the community has one of the highest percentage of people with that health condition, risk factor, or protective factor. For example, binge drinking is a risk factor for liver disease, and therefore a number of "1" which indicates the lowest prevalence, is the best score a community can get, while the opposite is true for exercise.

These data suggest that generally Wellesley has statistically significantly higher proportion of residents that report consuming the recommended number of servings of fruits or vegetables per day and tends to be among the communities with a lower proportion of binge drinkers and highest proportion of residents who report any exercise in the state. According to these estimates there is no statistically significant difference in the proportion of smokers or heavy drinkers however.

Table 7. Small Area Estimates for Health Behavior

	CURRENT SMOKER‡	HEAVY DRINKER‡	BINGE DRINKER‡ (QUINTILES)*	ANY EXERCISE‡ (QUINTILES)*	5 OR MORE FRUITS OR VEGETABLES PER DAY <sup>†</sup>
LEXINGTON	7.3%	6.9%	1	5	32.0%
NATICK	9.7%	7.4%	3	5	31.3%
NEEDHAM	9.1%	7.7%	2	5	29.3%
WAYLAND	8.6%	8.4%	1	3	32.6%
<b>WELLESLEY</b>	10.8%	8.3%	2	5	32.7%
WESTON	7.8%	7.7%	1	5	31.3%
WINCHESTER	8.7%	8.9%	2	5	32.6%
STATE <sup>¥</sup>	15.0% (14.0-16.1)	7.0% (6.3-7.7)	N/A	N/A	28.8 (27.3-30.2)

Source: ‡: BRFSS small area estimates, 2012-2014; ¥: BRFSS small area estimates, 2014; \*Quintile data; †: BRFSS small area estimates, 2005,2007, 2009

## Health over the Lifespan: Age Specific Health

Data specific to children under the age of 3, youth between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, and older adults over the age of 60 are included here. Data on the remainder of the population are included in the “Current Health Indicators” analysis at the start of this section.

### Children

Indicators included: blood lead levels; youth asthma related hospitalizations

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Lead paint in older homes is the most common source of lead poisoning. Lead can cause damage to the brain, kidneys, and nervous system; slow growth and development; and create behavioral problems and learning disabilities in children. More information on lead prevalence in the housing stock in Wellesley can be found in Section II of this document under the section “Housing”.

Confirmed Blood Lead Levels (BLL) for children in Wellesley between the ages of 9 to less than 48 months were below the 5-year annual rate per 1,000 children of 3.7 at the state level.<sup>10</sup>

The MDPH Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP) considers a child with a confirmed blood lead level of 10 micrograms per deciliter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{dL}$ ) or more as elevated and requiring a public health intervention.

Asthma in youth poses direct health risks as well as creates a barrier for engagement in social and physical activities and in school. It is also a condition that is experienced more by black children, people with less than a high school education, and those with lower incomes. The causes of asthma are not clear but evidence shows it can be triggered by allergens, exercise, air pollution, tobacco smoke, and airway infections.<sup>11</sup>

The rate of youth asthma hospitalizations from 2008-2012 is 78 per 100,000 which is much lower than the state’s rate of 187 per 100,000. Given the sample size in Wellesley, it not is clear if residents of different races, income, or educational level experience different hospitalization rates.

### Youth 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade

Indicators included: exercise, overweight/obesity, stress/mental health

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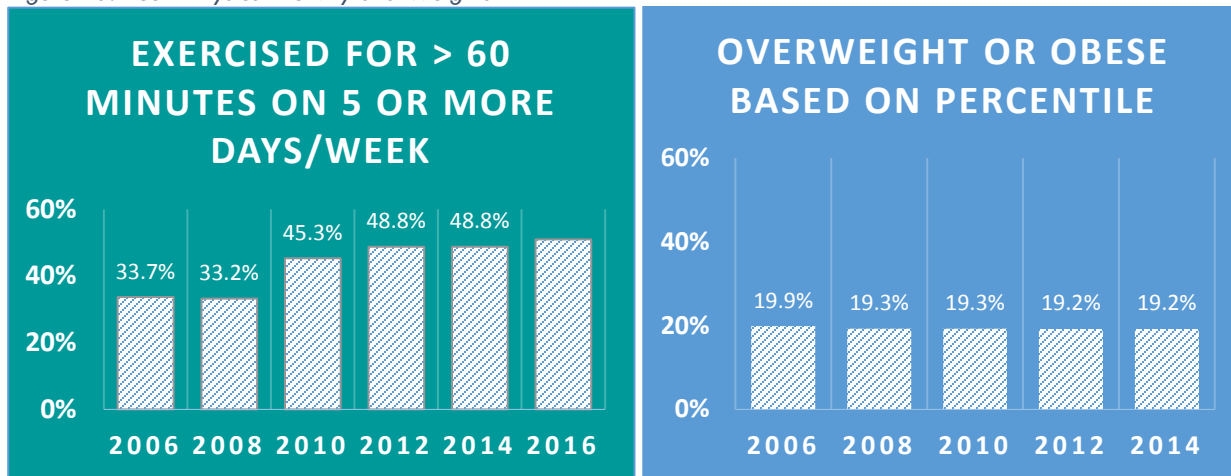
All data for Wellesley youth presented thus far were collected from the Metrowest Adolescent Health Study and therefore represent high school students from the entire district. Additional data from the Youth Behavioral Risk Survey and Wellesley youth specific data may become available over time from the schools which may be consistent with data presented or indicate a change in trends.

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<sup>10</sup> MDPH BEH Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP), 2010 - 2014

<sup>11</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Asthma’s Impact on the Nation, 2012.

Figure 10. Youth Physical Activity and Weights

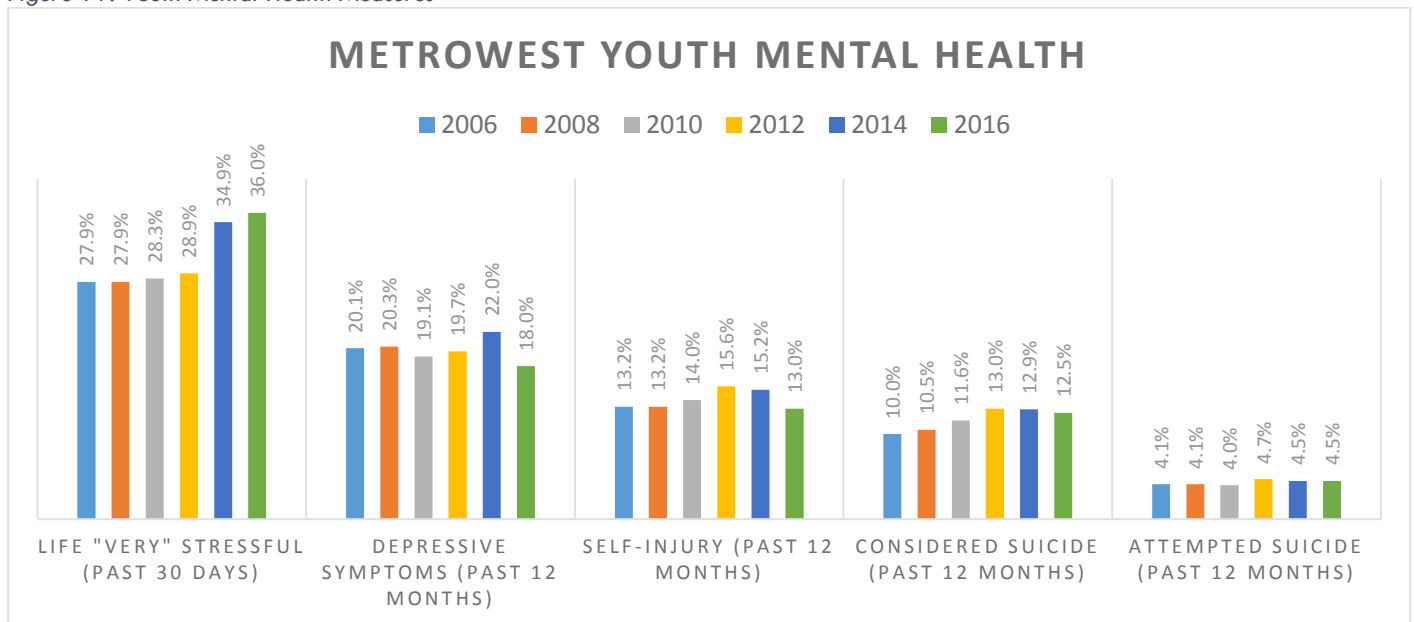


Source: Metrowest Adolescent Survey, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014

According to these data, the proportion of youth that is overweight or obese has not changed since 2006 (Figure 10) and students who report exercising more than 60 minutes 5 or more days a week increased by 12% from 2008 to 2010 and has remained consistently 10-15% higher than the 2006 and 2008 totals.

These same data show however that youth in the region have been becoming increasingly stressed and depressed from 2006 to 2014 (Figure 11). This does not seem to have manifested in a significant increase in suicide attempts, self-injury, or the contemplation of suicide, but should nevertheless be monitored and addressed as these can have health impacts on their own.

Figure 11. Youth Mental Health Measures



Source: Metrowest Adolescent Survey, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014

The data below are all derived from the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative Community Profiles, which are robust statistical estimates of health for aging populations. The data are broken out into four tables: health behaviors and risk factors for chronic disease, mental health, chronic disease prevalence, and access to care and service utilization.

According to these data, Wellesley's older adults are overwhelmingly healthier than the state average, even when compared to similar measures (Table 8). In particular, Wellesley is the only one of the comparison towns to perform statistically significantly better than the state for the 1 year age-adjusted mortality rate.

The only issues where Wellesley does similarly to the state, is in the percentage of older adults who drink excessively and the percentage who were injured in a fall in the last 3 months.

Table 8. Older Adult Health Behaviors and Risk factors for Chronic Disease

	LEXINGTON	NATICK	NEEDHAM	WAYLAND	WELLESLEY	WESTON	WINCHESTER	STATE
POPULATION ≥ 60	7,831	6,502	6,229	3,025	5,261	2,599	4,473	1,249,723
% OF TOTAL	25.2%	19.9%	21.6%	23.4%	18.9%	23.1%	21.1%	19.2%
AGE-ADJUSTED 1 YEAR MORTALITY RATE	4.5%	4.5%	5.4%	4.2%	4.0%	5.5%	5.1%	4.7%
<b>HEALTH BEHAVIORS</b>								
% PHYSICALLY ACTIVE	79.2%	76.3%	77.9%	76.3%	77.9%	77.9%	79.2%	72.4%
% 5 OR MORE VEGETABLES PER DAY	32.9%	24.7%	32.7%	24.7%	32.7%	32.7%	32.9%	24.9%
% CURRENT SMOKERS	4.6	6.9%	3.3%	6.9%	3.3%	3.3%	4.6%	9.1%
% EXCESSIVE DRINKING	10.4%	6.4%	10.2%	6.4%	10.2%	10.2%	10.4%	9.2%
<b>WELLNESS AND PREVENTION</b>								
% WITH SELF-REPORTED FAIR OR POOR HEALTH STATUS	12.9%	18.0%	16.0%	18.0%	16.0%	16.0%	12.9%	20.7%
% INJURED IN A FALL WITHIN LAST 3 MONTHS	4.8%	5.6%	6.3%	5.6%	6.3%	6.3%	4.8%	5.1%
% FLU SHOT PAST YEAR	76.7%	71.5%	75.4%	71.5%	75.4	75.4%	76.7%	67.8%
% SHINGLES VACCINE	18.0%	18.0%	21.8%	18.0%	21.8%	21.8%	18.0%	14.9%

Source: Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative

Mental health amongst Wellesley’s older adults is at about the same as the state rate except for the rate of adults ever diagnosed with depression, where the Town performs slightly better (Table 9). This stands in stark contrast with the increasing rates of depression amongst Wellesley’s youth.

Table 9. Older Adult Mental Health

	LEXINGTON	NATICK	NEEDHAM	WAYLAND	WELLESLEY	WESTON	WINCHESTER	STATE
<b>MENTAL HEALTH</b>								
% WITH 15+ DAYS POOR MENTAL HEALTH LAST MONTH	5.9%	5.5%	6.7%	5.5%	6.7%	6.7%	5.9%	6.7%
% SATISFIED WITH LIFE	96.8%	95.7%	95.8%	95.7%	95.8%	95.8%	96.8%	95.8%
% RECEIVING ADEQUATE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT	83.0%	85.2%	81.3%	85.2%	81.3%	81.3%	83.0%	80.7%

	LEXINGTON	NATICK	NEEDHAM	WAYLAND	WELLESLEY	WESTON	WINCHESTER	STATE
% EVER DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION	27.4%	28.9%	27.2%	26.0%	26.0%	28.6%	23.3%	28.6%

Source: Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative

Finally, Wellesley also statistically outperforms the state across nearly all indicators in terms of chronic disease prevalence, access to care, and service utilization (Table 10).

Table 10. Older Adult Chronic Disease

	LEXINGTON	NATICK	NEEDHAM	WAYLAND	WELLESLEY	WESTON	WINCHESTER	STATE
<b>CHRONIC DISEASE</b>								
% OBESE	21.0%	23.7%	15.8%	23.7%	15.8%	15.8%	21.0%	22.6%
% HYPERTENSION	68.9%	77.4%	73.1%	69.7%	70.8%	67.8%	71.1%	77.5%
% WITH ALZHEIMER'S OR RELATED DEMENTIAS	15.8%	14.4%	15.3%	12.0%	11.6%	16.4%	16.2%	14.4%
% WITH DIABETES	22.6%	28.8%	24.2%	20.8%	20.6%	19.4%	24.1%	32.1%
% WITH STROKE	11.6%	12.8%	12.6%	11.0%	11.5%	10.8%	11.0%	12.6%
% WITH CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE	14.7	21.6%	19.4%	14.7%	16.2%	17.3%	16.8%	23.3%
% WITH ASTHMA	9.7%	10.7%	10.7%	10.6%	10.0%	10.2%	9.6%	11.8%
% EVER HAD A HEART ATTACK	3.2%	4.5%	3.9%	3.2%	3.4%	3.6%	5.0%	5.0%
% WITH ISCHEMIC HEART DISEASE	38.5%	46.2%	44.3%	39.6%	38.7%	41.9%	44.7%	44.1%
% WITH CONGESTIVE HEART FAILURE	18.7%	24.1%	26.2%	19.1%	20.5%	22.5%	24.0%	24.8%
<b>SUMMARY CHRONIC DISEASE MEASURES</b>								
% WITH 4+ CHRONIC CONDITIONS	53.2%	62.5%	57.5%	50.9%	54.8%	55.2%	56.3%	61.5%
% WITH 0 CHRONIC CONDITIONS	10.1%	8.5%	8.2%	8.3%	8.8%	8.9%	8.8%	7.8%

Source: Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative

Table 11. Older Adult Access to Care and Care Utilization

	LEXINGTON	NATICK	NEEDHAM	WAYLAND	WELLESLEY	WESTON	WINCHESTER	STATE
<b>ACCESS TO CARE</b>								
% WITH A REGULAR DOCTOR	96.1%	97.6%	97.1%	97.6%	97.1%	97.1%	96.1%	96.2%
% DID NOT SEE DOCTOR WHEN NEEDED DUE TO COST	4.3%	3.4%	1.4	3.4%	1.4%	1.4%	4.3%	3.7%
<b>RATE OF SERVICE UTILIZATION</b>								
PHYSICIAN VISITS PER YEAR	7.4	8.9	8.2	7.8	8.5	7.8	7.1	7.6
EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS/1000 PERSONS 65+ YEARS PER YEAR	496	739	677	544	551	565	597	646
PART D MONTHLY PRESCRIPTION FILLS PER PERSON PER YEAR	46.7	52.3	49.3	44.3	46.2	50.8	46.6	52.7
HOME HEALTH VISITS PER YEAR	3.9	4.6	3.9	4.8	3.7	3.7	4.0	4.2
DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT CLAIMS PER YEAR	1.4	1.8	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.5	1.4	2.1
INPATIENT HOSPITAL STAYS/1000 PERSONS 65+ YEARS PER YEAR	285	399	304	308	304	321	378	354
INPATIENT HOSPITAL READMISSIONS (AS % OF ADMISSIONS)	16.4%	18.5%	16.0%	15.9%	17.6%	17.2%	16.7%	17.8%
SKILLED NURSING FACILITY STAYS/1000 PERSONS 65+ YEARS PER YEAR	94	110	121	96	84	101	109	117

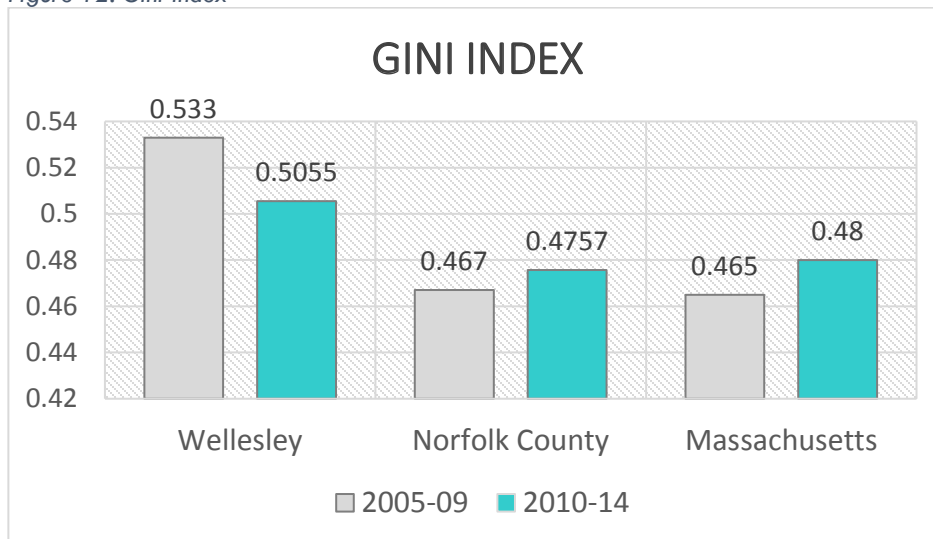
Source: Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative

## Equity Indicators

The Gini index is a statistical indicator of the distribution of income. The range is between 0 and 1 where 0 is a perfectly equal society where income is perfectly distributed and 1 is a perfectly unequal society where all income is concentrated in the hands of a single individual.

Based on these data, while Norfolk County and Massachusetts have become overall less equal, Wellesley's income distribution is now *more* equal than it was before. Although this is important because disparities in the distribution and access to goods and resources is linked to worse health for the overall population, this indicator must be interpreted with caution because it does not describe *how* the Town has become more equitable. For example, this could be due to moderate income families leaving Wellesley, or a greater proportion of wealthy individuals coming to the community; the data below cannot answer this question.

Figure 12. Gini Index



Source: MAPC

## Distribution of Vulnerable Populations

The maps below show the geographic distribution of Wellesley's population by age, race, and environmental justice (EJ) group. These maps are designed to show the geographic areas in the Town where clusters of vulnerable populations reside in order to facilitate prioritization.

### Age

Figure 13 shows that most of the population in Wellesley is fairly equally distributed, but that there are two clusters of elderly residents over the age of 65 in the circles highlighted in purple and two of young residents between the ages of 18 and 24 highlighted in orange. The first two clusters correspond to existing senior housing and the second two to the students living by Babson College, Frank W. Olin College of Engineering, and Wellesley College.

### Race

As seen in Figure 14, there are three clusters of racial and ethnic minorities throughout Wellesley. Two are associated with the college campuses and the third is located by Interstate 95 (Route

128). Asian residents and to a lesser extent Latino residents are more evenly distributed throughout the town.

### Environmental Justice block groups

The Environmental Justice (EJ) term was coined to capture places where a disproportionate share of environmental burdens were placed on lower-income people and communities of color who, at the same time, often were lacking environmental and natural resources in their neighborhoods. As a measure, an EJ designation is meant to help identify where at risk populations are located to affect remediation of past harms and prevent introduction of new sources of pollution and environmental hazards. In Massachusetts, an EJ community is where any of the following are true<sup>12</sup>:

- Block group whose annual median household income is equal to or less than 65 percent of the statewide median (\$62,072 in 2010); or
- 25% or more of the residents identifying as minority; or
- 25% or more of households having no one over the age of 14 who speaks English only or very well - Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

The EJ block groups that are highlighted in Figure 15 correspond to two of the clusters highlighted in Figure 15. It is not clear why the clusters by Wellesley Square and Lake Waban/Wellesley College are not captured.

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<sup>12</sup> MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. Environmental Justice Policy, 2017. <http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/massdep/service/justice/#2>

Figure 13. Geographic Age Distribution

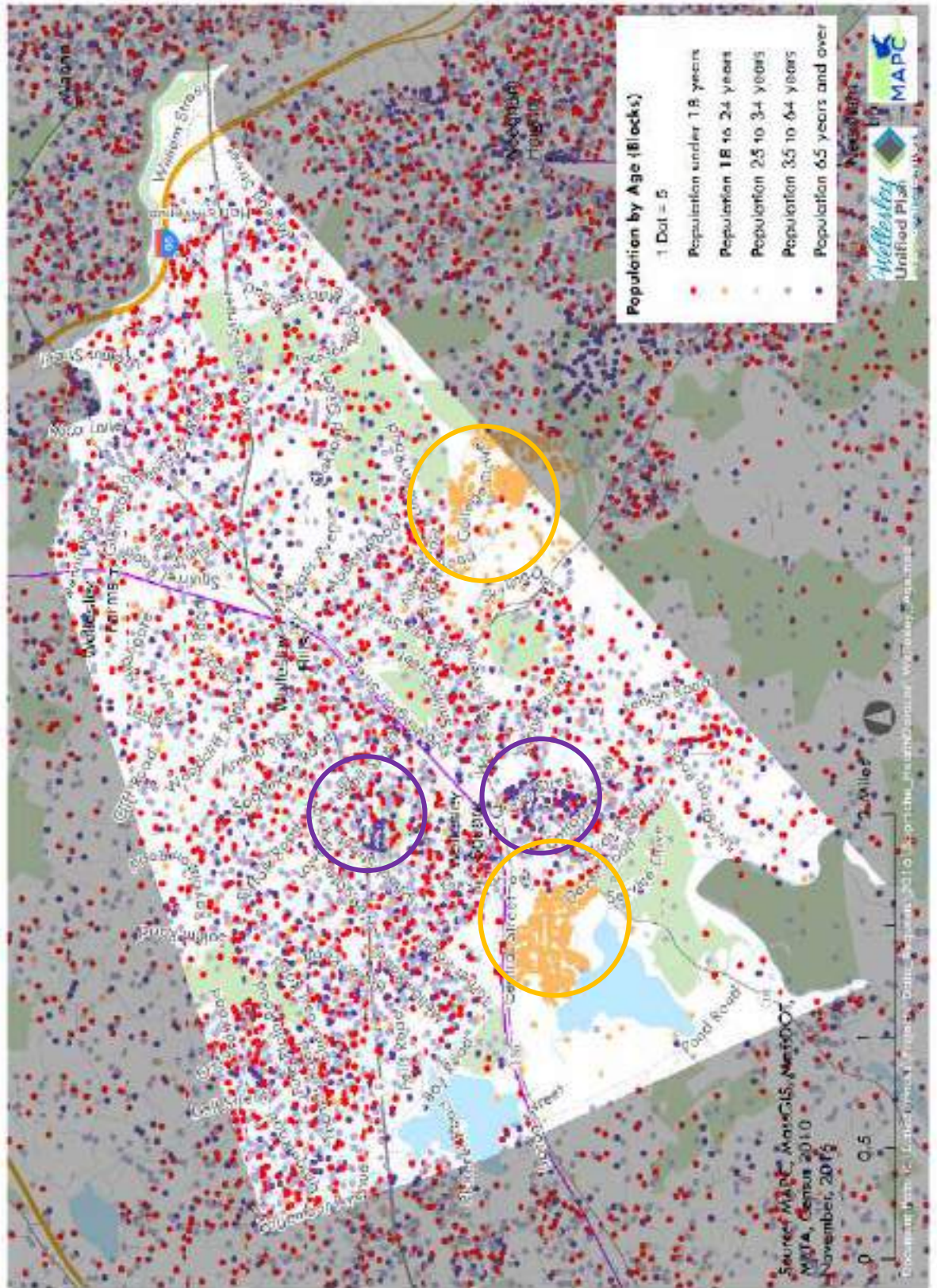


Figure 14. Geographic Race Distribution

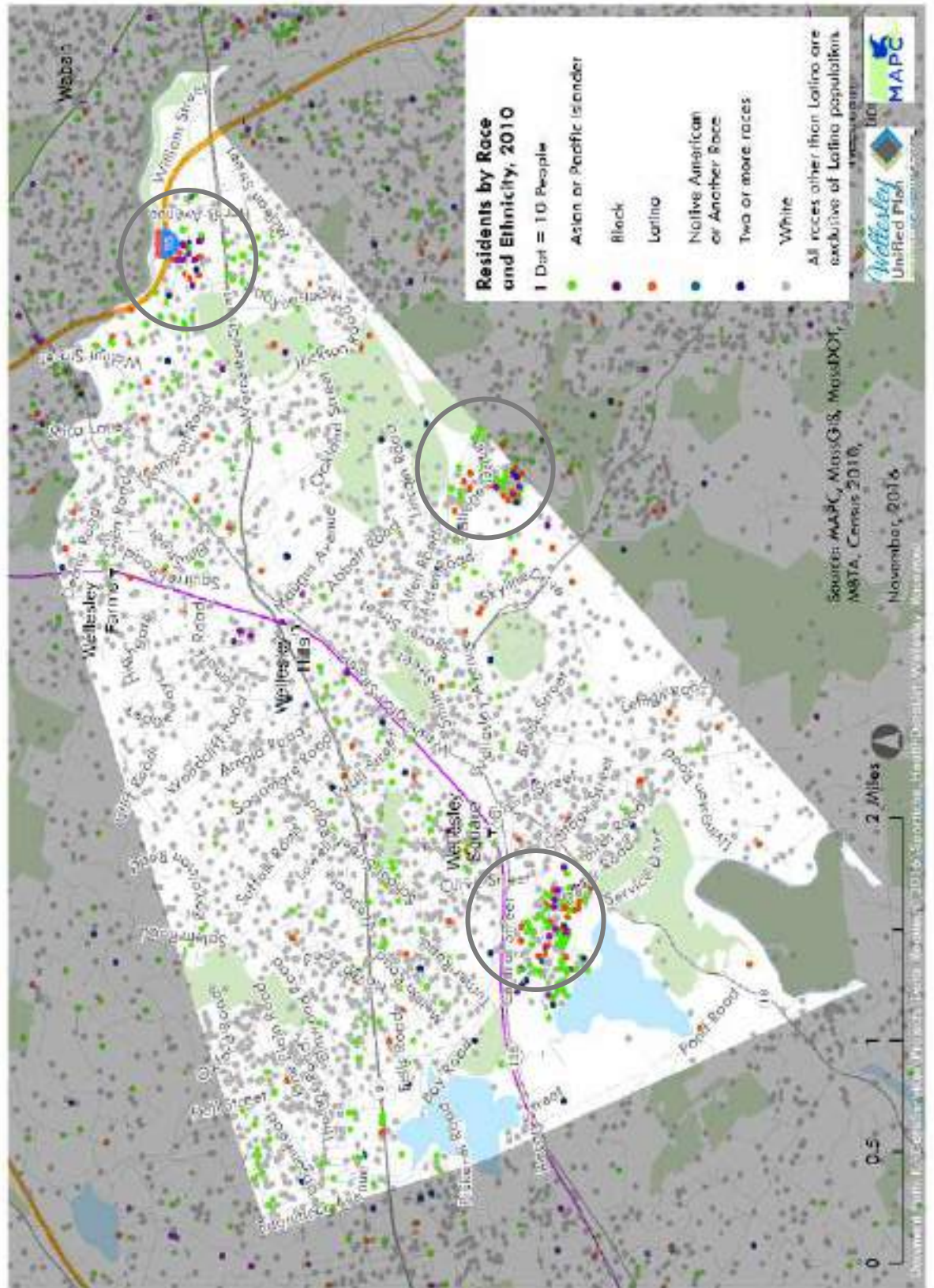
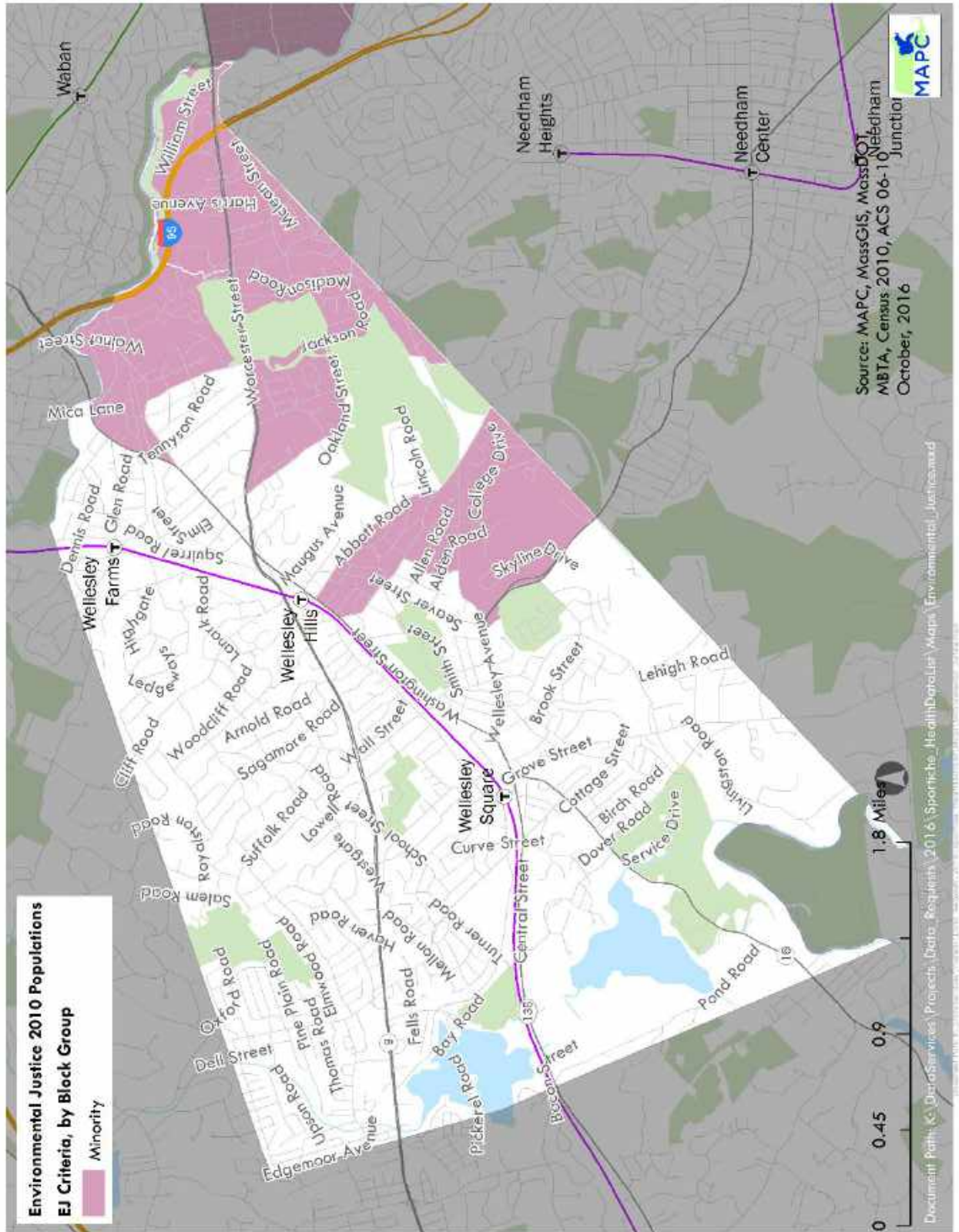


Figure 15. Environmental Justice



# Section III. Implementation

## Goals, Strategies, and Actions

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Findings suggest that the Town of Wellesley's residents, overall, experiences physical, social, and mental health outcomes that are equal or better than those of the Commonwealth. The economic, housing, and environmental conditions support these beneficial outcomes and represent conditions that are supportive of wellness. Although residents in the town generally enjoy better health, there are existing and potential health issues among specific populations such as youth and older adults, in addition to issues such as traffic safety that prevent residents from enjoying even healthier lifestyles.

We propose the following six goals, with supportive as a way to enhance the overall positive impacts associated with policies and projects that will result from enactment of the Unified Plan and, where needed, mitigate potential negative health issues that exist or that could occur from implementation of the plan.

### Frame for recommendations

#### Intervention and Prevention

Core activities of local public health are and will continue to be: enforce protective and regulatory measures that protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents. Activities such as food inspections and enforcement of sanitary codes are essential, and must be supported as local public health provides a critical, but often invisible, role in providing health protective measures that are the foundation of a prosperous and thriving community.

For this plan element, activities that involve local public health in cooperation with other municipal departments and private partners are also required. Broadly, these activities fall into two categories: intervention and prevention. Interventions are programs or actions implemented in response to an immediate issue such as helping those who are injured and those who need emergency care for diabetes or substance misuse. Interventions often take the form of providing direct care and instituting programs. Prevention, on the other hand, is action that seeks to reduce or eliminate the conditions that lead to poor health outcome. Prevention can include the provision of care, but it is more effective when it uses a Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) strategies (see Figure 3 in Section I). These strategies focus on the root causes of poor health outcome. For example, rather than just providing care to children who are experiencing asthma, a PSE strategy would move to eliminate the conditions that may lead to a child having asthma as well as the triggers (e.g., pests, mold) that trigger asthmatic events.

The health element of the plan includes intervention- and prevention-related recommendations.

#### Evidence

Whenever possible, recommendations draw on evidence that has shown or been associated with a proven effect. Evidence often comes from a systematic review and meta- analysis of the published literature including public health, planning, and other fields and is identified through a formal

literature search (e.g., ‘What Works’ resources, CDC Community Guide). The reason for using evidence-based public health solutions is because when it is not used, recommendations may be ineffective and could divert resources from other, potentially more effective actions.

The evidence is not always available in all situations. In these cases, evidence or information on the potential efficacy of proposed recommendations may need to come from interviews, surveys, and group consensus methods obtained from other sources such as subject area experts, residents or other key informants. Also, in these cases, we propose local monitoring to assess effectiveness for residents in town.

### What Works in Wellesley

The recommendations reflect characteristics of successful efforts and projects in Wellesley. Three characteristics of successful recommendations in the town, as identified by the Health Working Group, are:

- Building on a shared vision
- Transparent process to advance and implement recommendation
- Help address multiple needs and opportunities

An example of a recommendation meeting these characteristics is the Fuller Brook Park project. While the project helped the town address critical storm water issues, several other goals were achieved by making changes to the park. These included making it accessible to people with physical disabilities; retaining historical elements, involving a diverse set of constituents, and funding through multiple sources. Each recommendations may not be as inclusive as the Fuller Brook Park project, but they should aspire to meet a similar standard.

### Adaptive Management

The recommendations embrace the concept of adaptive management. This concept is relevant to addressing issues that involve uncertainty. It relies on continuous monitoring and assessment to understand which actions are working and which are not. An adaptive management approach seeks new information (e.g., projections, estimates, and statistical data) so that recommendations are evaluated as quickly as possible and, if needed, modified to maximize their effect (e.g., reductions in annual traffic injuries and fatalities) or change direction.

The adaptive management concept does require decision-making to be agile and capable of working quickly in the face of evolving information. Massachusetts town governments and residents may find it challenging to operate in such a manner. Therefore, a gradual but sustained effort should occur to apply this approach and, over time, integrate the concept into legislative and operational decision making processes in town.

GOAL 1: Wellesley fosters formal and informal connections among neighbors and peers to strengthen social capital and intergenerational ties.

Purpose:

- Adopt and incorporate deliberate approaches that increase inclusivity and reduce the risk of social isolation

STRATEGIES

**A. Promote public spaces in each neighborhood for residents to share experiences and strengthen local social capital<sup>13</sup>.**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. Identify or develop publicly-accessible spaces as physical community hubs in each neighborhood in Wellesley. The purpose of the hubs, which could be a park, playgrounds, or cafe, is to provide a known location for neighbors to connect with one another, formally and informally. These spaces could also be programmed to welcome new residents into the neighborhood and to host in-person ‘collider’ events that share and learn about each other’s skills.	2018-2022	Council on Aging; Youth Commission; Board of Health; Art Groups

**B. Sustain and enhance community arts programs with focus on inclusivity.<sup>14</sup>**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. Sustain current arts programming in town. Evidence suggests that community arts programs can improve social networks and relationships and promote community involvement. See Chapter 5.	2018-2022	Library; Arts groups
ii. Hold at least two arts programs each year that promote cultural equity. The program would promote cultural inclusivity for all in town, especially those who have been historically underrepresented.	2018-2022 and ongoing	Library; Arts groups

**C. Adopt an age friendly and intergenerational approach to the development of community buildings and spaces.**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. Adopt guidance related to universal design and accessibility for publicly-accessible buildings and spaces so that these places become more accessible and inviting to people of all ages and abilities. Consider seeking designation for town as Age- and Dementia-Friendly.	2018-2022	Town Meeting

<sup>13</sup> “Social capital refers to the collective value of all ‘social networks’ [who people know] and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other [‘norms of reciprocity’]. Source:

<http://robertdputnam.com/bowling-alone/social-capital-primer/>

<sup>14</sup> County Health Rankings: What Works for Health. “Community arts programs.”

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/community-arts-programs>



ii. Expand opportunities for children, youth, and older residents to connect and interact <sup>15</sup> . Examples include programs such as intergenerational mentoring <sup>16</sup> where older residents are matched as mentors to high school students and mixed use developments such as siting a daycare center in or along with an assisted living facility.	2018-2022	Council on Aging; Youth Commission; Library
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GOAL 2: Wellesley supports the mental and emotional wellness of children and youth to reduce the potential for self-harm and to increase opportunities among all youth in town.

Purpose: Enact changes that decrease the incidence and rates of poor mental health and associated behaviors, especially for those 18 years old and under in Wellesley.

STRATEGIES

**A. Promote Wellesley as a Stigma-Free Municipality.**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. Conduct an annual town-wide communications campaign to reduce the perception of stigma for receiving mental and emotional support. The initiative, which may be new or expand on existing efforts <sup>17</sup> , should include information about mental health literacy and language, peer mentoring, and how parents and older adults can model stigma-free behavior.	2018-2022 and ongoing	Board of Health
ii. Hold annual community conversations to discuss mental health challenges in the community (e.g., suicide) and reinforce a town-wide stigma-free approach by sharing resources and supportive behaviors (e.g., Wellesley Acts).	2018-2022 and ongoing	Board of Health

**B. Continue focus on school-based social and emotional instruction and engage in continuous communications about this work with all residents.<sup>18</sup>**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. The Wellesley Public Schools and the Wellesley Health Department have programs in place to provide social and	2018-2022 and	School Committee;

<sup>15</sup> Grantmakers in Aging. “Children, youth, families ... and aging” (toolkit). <https://www.giaaging.org/resources/gia-toolkit/children-youth-and-families-and-aging/>

<sup>16</sup> County Health Rankings: What Works for Health. “Intergenerational mentoring.” <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/intergenerational-mentoring>

<sup>17</sup> The town’s Health Department currently provides funding for mental health support in the community and has developed a resource guides for parents and residents of all ages: <http://wellesleyma.gov/204/Mental-Health-Resources>

<sup>18</sup> County Health Rankings: What Works for Health. “Community arts programs.” <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/community-arts-programs>

<p><i>emotional support (e.g., BRIDGE program)</i>. These programs, as well as others<sup>19</sup>, should be enhanced as MetroWest or town data indicate that current percentages of youth who are living with depression or other mental health issues are significantly reduced, with the goal of eliminating the issue. If not already in place, the school system should also consider implementing a universal school-based suicide awareness and education program.<sup>20</sup></p> <p>Measure progress through reductions in reported percentages of youth considering harmful behaviors or mental health issues according to town (e.g., Stanford Survey) or MetroWest Health Foundation surveys.</p>	ongoing	Board of Health
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**C. Promote unstructured play and offer time and space for it to occur.**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<p>i. <i>Identify spaces and provide resources that support more unstructured play among youth and children in town.</i> There is evidence that associations exist between unstructured, self-directed play and higher rates of creativity, pro-social behaviors, and rates of physical activity<sup>21</sup> - all outcomes that are also associated with better mental health outcomes. The town is encouraged to explore making more space available for unstructured play (e.g., playgrounds and fields), more time (e.g., extended recesses, after school programs), and support for parents (e.g. informational materials, volunteer supervisors).</p>	2018-2022	Youth Commission; Recreation Commission; Library

**GOAL 3: Wellesley prioritizes walkability and open space to promote physical activity and exposure to outdoor natural environments**

*Purpose: Increase exposure and access to green spaces and active transportation facilities in order to provide all residents the opportunity for associated positive health benefits like reduced stress, opportunities for physical activity, reduced risk of injury from traffic crashes, and additional social connections.*

**STRATEGIES**

**A. Adopt Policies that Promote and Protect Active Transport**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<p>i. <i>Adopt a Complete Streets policy to ensure that sidewalks, sidepaths, bicycle facilities, and transit stops are created or</i></p>	See Chapter 10.	

<sup>19</sup> Local non-profits, such as Community Investors (<http://communityinvestors.net/>), also provide programs and focus resources to improve adolescent wellness.

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/universal-school-based-suicide-awareness-education-programs>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4483712/>

<p><i>preserved in town. The policy would encourage the town to set priorities around bicycle, pedestrian, and transit investments and integrate these investments, design to match their context, into publicly- and privately-driven changes to the local transportation system.</i></p>	
<p><i>ii. Adopt a data driven traffic safety policy with goal of eliminating fatalities and injuries from roadway crashes in Wellesley. Taking guidance from the Vision Zero approach<sup>22</sup>, the town can use a crash data and local feedback to eliminate the potential for fatalities and serious injuries at known crash locations. In addition, the town can apply the same approach to prospectively identify other potential crash locations (e.g., due to speeding) as part of efforts to reduce the possibility crash-related injuries and death.<sup>23,24</sup></i></p>	See Chapter 10.

**B. Create a Sidewalk Improvement Fund.**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<p><i>i. Establish a sidewalk improvement fund for the town to provide a mechanism for waiving sidewalk requirements (where allowable) and to collect a payment in lieu of funds, which would be deposited into an enterprise fund. The enterprise fund can be used to invest in sidewalk infrastructure in key locations (e.g., identified locations in Complete Streets prioritization plan). The Town of Stow has a sidewalk improvement fund that can serve as an example for local action.</i></p>	2018-2022	Town Meeting; Department of Public Works

**C. Enhance Tree Protection and Planting.**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<p><i>i. Enhance enforcement (in accordance with tree preservation and protection bylaw) to ensure protection of trees and significant vegetation that could be impacted by public or private developments. In addition, provide more resources for and promotion of the town’s tree planting program. These actions would maintain and expand exposure to green spaces and help mitigate potential impacts of heat island effects<sup>25</sup> which affects people with chronic diseases like diabetes and asthma<sup>26</sup>. For the planting program, the town should</i></p>	See Chapter 4.	

<sup>22</sup> Vision Zero sets a target of eliminating all serious injuries and deaths due to road traffic crashes. The approach focuses on how we design and operate our roadway system so that we prevent the potential for death or serious injury for roadway users, especially those who are most vulnerable. Vision Zero was first adopted in Sweden and has reduced deaths from road traffic crashes by 50% since 2000. The work has involved changes in planning and design, technology, education, and enforcement in order to create a system that protects the lives of motorists and non-motorists alike.

<sup>23</sup> Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention, “The Community Guide: Physical Activity.” <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-built-environment-approaches>

<sup>24</sup> Swedish Transport Administration, “Analysis of road safety trends 2014 - management by objectives for road safety work towards the 2020 interim targets” [https://trafikverket.ineko.se/Files/sv-SE/12138/RelatedFiles/2015\\_103\\_analysis\\_of\\_road\\_safety\\_trends.pdf](https://trafikverket.ineko.se/Files/sv-SE/12138/RelatedFiles/2015_103_analysis_of_road_safety_trends.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Environmental Protection Agency, “Using Trees and Vegetation to Reduce Heat Islands,” <https://www.epa.gov/heat-islands/using-trees-and-vegetation-reduce-heat-islands>.

<sup>26</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Climate Change and Extreme Heat: What you can do to prepare,” <https://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/pubs/extreme-heat-guidebook.pdf>

diversify species to reflect potentially new climate conditions in the future (e.g., higher average temperatures) and new anticipated vectors (e.g., invasive insect species). <sup>27</sup>	
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**D. Incentivize Preservation of Natural Resources on Development Sites.**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. <i>Adopt guidance – regulatory or promotional – for maintaining as much natural, healthy vegetation on developments sites, especially redevelopment projects.</i> There were instances cited of clear-cutting of neighboring properties that resulted in increased water runoff in addition to the reduced aesthetic appearances from the removal of the trees and ground cover.	See Chapters 4, 12.	

## GOAL 4: Wellesley Addresses Environment Hazards to Reduce Resident Exposure to Substances that Reduce the Quality of Life in Town

*Purpose: Minimize or eliminate exposure of residents to environmentally hazardous materials and pollutants.*

### STRATEGIES

**A. Implement Best Practices related to the Elimination of Gas Leaks.**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. <i>Assess and update regulations and practices in order to reduce harmful pollutant exposures while modernizing infrastructure.</i> Specific supporting activities include: sustained coordination between road maintenance and utility infrastructure construction, prioritization of fixes for high volume leaks near sensitive locations (e.g., elementary schools), and adoption of protective policies that expedite the repair of gas leaks. Refer to MAPC’s assessment guide for additional supporting activities: <a href="http://fixourpipes.org/best-practices/">http://fixourpipes.org/best-practices/</a>	2018-2022	Board of Public Works

**B. Promote Best Practices related to Pest Management on Private Properties**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. <i>Identify policies and materials that encourage private land owners to adopt practices that eliminate the use of pest control substances with toxics and environmentally hazardous materials.</i> Reduced use of these toxic materials are associated with positive effects on those with chronic diseases (e.g., asthma) and lessen exposure to potential carcinogens <sup>28</sup> . Use the town’s existing regulation as well	See Chapters 4, 12	

<sup>27</sup> United State Department of Agriculture, “Climate Change Tree Atlas,” <https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/atlas/tree/#>

<sup>28</sup> Environmental Protection Agency, “Introduction to Integrated Pest Management,” <https://www.epa.gov/managing-pests-schools/introduction-integrated-pest-management#Benefits>

as the state's resources <sup>29</sup> to showcase Integrated Pest Management (IPM) as a preferred approach.	
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**C. Water Protection**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. <i>Prioritize policies and land protection (e.g., easement, purchase) that prevent the development of potentially environmentally harmful uses on lands adjacent to water resources and water recharge areas.</i>	See Chapters 4, 12.	

**D. Prepare for Climate Change Impacts on Health**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. <i>Develop an action plan that addresses potential impacts of climate change on health and resiliency of town residents. Climate change will exacerbate existing health conditions, such as asthma and cardiovascular disease, and lead to the emergence of new vector- and water-borne diseases. Wellesley's local public health infrastructure should have the resources to plan for and prepare for these potential impacts<sup>30</sup>.</i>	See Chapter 12.	

GOAL 5: Wellesley Optimizes the Availability of Indoor and Outdoor Recreational Space so that All Residents Have Places to Be Physically Active, To Socialize, and To Relax.

*Policies: Find balance between school, municipal, and community needs for use of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities like gyms, playing fields, and park spaces.*

STRATEGIES

**A. Review existing and consider additional shared use opportunities at recreational facilities.**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
i. <i>Investigate existing shared use opportunities that provide for resident and community access to public indoor and outdoor facilities for exercise and other social and recreational activities.</i> <sup>31</sup> Use	See Chapter 6.	

<sup>29</sup> Massachusetts Executive Office for Administration and Finance, "Integrated Pest Management," <http://www.mass.gov/anf/budget-taxes-and-procurement/procurement-info-and-res/procurement-prog-and-serv/epp-procurement-prog/green-products-and-serv/specific-epp-statewide-contracts/integrated-pest-management.html>

<sup>30</sup> For reference: MDPH conducted a survey to assessing capacity of local health departments to address climate change in 2013. The report is a useful guide for preparation: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/environmental/exposure/climate-change-report-2014.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/shared-use-agreements>

existing guides, such as the toolkit from the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation at the Harvard School of Public Health <sup>32</sup> , to assess current arrangements and consider updates to reflect recommended standards and practices.	
ii. <i>Consider establishing arrangements for the shared use of public indoor and outdoor recreational facilities for which no such arrangement currently exists.</i>	See Chapter 6.

**B. Implement Supportive Community Programs for All Ages**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHO/HOW</b>
i. <i>Establish municipal- and community-led programs in publicly-accessible spaces and at times convenient for residents. Some programs should occur during open periods made possible by shared use agreement. These programs should have reduced or subsidized costs and be available for smaller groups who can use the space(s) at the same time. Variations on this could involve shared events for youth and older residents in order to encourage more intergenerational interaction; making space available for older residents and those with limited incomes to engage in group exercise; and programs for at-home parents with young children who are seeking to meet neighbors and socialize.</i>	2022-2028	Recreation Commission; Youth Commission; Council on Aging; Library

## GOAL 6: Wellesley Considers Health Impacts of Proposed Projects and Policies by Integrating a Health and Equity Lens into Local Decision-Making

*Purpose: Systematize the consideration of health and equity impacts as part of decision-making on new projects, programs, and policies.*

### STRATEGIES

**A. Use a Checklist to Assist in Decision-Making.**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>WHEN</b>	<b>WHO/HOW</b>
i. <i>Use a checklist to assist in understanding how municipal decisions affect health conditions in the town. A prototype checklist is attached to this document as an initial model to assist in local decision-making on proposed projects and policies in Wellesley. Decision-makers and residents can use this checklist to assess proposals quickly and have an informed discussion about potential positive and negative effects on public health generally and in relation to specific people in the town (e.g., people of color, older adults, households with limited incomes, etc.).</i>	See Chapter 13.	

<sup>32</sup> Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation and the Harvard School of Public Health, “Massachusetts Joint Use Toolkit,” <http://www.chlpi.org/joint-use-toolkit/>

**B. Conduct Equity Impact Assessment**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<p>i. <i>Develop and apply an equity impact assessment tool for proposed policies and projects in the town.</i> The tool would explore how a project may disproportionately impact populations already experiencing disparities. Initial assessments should focus on significant proposals and be voluntary to explore how the process and assessment findings work within Wellesley decision-making processes. A model to consider is Race Forward’s Racial Equity Toolkit (developed for Seattle) which lays out a process and offers a ready to use worksheet.<sup>33</sup></p>	<p>See Chapter 13.</p>	

**C. Increase Resources available for Community Health and to Enhance the Health Department’s Role in Community Planning**

Actions	WHEN	WHO/HOW
<p>i. Consider increases <i>in funding and support for the Wellesley Health Department to sustain existing programs and enforcement activities while allowing staff engagement in implementation of the Unified Plan.</i> Staff from the Health Department can act as stewards of the Health and Wellness Element and use the process to engage other partners from the community health and health care sectors.</p>	<p>2022-2028</p>	<p>Board of Health, Board of Selectmen, and Town Meeting</p>

<sup>33</sup> City of Seattle, “Racial Equity Toolkit to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs, and Budget Issues,” <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/opi/healthequity/resources/seattle-toolkit.html>

# Healthy Community Design Proposal Review Checklist<sup>34</sup>

## 1 Housing quality and design

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal address the housing needs of older people and disabled individuals, (e.g., smaller units, assisted living, and connections with supportive services)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include homes that can be adapted to support independent living for older and disabled people?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include a range of housing types and sizes, including affordable housing responding to local housing needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

<sup>34</sup> Source: The checklist design and contents are based on the London Healthy Urban Development Unit Rapid Health Impact Assessment Tool: <http://www.healthyrbandevelopment.nhs.uk/our-services/delivering-healthy-urban-development/health-impact-assessment/>

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal contain homes that are highly energy efficient (e.g. a high LEED rating, ENERGY STAR compliant, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 2 Access to healthcare services and other social infrastructure

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal provide or retain connections to social or supportive services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal assess impacts on healthcare services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal assess the capacity, location, and accessibility of other local community institutions (e.g., schools, social care and community facilities)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal explore opportunities for shared community use and co-location of services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

### 3 Access to open space and nature

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal retain and enhance existing open and natural or recreational spaces?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
In areas with limited green space, does the proposal provide new open or natural space, or improve access to open spaces or off-road trails?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal provide a range of play spaces for children and young people?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal provide links between open and natural spaces and community institutions like schools?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Are the open and natural spaces welcoming and safe and accessible for all?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal set out how new open space will be	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative	

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
managed and maintained?	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

#### 4 Air quality and Noise

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal minimize construction impacts such as dust, noise, vibration, and odors?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal minimize air pollution caused by vehicular traffic?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal minimize night time light pollution?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 5 Accessibility and Active Transportation

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal prioritize and encourage walking (such as through sidewalks, sidepaths, or trails)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal prioritize and encourage cycling (for example by providing secure cycle parking, cycle lanes, or shared use paths)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal connect new active transportation facilities and internal routes to local and strategic cycle and walking networks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include traffic management and calming measures to help minimize road injuries and increase feelings of safety from vehicle traffic?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Is the proposal connected to public transport or local shuttle services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal encourage active transportation by reducing distance and barriers to local goods and services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal seek to reduce car use by reducing parking requirements and/or supporting shared parking and car services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal allow people with disabilities to access buildings and places?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 6 Crime Reduction and Community Safety

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal incorporate elements of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) (e.g., natural surveillance, maintenance schedule, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal incorporate design techniques to help people feel secure?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include attractive, multi-use public spaces and buildings?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Has engagement and consultation been carried out with the local community?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 7 Access to Healthy Food

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal facilitate the supply of local food (e.g., community garden plots, community farms, and/or farmers' markets)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Is there a range of retail uses, including food stores and convenience stores that offer healthy and/or local foods?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal avoid contributing to a concentration of fast food establishments?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 8 Access to Work and Training

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal provide access to local employment and training opportunities, including temporary construction and permanent 'jobs'?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal provide childcare facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include managed and affordable workspace for local businesses?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include opportunities for procurement of goods or services from local businesses?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 9 Social cohesion and age friendly neighborhoods

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal connect with existing neighborhoods (e.g., layout and facilities which avoid physical barriers and obstacles, land uses and spaces which encourage social interaction)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal include a mix of uses and a range of community facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal provide opportunities for the voluntary and community organizations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal create environments that people of all ages and abilities can access and enjoy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

## 10 Resource Utilization and Sustainable Design

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal incorporate renewable energy?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal ensure that buildings and spaces are designed to reduce energy needs in winter and summer seasons (e.g., building orientation, ventilation, shading, landscaping)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal maintain or enhance biodiversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	
Does the proposal incorporate sustainable stormwater drainage techniques?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

Assessment criteria	Relevant?	Details/evidence	Potential health impact?	Recommended mitigation or enhancement actions
Does the proposal incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Positive <input type="checkbox"/> Negative <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain	

# *Appendix B*

TOWN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC CONCEPTS

# Best Practices Resources

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## APPENDIX 2

### TOWN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC CONCEPTS: BEST PRACTICES RESOURCES

#### **Government Finance Officers Association**

The Government Finance Officers Association (<https://www.gfoa.org/best-practices>) has a large best-practices database, research reports on many topics (<https://www.gfoa.org/research-reports>), and policy statements. Examples include:

- Shayne Kavanagh, et al. “Anatomy of a Priority-Driven Budget Process,” Government Finance Officers Association, 2011 ([www.gfoa.org/anatomy-priority-driven-budget-process](http://www.gfoa.org/anatomy-priority-driven-budget-process))
- Michael J. Mucha, “Budgeting for Outcomes: Key Findings from GFOA Research,” October 2012 (<http://www.gfoa.org/budgeting-outcomes-key-findings-gfoa-research>)

#### **Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, Harvard University**

The Innovations in Government Program (<https://ash.harvard.edu/innovations-government>) publishes policy papers, reports, and case studies. Programs of potential interest to Wellesley include: Better, Faster, Cheaper; Data-Smart City Solutions; and case studies. Examples include:

- Katherine Hillenbrand and Stephen Goldsmith, “Kick-Starting Data Driven Government,” (2017), <https://datasmart.ash.harvard.edu/news/article/kick-starting-data-driven-government-992>
- Jane Wiseman, “Lessons from Leading CDOs: A Framework for Better Civic Analytics,” (2017), <https://datasmart.ash.harvard.edu/news/article/lessons-from-leading-cdos-966>

#### **Bloomberg Philanthropies**

What Works Cities (<https://whatworkscities.bloomberg.org/>) focuses on how cities can use data and evidence to solve local problems and improve government.

#### **Massachusetts Municipal Association Best Practice Series**

MMA has published this series since 2016 (<https://www.mma.org/about-mma/publications/bestpractices/>). The series provides brief information on best practices on a wide range of topics, include issues such as planning for climate change.